

Referral information required for the assessment of neurodevelopmental conditions in children attending primary school

Community Paediatrics provides assessments for:

- Social Communication/Autism
- ADHD/significant attention difficulties
- Medical assessment of a child who has a significant learning disability (as part of EHCP application process)
- Mixed neurodevelopmental difficulties which are complex/overlapping and affecting a child's function in school

Eligibility:

- Children must be under a GP in the Cambridge CCG and either a resident in Cambridgeshire or attend a Cambridgeshire school
- Children should be of primary school age
- Referrals should be made by the child's school setting due to the amount of supporting information required, we would not expect a GP to make these referrals unless in exceptional cases (see exceptions below)

NB: Secondary school age assessments for ASD and ADHD are undertaken by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

NB: Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 0-5 years) Children presenting with neurodevelopmental difficulties are likely to be seen by Community Paediatrics and there is a clear pathway for referral through Early Support services.

This referral pathway is **not required** for the following:

- For the below please refer directly to Community Paediatrics through the GP.
 - i. Physical difficulties/disabilities
 - ii. Infants who are presenting with an obvious delay in their development or is in association with other medical conditions/genetic diagnoses
- Children who are presenting with early developmental impairment/social communication difficulties before starting school will require a referral to Early Support
- Therapies (i.e. Speech and Language, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy). Referrals can be made directly to their service (see CCS website)

Information required before assessment for all neurodevelopmental referrals

Community Paediatrics offers a specialist diagnostic service for children with significant developmental difficulties/significant Special Educational Needs (SEND) which are likely to be life long and will have a significant impact on that child's ability to access and participate in aspects of daily living. The children referred to us should have the greatest level of need and we would expect that other professionals will already have been involved in supporting the child and their family.

Schools should send relevant records (see below) with the referral, having first secured parental permission to share this information.

Support and intervention is needs based and is not dependent on a diagnosis. If there are difficulties at home then parents should be supported with behavioural strategies from District Teams and other agencies, which school should signpost parents to.

Minimum information required for all referrals in this pathway:

- Completed Neurodevelopmental Referral Form (electronic referral form on website)
- Early Help Assessment (EHA)
- Involvement of the school SENCo

- Evidence of the school using a graduated response, and following a clear cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' with outcome measures of appropriate strategies and interventions used
- SEND Service 0-25 reports where involved.
- Assessment of a child's current academic attainment (see referral form)
- Relevant information regarding family and social background, Social Care involvement and child protection concerns. This should be included either in the EHA or the referral form

We are unlikely to accept referrals if there is no supporting evidence showing the level and complexity of need and no information showing the impact of suitable programmes or strategies implemented over time.

Social Communication concerns and Autistic Spectrum Condition assessments

The Community Paediatric service provides diagnostic assessments for Autistic Spectrum Conditions in children.

Children presenting after the age of 7 years with social communication concerns usually have less difficulties and therefore a diagnosis may not be apparent at that stage. They may improve over time or their difficulties may become more marked. It is important to have a clear picture of a child's functioning over a period of time, and it is important to offer them support before a referral is considered.

SEND Services 0-25 may be involved before a referral for a diagnosis is made as they provide support and educational advice within the school setting, and their assessments contribute towards the diagnostic process. Parents should also be referred to the District Team for behavioural advice before making a referral.

It is important to recognise that the threshold for an assessment is high and therefore only children who are presenting with significant difficulties at both home and school and who have failed to respond to interventions put in place are likely to be seen.

To make a referral for a diagnostic assessment for Autistic Spectrum Disorder the following information is required before the referral is considered:

- Minimum information required for all referrals in this pathway (as above).
- Evidence of appropriate intervention and support already put in place by school, and a clear process of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' (APDR) over time as per the SEND Code of Practice (2014) please also see 'Improving Outcomes for Children with Additional Needs' document and the ASD Pathway, which are both on Cambridgeshire's local offer website, including implementation of any advice from a relevant professionals (for example, Specialist Teacher or Educational Psychologist if they have been involved).
NB: Please include reports/records of involvement having first obtained parental permission for sharing information.
- Where schools have engaged in ASD training (such as AET level 1-3) evidence of how strategies have been imbedded within school practice, and their impact
- Social communications descriptors completed by school and evidence of how the responses to need have been incorporated into the APDR cycle.

