

# Statutory Health Assessments

## .....A guide for parents and carers

### What is a health assessment?

A health assessment is an opportunity to discuss your child's health.

It is a chance for your child to have a physical examination and to have a discussion around their health and well-being.

Children have told us that they would like this to be referred as their `health check`. Therefore, when preparing your child for the appointment you may wish to use this term.

### Why does my child need one?

All children in care are required to have a health assessment; so that we can make sure your child is healthy.

It is known that many children who enter care may have unmet health needs, therefore it is a legal requirement that all children in care have this opportunity to have their health assessed.

This is required to be completed in 28 days so that your child's health summary and plan can inform care planning.

### What happens during an assessment?

For an initial health assessment this will be conducted by a Paediatrician who will explain the process to you and ask you and your child questions about their health.

Your child will be weighed and measured, and the doctor may also examine their eyes, ears and mouth.

The Doctor will also listen to their chest and heart and may listen to their stomach.

Review health assessments are usually completed by a nurse on a 6 monthly basis for children under the age of 5 and annually for those over the age of 5. Young people will be asked where they prefer to be seen.



### What health information will be discussed?

You can talk about any worries or concerns you or your child may have, but as a guide the following maybe discussed:

Dental care · Diet and sleep · Fitness and exercise · Emotional Health · Drugs, smoking and alcohol · General health problems · Immunisations · Relationships · Relevant social and medical history.

### **How to prepare for an assessment?**

Please make sure your child's social worker is aware of the appointment and attends with you where possible.

Please let the health team aware if you are unable to attend as the earliest opportunity so another appointment can be provided.

If you think that your child needs any form of additional support to be able to attend the appointment, for example a translator, a first appointment, quiet time, then please contact the relevant team as detailed in your appointment letter.

If there is any information you wish to discuss with the doctor or nurse in advance of the appointment, that may not be appropriate to discuss in front of your child or young person, please contact the relevant team as detailed in your appointment letter.

### **Things to talk about with your child**

Reassure your child that there is nothing in the assessment to worry about.

Reassure your child that although some questions may feel embarrassing or sensitive, that the doctor or nurse would never force your child to answer questions they feel uncomfortable with.

### **Do I need to bring anything with me?**

It is important that your child attends with you and it is helpful to bring:

- Details of any health appointments, including names and dates of dentist and optician appointments.
- For pre-school children please bring the red book if available.
- Any health information including current medication.
- You may wish to bring a snack and a drink.

### **What happens after the assessment?**

A copy of your child's health summary and plan will be sent to yourself, your child's social worker and GP. The health plan will include actions that need to be completed in a specific time to ensure your child's health needs are being addressed.

### **Will my child require another health assessment in the future?**

All children in care will require a review health assessment at least once a year. For children under the age of 5 this will be twice a year. This review is usually carried out by your health visitor, school nurse or children in care nurse.