

What to expect at your Neurodevelopmental appointment

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I have to bring my child to all appointments?

At the first appointment we would like to meet your child because our assessment would involve talking with them, completing some activities and/or playing with them. However there can be some appointments where you might just want to focus on talking with the doctor and it might be better if your child remains at school/nursery or home.

Who else can I bring with me to appointments?

You are welcome to bring another person with you that can support you at appointments. This might be a staff member from your child's nursery or school. It could also be relative or friend. During the COVID-19 pandemic please let us know if you do want to bring somebody so that we can make appropriate arrangements (sometimes education staff can attend virtually via a video link).

Can I bring my child's toys, books or playthings to the appointment?

Yes! These appointments can be long and it might be nice for your child to have their familiar things with them to keep them entertained while you are talking with your doctor. This will not affect the assessment process as it is important for us to understand what interests your child and how they play.

We may use specific toys and items to assess your child's development and behaviour. We will let you and your child know when and if these will be needed.

Can I bring food for my child to the appointment?

Of course! We understand that some of the children coming for assessment can be very particular about what they eat and when they eat. You are therefore welcome to bring snacks and drinks for your child.

Can I change my appointment?

Yes. If you're not able to attend your appointment please let us know as soon as possible. We can make another appointment for you at a time that is more convenient and then offer that appointment to someone else.

English is not my first language?

When we book your appointment we will ask if you will need an interpreter. If you need one, we will arrange for a professional interpreter to join the appointments so that you can focus on your child and the appointment.

I have a hearing impairment and require a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter

When we book your appointment we will ask if you will need a BSL interpreter to support you with your hearing needs. If you need one, we will arrange for a professional interpreter to join the appointments so that you can focus on your child and the appointment.

Is it possible to have appointments outside of school hours?

We run clinics in the mornings and afternoons. We offer the last appointment at 3.30 pm. We do run Saturday clinics but these have limited availability and you may wait longer for these appointments. When you book the appointment the booking clerk will run through the available appointments to find a time that suits you and your child.

What happens if the appointment runs late because the clinician is busy with another patient?

As far as possible we will try to run appointments on time. However sometimes this is not possible. If we are running late, we will try to let you know how much longer you will have to wait, so that you can make appropriate plans and reassure your child.

Are there changing facilities that I can use for my child?

Yes! We provide appropriate changing and toilet facilities for children, young and their families.

Will my child be in the room the whole time? /What if I want to share some concerns but not in front of my child?

In preparation for your appointment, you can complete the 'Tell Me Your Story' form, where you can share your concerns in writing for the doctor to read at the appointment.

If you want to talk about these concerns and there is another suitable adult present we can arrange that your child leave the room with this adult while you have these more sensitive discussions about your child. If this is not possible we can arrange for you to talk with your doctor on the telephone after the appointment. Please discuss this during the appointment.

Why do I need to see a Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist?

Some speech and language therapists (SLT) work as part of a multi-disciplinary team with paediatricians and other professionals in assessing, diagnosing and supporting autistic children and young people. These SLTs are specifically trained in assessing the following areas that will support the diagnosis of autism:

1. Social communication
2. Social interaction
3. Play, imagination and flexibility of thought (e.g. difficulty with coping in sudden changes in routine or seeing things from other people's point of view)
4. Restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviours or interests

Please see our jargon buster page for more information about the above areas.

<https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/advice/post-diagnosis/jargon-buster>

Any other questions?

If you have any further questions, please contact the Children's Community Health HUB on 0300 555 0606 or email: ccs.bedsandlutonchildrenshealthhub@nhs.net