Once all the above information has been received additional information may be requested in the form of autism specific questionnaires. When completed the referral may then be discussed in a joint meeting with SEND Services 0-25, Speech and Language Therapy and Community Paediatricians. The family will be contacted directly following this.

The outcome may be:

- Further information requested
- Advice and/or intervention given from one of the agencies
- Invited to a multi-disciplinary assessment
- Other assessment or referral indicated
- Declined

The family will be contacted directly of the outcome by letter.

Attention and Hyperactivity issues (ADHD)

If a diagnosis of ADHD is suspected, where there are significant difficulties with a combination of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity across both the home and school setting, which have not responded to behavioural support and are out of keeping with that child's developmental level, then the following information is required before a referral is considered:

- Minimum information required for all referrals in this pathway (as above)
- Evidence of behavioural management and intervention, either universal or targeted from the Locality Team. For parenting and behavioural support for families, please specify dates and course name and provide certificates if available. This must have taken place within the last 2 years. Referrals will not be considered unless this has already been undertaken prior to referral and the response has been evaluated
- Information regarding any home or environmental factors which may have an impact on that child's behaviour and/or functioning, if not already included on the referral form or EHA

Once the above information has been received additional information may be requested, i.e. Connor's Questionnaires, before an assessment is considered.

The family will be contacted directly of the outcome by letter.

Behavioural issues occurring at home only

School to direct parents for behavioural support either within the school based services or via their District Team. This will require an EHA. Referrers would be advised to contact their District Team manager who may be able to signpost or advise local services.

Behavioural concerns only in the school setting

School based support; consider involvement from SEND Services 0-25 if thresholds for their service are met. Consider behaviour in terms of that child's developmental level.

Community Paediatrics assesses only primary school aged children for ADHD and refers to CAMHS for ongoing medical management, or for assessment of secondary school age children requiring assessment.

Learning Disability reaching Education Health and Care Plan threshold

Community Paediatrics will provide a medical assessment for children identified in school age as having a significant learning difficulty/disability i.e. those children who have met the criteria for an EHC Plan. A medical assessment will be offered to those families as part of the EHC process (if they have not previously been seen) to explore whether there is a medical or genetic reason for their difficulties.

We would expect that the nature and extent of a child's learning needs, and appropriate investigation of any specific learning difficulties, would already have been undertaken by the school, and that the Educational Psychologist is already involved. If the school needs advice on this they should contact the Statutory Assessment Team (SAT).

- Minimum information required for all referrals in this pathway (as above)
- Details of child's levels of attainment using standardised assessments (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/the-role-of-the-local-authority-schools-and-settings/>)
- Reports provided by SEND Services 0-25, if involved

Community Paediatricians do not offer cognitive assessments, educational support or advice on school age children, nor diagnose specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Cambridgeshire Dyslexia Guidance can be found at:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/local-offer/about-cambridgeshire-s-local-offer/the-role-of-the-local-authority-schools-and-settings>

Exceptions

There will be some children in whom not all information will be available i.e.:

- Children who are home schooled
- Children attending an out of Cambridge school but live in Cambridgeshire
- Children who have recently relocated into the area

We would advise that these children are discussed with the referral intake team individually before a referral is made as other arrangements may be made for these cases.

Referrals with supporting information should be sent to:

North Cambridge, South Cambridge, Cambridge City and Ely

Community Paediatrics

The Peacock Centre
Brookfields Hospital
351 Mill Road
Cambridge
CB1 3DF

Tel: 01223 218072

Email: ccs-tr.communitypaediatricssouth@nhs.net

Huntingdon and Fenland

Community Paediatrics

The Oak Tree Centre
1 Oak Drive
Huntingdon
PE29 7HN

Tel: 01480 425300

Email: ccs-tr.clinicalsupport@nhs.net

We hope that this is helpful. This information has been considered in conjunction with Cambridgeshire Community Paediatrics, SEND Services 0-25, Cambridgeshire Speech and Language Therapy Service and District Teams.

Further information can be found at: www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services/community-based-care/community-paediatrics

If you have any queries or would like to discuss a referral please don't hesitate to contact us.

On behalf of Cambridgeshire Community Paediatrics

This information is current in May 2020. Further revisions and updates of this service will be made over time