

September 2014

Dear Parent/ Carer

**Measuring the height and weight of children in Reception Year and Year 6
for the National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP)**

We need to have a good understanding of how children are growing across the country, so that the best possible health services can be provided for them and their families. As a result, all children in England in Reception Year and Year 6 have had their height and weight measured each year since 2006. Your child's class will take part in this year's measurement programme.

Trained staff from your local healthcare will supervise the measurement. The measurements will be done in a private area at school. School staff are usually present to support the children. Children who take part will be asked to remove their shoes and will be weighed in normal indoor clothing.

Routine data, such as your child's name, National Health Service Number, sex, address, postcode, ethnicity and date of birth, will also be collected. This information will then be used confidentially by the local authority and NHS to help understand and plan interventions for weight-related problems for children in your area.

The records of children's heights and weights will be made anonymous before being submitted for analysis and may be stored locally on child health records. All information and results will be treated confidentially. No child's height and weight measurements will be given to school staff or other children.

Once your child has had their height and weight checked, the results will be given to your child to bring home. More information about the National Child Measurement Programme is on the back of this letter.

If you are happy for your child to be weighed and measured, **you do not need to do anything**. If you do not want your child to take part, you can let your let us know by filling in the opt-out slip below and returning it to school. If you have any queries please contact our School Health Department on 01483 728 201.

Yours faithfully

**Child Health Team
Goldsworth Park Health Centre**

Opt-out slip

Please return to your child's School Office

I do not wish my child to be weighed and measured for the National Child Measurement Programme.

Child's Name Year Class

Child's School..... Date.....

Parent/Carer's NameParent/Carer's Signature.....

Further information on the National Child Measurement Programme

Measuring height and weight in schools

Every year, throughout England, more than a million children in Reception Year and Year 6 have their height and weight measured as part of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). Trained staff will measure your child's height and weight, in their indoor clothes, at school. They will take care to ensure that the measurements are done sensitively and in private, and your child's results will not be shared with teachers or other children. Your child does not have to participate, but we urge you to encourage your child to take part.

Why is it important that my child takes part?

Almost one in three children in England is overweight or obese by age 11. With so many children being overweight, an overweight child may not look different from their friends. Therefore, we tend not to notice when a child is overweight and are becoming accustomed to heavier children as the norm. That is why an objective measurement of how a child is growing is useful. Collectively, information about children's weight helps to build a national and local picture on how children are growing. The more children that take part, the clearer that picture will be. The information collected is used to help plan and provide better health and leisure services for the children in your area.

Will I find out my child's results and what will the results tell me?

Once your child has had their height and weight checked, the results will be made available. They may then be stored in your child's red child record book if you wish. The booklet "Top Tips for Top Kids" will also be made available for each child through your school. It includes advice and support on helping your family lead a healthy lifestyle.

What happens to the results?

Results from all the schools in your area will be gathered together and held securely by your local public health team. Some of the information will be sent to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC). The HSCIC collects and holds health data on behalf of the NHS and social care. This information is used to produce reports and information to assist the development of services to help families lead healthy lifestyles.

Why is a healthy weight important?

Research shows that modern living makes it more difficult to be a healthy weight. If we carry on as we are, many children may grow up with dangerous amounts of fat in their bodies, putting them at a greater risk of developing cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease in later life. Because it is not easy to tell just by looking if a child is overweight, the results can help parents make decisions about their child's lifestyle and make simple changes if necessary. To help your child achieve and maintain a healthy weight, encourage the whole family to enjoy eating healthily and being active. Children who see their parents, grandparents and carers following a healthy and active lifestyle tend to join in and learn by example. These habits become a normal part of everyday life for the whole family.

For more information about how to keep your family fit and healthy visit



www.nhs.uk/change4life or call 0300 123 4567