



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

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Dear Parent/Carer,

## **Height and weight checks for children in reception and year 6**

Every year in England, school children in reception and year 6 have their height and weight checked at school. This is called the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The checks are carried out by registered school nurses or trained health and care providers. Children are measured fully clothed, except for their coats and shoes, in a private space away from other pupils. You can watch the [NCMP process animation](#). The animation explains the process of the NCMP and why it is important. It will guide you through what it involves, how your child's data is collected and processed and what it will be used for.

Please scan the QR code below for further information or visit [www.nelft.nhs.uk/national-child-measurement-programme-ncmp](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/national-child-measurement-programme-ncmp).



## **Why do we need to measure children?**

Children's height and weight measurements are collected to build an understanding of how children are growing. The information from the NCMP is used by local councils and the NHS to plan the provision of health and leisure services for families to promote healthier growth in children.

Parents/carers will receive their child's measurement data, because this can be useful information about their child's growth. It also provides an opportunity to offer support to parents where required. Your child's class will take part in this year's programme.

## **What information is collected and why**

Your child's height, weight, age, sex, and date of birth are collected to calculate their weight category (also known as child body mass index).

Your child's ethnicity and address are collected to monitor differences in child growth and weight between ethnic groups, where children live and their backgrounds.

Your child's name, date of birth and NHS number are collected to link their measurements from reception and year 6 to other information from health and education records held by NHS England, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Department for Education, where it is legal to do so.

## **Information about how personal information and data is collected and stored**

You can read more about how the Department of Health and Social Care collects, stores and uses your child's information and data in the [National Child Measurement Programme privacy notice](#).

You can read more about how NHS England collects, stores and uses your child's information and data at [National Child Measurement Programme \(NCMP\): GDPR information](#).

At the NHS England [National Child Measurement Programme webpage](#) you can read more about:

- taking part in the programme
- how your data is collected
- how your data is used

You can read more about how NELFT collects, stores and uses your child's information at [www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-havering-school-nursing](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-havering-school-nursing)

## **How you can withdraw your child from participating in the NCMP**

If you are happy for your child to be measured, you do not need to do anything.

If you do not want your child's height and weight to be measured, or your child has a medical condition that affects their height or weight, please email us within two weeks of the date of this letter. You can contact us using the email address provided at the top of this letter.

If you do withdraw your child from height and weight measurements, please inform us if you would like the option of still having their hearing and vision screened. (Reception children only). You contact us using the email address provided at the top of this letter.

Children will not be made to take part on the day if they do not want to.

## **How is a child's mental health and wellbeing considered in the NCMP**

The wellbeing of children and families is very important to the programme. Measurements are conducted in a sensitive way, in private and away from other children. Individual feedback is not shared with your child or their school.

The weight and height information is shared only with you, through a parent feedback letter. It is your choice to share or not share the information with your child.

If you are concerned about your child's growth, weight, body image or eating patterns, seek further support from a school nurse or GP.

Reception parents will shortly be receiving a school entry health questionnaire to be completed and returned to school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Ansell  
Director of Public Health  
London Borough of Havering



Tara Geere  
Director of Starting Well  
London Borough of Havering

## **Further information**

You can find information and fun ideas to help your kids stay healthy at the NHS Better Health: healthier families webpage [Easy ways to eat well and move more](#).

Another way to help maintain a balanced diet and physical activity for your family is the NHS Healthy Steps email programme. Sign up for the 8-week Healthy Steps emails and

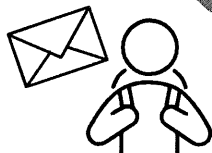
you will be sent lots of low-cost easy tips, fun games, healthy swaps and tasty recipes on a budget. You can sign up to NHS [Healthy Steps - step this way](#).

You can find further information about the NCMP at [The National Child Measurement Programme](#) NHS webpage.

# School height and weight measurements

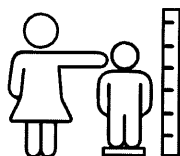
Every year, throughout England, more than a million children in Reception and Year 6 have their height and weight measured at school as part of the National Child Measurement Programme

## PARENTS ARE NOTIFIED



Parents receive a letter about measurement day at their child's school. The letter tells parents how children are measured, what data is collected, and why.

