

For further information about this service contact:

**Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service**

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**Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service**

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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](http://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](mailto: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**



## Advice Sheet for Parents/Carers and Education Staff Regarding Key Board Skills

### Paediatric Occupational Therapy



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.

Before a word processing device can be used usefully in the classroom, the child needs to have had devoted time to developing the skill of keyboarding, in the same way that we all spend time developing handwriting skills. As a rule of thumb, it is a good idea to have a typing speed that is equal to, or surpasses handwriting speed before a keyboard is used as a regular recording aid in the classroom.

Taking regular breaks away from the computer is important, and during a sustained period of typing "micro-breaks" involving the loosening and "shaking out" of hands arms and shoulders can be helpful every few minutes.

The following suggestions may help with the development of typing skills:-

- Before and during typing ensure the following:
  1. Sit up straight, bottom back in chair.
  2. Feet flat on floor.
  3. Keyboard not too high or too low, forearms resting lightly on edge of table.
  4. Fingers curved.
  5. Wrists flat.
  6. Fingers resting lightly on middle row and thumbs on spacebar. It is important to return to this position throughout typing.
- Use two hands where possible, this will encourage familiarity with the keyboard and efficiency. If this is difficult encourage one-hand typing with the other using the 'space bar' and function keys. Encourage the use of as many fingers as possible when typing.
- It may be helpful to divide the keyboard into two halves, approximately between keys TGB/YHN. The left hand for the keys on the left side and the right hand for the right side. The use of small sticky coloured dots on the keys may act as a reminder eg left keys green, right keys red. Try not to cover letters! A piece of wool could be used to divide the keys instead.
- Ideally schedule 15 minutes each day. Frequent, short sessions are more effective than longer, less frequent ones.

*Adapted from: NHS Borders Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service*

[www.abilitynet.org.uk/sites/abilitynet.org.uk/files/Keyboarding%20and%20Touch%20Typing%20for%20Children.pdf](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/sites/abilitynet.org.uk/files/Keyboarding%20and%20Touch%20Typing%20for%20Children.pdf)

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## Online touch Typing Programmes for Children

### Dance Mat Typing

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/)

An introduction to touch typing for children aged 7-11 years. Used in Schools.

### Rapid Typing Zone

[www.rapidtyping.com/](http://www.rapidtyping.com/)

A collection of typing games and software for older children who have basic knowledge of keyboard skills.

### Big Brown Bear

[www.bigbrownbear.co.uk/learntotype](http://www.bigbrownbear.co.uk/learntotype)

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.

### Free Typing Game

[www.freetypinggame.net/](http://www.freetypinggame.net/)

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.

### Typing Ghost

[www.mathandreadinghelp.org/kids\\_games/the\\_typing\\_of\\_the\\_ghosts.html](http://www.mathandreadinghelp.org/kids_games/the_typing_of_the_ghosts.html)

In Typing Ghost, players are required to destroy the ghots by typing the words on them. To cancel the typing, players need to use the " backspace" key.