

For further information about this service contact:

Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service

Redgrave Children & Young People's
Centre
Redgrave Gardens
Luton
LU3 3QN
Telephone: 01582 708141
Email: ccs.beds.childrens.ot.redgrave@nhs.net



Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service

Child Development Centre
Hill Rise
Kempston
Bedford
MK42 7EB
Telephone: 01234 310278
Email: ccs.beds.childrens.ot.cdc@nhs.net

We've produced a short video for Children and families explaining the Covid 19 changes when visiting sites. The video walks through a clinic visit and has been created from a child's point of view - watch here: <https://vimeo.com/456074930>

To access our website page, visit:
www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/BedsandLutonOT
or scan this QR code

Parking

Disabled parking spaces are available near the entrance at both venues and there is ample other free parking.



If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.



**Bedfordshire
Community
Health Services**



A guide for Parents and Carers

Equipment



This leaflet contains information and advice which you may find useful for your child.

Suppliers:

www.peta.co.uk

www.backinaction.co.uk

www.amazon.co.uk

www.specialdirect.com

www.southpaw.co.uk/

www.ebay.co.uk/

www.sensorytoywarehouse.com

<http://www.sensetoys.com>

Handwriting Equipment:

Here is a list of a range of pencil and handwriting tools that your child may find helpful when writing both at home and school. NB: most of these are available from Amazon.

	<p>The Stabilo Easy ergo 3.15mm pencil has an innovative pen design which has been specially developed for children's hands. It has a cushioned tip and only a small amount of pressure is required to write with. It is available in both right and left handed versions.</p>
	<p>Stabilo EASY ergo 1.4mm pencil. This is usually for children of 7+. This is a pencil with a larger barrel and an innovative pen design which has been specially developed for children's hands with dimples to place the fingers in and a cushioned tip requiring a small amount of pressure to write with.</p>
	<p>Stabilo easy original Are ergonomically designed pens which have an innovative grip mould which makes sure that you have the correct grip as soon as you pick the pen up to use. It sits perfectly in the hand and allows flowing writing with very little pressure. The way the pen flows on the paper varies and different children prefer one or the other.</p>
	<p>Stabilo Easy gel pen Are ergonomically designed pens which have an innovative grip mould which makes sure that you have the correct grip as soon as you pick the pen up to use. It sits perfectly in the hand and allows flowing writing with very little pressure. The way the pen flows on the paper varies and different children prefer one or the other.</p>

	<p>Green Chewy Tube (knobby) The Green Knobby Chewy Tube has been designed to increase sensory input by means of the raised dots on the shaft. The shaft diameter is 15mm OD. The Green knobby Chewy Tube is slightly harder to chew on when compared with Yellow and Red Chewy Tubes.</p>
	<p>Chew Stixx The Sensory University has created an all new pencil topper using its top selling Chew Stixx Product. If your child bites, chews, or grinds, give them something safe to chew on. The Chew Stixx Pencil Topper fits any number 2 pencil, decreases lead exposure, is safe for teeth, is socially acceptable, is allowed in classrooms, increases attention, lowers anxiety levels, and has been proven to improve concentration skills in children constantly seeking sensory input. Excellent for streamline and special needs children. Package includes one smooth and one knobby surfaced topper. Not for use with children under 3 years of age.</p>
	<p>Chewelry: Chewelry is a non-toxic, colorful, plastic chewable jewelry that stretches. Its a great way to keep kids from chewing clothes, while letting them work through their chewing tendencies. It's also great for oral-motor stimulating activities. Use Chewelry with adult supervision.</p>

Sensory Resources:

Some children need additional resources to help focus on activities and tasks, for example something to fiddle with or chew.

	Finger Fidgets Fidget while you work! These colourful, innovative toppers are sure to keep little fingers happy as they screw, snap or bump the different ends. Set includes 4 different style toppers with pencils.
	Tangle on a Keyring Fidgets will love carrying around a tangle on a keyring and twisting all day long! Tangle measures approximately 5cm when coiled up.
	Stretchy Smiler Happy to be stretched in any direction, then let go to return to his original size.
	Squishy Mesh Pen The pen is topped with an irresistibly squishy ball that produces, what we can only think to describe as 'pustules' which grow through the black netting, changing colour as they emerge.
	Koosh Ball UV-reactive, non-toxic and washable. Lightweight and extremely tactile. Ideal for use in darkened areas. 90mm diameter.
	Spine Balls A set of four bright UV reactive Spine Balls that are firm and bouncy, yet soft to touch. Fabulous when used with a UV light! Sizes: 75mm, 60mm, 50mm and 38mm diameter.

Pencil Grips:

Pencil Grips can help your child hold their pencil with a more functional grasp.

	Ultra pencil grip – this can be helpful for children with hypermobile fingers and comes in a jumbo size for children of about 11+
	Grotto pencil grip supports the fingers in a tripod grasp
	Comfort Pencil Grips: A new design in pencil grips. Made in soft foam they provide a comfortable and secure grip for small or less able fingers.
	Triangular Pencil Grips: A simple aid to better pencil control and handwriting, available in standard size for normal pencils and jumbo size for junior pencils and ball point pens.

Typing Websites:

Learning to use the keyboard effectively is an important skill for any child and the earlier they learn to type, the easier they will find it. Although learning to type more effectively is important for all children, for children who are already having handwriting or recording difficulties it is even more so. For many children and adults with disabilities, handwriting can be very difficult and becoming more familiar with the keyboard or learning to touch type (being able to type with multiple fingers without looking at the keyboard) can provide an alternative method of recording information.

Touch Typing websites: to help develop typing skills.