## SCHOOL HEIGHT & WEIGHT CHECKS



Measurements are carried out by trained staff e.g. school nurse assistant. Children take off their coat and shoes for a more accurate measurement.

## PARENTS' FEEDBACK LETTER



Most areas send parents a confidential letter about their child's weight status within 6 weeks of measurement.

## PARENTS' ACTION

A parent can speak to their school nurse or GP for further advice and support about their child's weight and growth.



Parents can visit the [children's weight](#) page at Better Health - Families for tips on healthier changes.

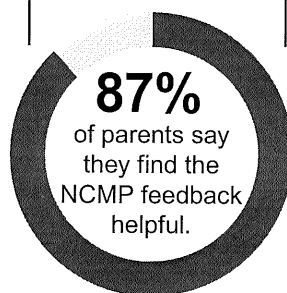
Parents can monitor their child's weight by visiting the [NHS healthy weight calculator](#).

## DATA USE

The data is held by the local authority and sent to NHS England and Department of Health and Social Care, where it is stored securely and used for analysis. It builds a picture of how children are growing to help plan better health and leisure services for families.



**Every year in England, over a million children in Reception (aged 4-5) and Year 6 (aged 10-11) have their height and weight measured to calculate their weight status.**



### What we know from the data collected so far

- Most children in Reception and Year 6 are a healthy weight.
- Around one in ten children in Reception is very overweight. This doubles to one in five children by year 6.
- The number of very overweight children in Year 6 is increasing year on year
- Most children who are overweight in Reception will remain so or become even more overweight for their age by year 6 without action to achieve a healthier weight.

Because many children are overweight, we are all becoming used to seeing heavier children as the norm. It means we cannot always tell when a child is overweight. That is why many parents find it helpful to have an objective measurement of how their child is growing. More than 8 in 10 parents say this information is helpful and they can then make decisions about their child's lifestyle and wellbeing to make changes, or seek support if necessary.

### Why achieving a healthy growth is important

When children are a healthy weight, they feel better about themselves. They find it easier to play and learn. And they are more likely to grow up healthy too. Helping them to be a healthier weight when they are a child can set up their health and wellbeing for life.

You can encourage the whole family to enjoy eating healthily and being active which will help your child achieve and maintain a healthier weight. 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 on helping your family lead a healthy life, please turn over.**



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**Better  
Health**

**Let's  
do this**

**NHS**

## Better Health Families is here to help your family be healthy and happy

### Sign up for NHS Healthy Steps emails

**Better  
Health**

**Let's  
do this**

Sign up for 8 weeks of Healthy Steps emails to help your family make small changes to make a big difference. We'll send you lots of budget-conscious, simple family recipes, fun games and healthy swaps!

Visit [healthysteps.uk](http://healthysteps.uk) or scan the QR code to get started!



### Be Sugar Smart

Kids are having over double the amount of sugar than they should. Too much sugar is bad for teeth and can lead to weight gain. But don't worry, we have some simple swaps to help you be sugar smart and cut back.



Sugary drinks are bad for teeth and lead to decay. Swap fizzy drinks, juice drinks and flavoured milks for water, lower-fat milks and no added sugar drinks. Limit fruit juice to no more than 150ml a day and stick to meal times.



Eating breakfast every day is important, but some breakfast choices have much more sugar than you think. Opt for plain porridge, shredded wholegrain or plain wholewheat biscuit cereals. Help your kids towards their 5 a Day by adding in chopped fruit.

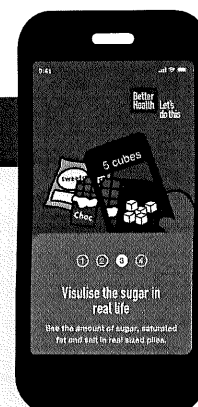


Sugary snacks can all add up! Fruit and vegetables are always the best snack. But when choosing packaged snacks, stick to two a day max.

### See what's really inside your food and drink



Download the FREE NHS Food Scanner app to see how much sugar, salt and saturated fat are in your favourite food and drinks, and to find healthier swaps.



Find Better Health Families on **Facebook!**