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/	Dance Mat Typing An introduction to touch typing for children aged 7-11 years. Used in Schools.
www.rapidtyping.com/	Rapid Typing Zone A collection of typing games and software for older children who have basic knowledge of keyboard skills.
http://bigbrownbear.co.uk/learntotype/	Big Brown Bear This game provides several exercises designed to improve children's touch-typing skills. These exercises start with using a few keys and gradually increases the level of difficulty till the learner reaches the total keyboard mastery. This game teaches learners to use the correct fingers for the different keys and improves their finger movements over the keyboard.
www.freetypinggame.net/	Free Typing Game This is a game that provides good typing practice to learners. Players have to save letters from being eaten by frogs. To do this, they need to type letters fast before the frogs swallow them.
http://mathandreadinghelp.org/kids_games/the_typing_of_the_ghosts.html	Typing Ghost In Typing Ghost, players are required to destroy the ghosts by typing the words on them. To cancel the typing, players need to use the "backspace" key.

	Zubits Magnetic Closures Just pull the magnets together and they magnetically attach themselves. No more tying, double knotting, or un-knotting.
	Clip on tie To reduce the time and stress of tying a school tie daily and when changing for P.E. https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/Turn-Convert-Your-own-Tie-into-a-Clip-On-Conversion-Service-Send-it-to-us-/270664452437
	Marks and Spencer easy dress range – school uniform Marks and Spencer have a Easy Dressing School Uniform Range including socks, trousers, shorts shirts, dresses and skirts.

Dressing Equipment:

Some children find completing fastenings and shoe laces challenging, they may find the following helpful to help increase speed when dressing at home and changing for P.E in school.

	<p>Elastic shoe laces from Mocent,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made of silicone, resilient, hard to fracture. • Fit 95% percent of the shoes on the market. • Dirt-resistant, Easy to wear, easy to wash. • No worry of your kids tripping up by the shoelaces while they are running.
	<p>Proworks No Tie Laces Elastic Easy Tie Shoe Laces for Adults and Kids Running Shoes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proworks no-tie elastic shoe laces are designed for sporting use. They remain securely fastened even in extreme circumstances, enabling you to run, hike, cycle and play sports without worrying about your laces coming undone. • The ergonomic design, adjustable tension and quick release fastener of the Proworks elasticated shoe laces enable you to easily adjust their fit, ensuring maximum comfort regardless of the situation. • The no-tie laces are made from high-grade elasticated rubber, which distribute pressure more evenly over your foot than conventional laces, reducing the risk that you will incur an injury during exercise. • Featuring reflective stripes for added safety when running at night or in low visibility conditions; the Proworks easy-tie shoe laces are a great way to add extra comfort and safety to your workout routine. • The Proworks elasticated laces are extremely easy to use, with handy installation instructions making it easy for you to get up and running in no time. One size fits all.

Scissor Skills:

Some children find using standard children’s scissors challenging. There are different types of scissors available that can make holding and coordinating scissors easier, to help improve speed and accuracy.

	<p>Easi Grip Children’s Scissors 30 mm rounded blades operates by squeezing handles together.</p>
	<p>Long Loop Easi Grip scissors (45mm / 75mm pointed blade) These are similar to the ones suggested for Child but have a loop to put all the fingers in and come in different sizes</p>
	<p>Long loop scissors Operate in usual way but have a long loop to support all the fingers which can be easier to hold</p>
	<p>Self-Opening Long Loop Scissors Support all the fingers and spring open, the stretch in the hand can be too much for some children</p>

Posture:

When working on handwriting skills, fine motor skills or any desktop tasks, it is important to ensure that the child is using a chair and table of the correct height. The following ergonomic principles should be applied.

- Sitting with bottom all the way back.
- Chair tucked in all the way.
- Legs fully supported by the length of the seat
- **Feet flat on the floor (a box or similar can be used if necessary)**
- Table height should be at elbow level (child can sit on a box or firm item if necessary).
- Sitting in the chair with shoulders straight. Ensure that the back is making contact with the backrest. Avoiding slouching or stooping forward.
- Do not sit in one position for too long. Ideally having a mini break, by getting up, having a stretch every 10-15 minutes. This prevents joints from seizing up/ becoming stiff.

Some children find it difficult to maintain a functional sitting position for long periods due to reduced postural stability. Therefore they require frequent adjustment of position to maintain comfort; as a result they can appear restless as they alternate their position in their chair or get up to move about. The following equipment suggestions may be beneficial for your child. When trying equipment allow for a 2 week period.

Equipment Ideas:

	Writing slope – useful if children tend to adopt a slumped posture in sitting. They also come in other colours and black which might be helpful if child has difficulties with visual figure ground or is visually distracted.
	Advantage Slant Board this is available from www.southpaw.co.uk/advantage-slant-board-737-p.asp . It folds flat and is lightweight so is good for older children who are moving from class to class
	Posture Pack: The posture pack includes a number of components: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Writing Slope tilts papers and books to the correct angle for reading and writing.• The Posture Pack Seat Wedge tilts the seat forward to a more comfortable angle for working, making it easier to lean forward to work without slouching.• A “ring binder” type fitting which allows lots of punched papers to be stored. A storage wallet to keep loose A4 sheets without punching. A pencil case which keeps erasers, etc. at hand.
	Move n sit cushion – this works similarly to the wobble cushion. This cushion can also be used in conjunction with a writing slope to improve posture
	Wobble Cushion – this comes in two sizes it can be helpful for children who fidget in their seats and require additional proprioceptive information. Some children tolerate and require the bobble side for increased input. Others only tolerated the flat side.