

# What School Nurse?



Healthy Schools

## Do you know who your school nurse is?

The school nurse is there to help you. The school nurse is the first person you may wish to speak to for confidential advice and information about your health. Find out how to make the most of your school nurse – this leaflet shows you how.

### Inside you'll find information on:

- why it's important to have a school nurse
- what you can go and see your school nurse for
- what services your school nurse will provide
- what services your school nurse might be able to provide in the future
- who else your school nurse has links with.



You may have heard of the term 'Healthy School'. A Healthy School is a school that makes it easier for young people to look after their health. School nurses can help young people and schools to do this. Even if you don't go to school you can still speak to a school nurse.

The work that school nurses do is expanding. This leaflet is to let you know what this means for you.



The leaflet has been designed with the help of these young people.

The young people explained why they thought it was important to have a school nurse. Here are some of the things they said ...

**To have someone to talk to about any health problems**

So that you can get information, leaflets and advice

So that you can access other services , for example, counselling

To get support health wise

**For sex education**

In case you get seriously hurt or there is an emergency

**For emotional support**

**Someone to talk to other than a teacher**

To share your troubles

To give kids security – there is someone you can talk to

Self-examination (breast cancer etc)

To learn about your body



# What do school nurses do?

## **School nurses have two main roles:**

- to give confidential advice, care and treatment to young people and parents or carers
- to look after and protect your physical and emotional health, and to make sure other people know what you need to be healthy.

It's really important to learn to look after your health and your school nurse can help you to do this. School nurses act as a link between school and other people, and can help make health services easier to reach. You can go and see your school nurse for lots of different reasons. Some of these reasons might be:

- to receive information and leaflets, for example, on how to give up smoking or for information about sex
- to talk about your health
- to de-stress and get emotional support, for example, if you have problems at home or with your friends
- if you have long-term health problems
- to learn how to examine yourself, for example, for breast cancer or testicular cancer
- to refer you to somebody else who can help you, for example, a doctor
- to talk about your weight and healthy eating.

# Services that school nurses provide

You can go and talk to your school nurse about anything. There are lots of services that school nurses provide. Here are a few that we think are really important.

- 1** To keep you safe if your health is at risk.
- 2** To organise immunisations and give advice on outbreaks of diseases that can be passed from one person to another.
- 3** To make sure young people with health problems are able to go to school, for example, if a young person is disabled or has problems with learning.
- 4** To make sure young people with health issues receive the right NHS care and specialist services.
- 5** To offer 'drop-in' sessions for young people where you can receive support and advice.
- 6** To help your teachers with PSHE lessons.
- 7** To provide training and advice for your teachers on specific health issues, for example, diabetes care, epilepsy, allergies.
- 8** To support you if you have emotional problems, for example, bullying or family issues.



# Services that school nurses may provide

School nurses provide different services depending on your local area. To find out what services your school nurse provides speak to your school nurse (details of how to contact your school nurse are at the end of this leaflet). Some school nurses can give help in the areas below. You could even talk to your school council about introducing these services at your school.

## **School nurses can:**

- 1** Offer support and advice to young people concerned with sexual identity issues.
- 2** Help young people to give up smoking.
- 3** Give support and advice to parents or carers on parenting skills.
- 4** Help teenage parents with emotional and practical support.
- 5** Provide parenting/babysitting skills training for teenagers.
- 6** Work in a particular area in which your school needs help, for example, teenage pregnancy or work with young asylum seekers.
- 7** Work with staff, young people and governors to develop health policies for your school, for example, to work on a policy about what food should be available at school or how much PE young people should do.
- 8** Help your school gain National Healthy School Status.

# Links to other services

School nurses know about other services for young people. If you ask your school nurse they can put you in touch with people from Connexions, drug action teams, social services or even the police. School nurses also work with other people, for example, they might run parenting groups with youth workers.

Sometimes you might feel like your school nurse doesn't spend much time at your school but this doesn't mean you won't be able to see them. School nurses can work with your local community. They might visit you at your home or invite you to come and see them in your local community centre. School nurses will try to provide services to young people and their families in lots of different locations. This means it will be easier for you and other young people to see your school nurse. It also means young people who do not go to school are able to see a school nurse.



**Speak to your school nurse to find out what is available in your area. Details of how to contact your school nurse are at the end of this leaflet.**



This section covers questions you might have about going to see your school nurse.

**QHow do I see my school nurse?**

**A** Some schools have a 'drop-in' clinic – this is when you can go and see a school nurse without an appointment. In other schools there are appointments for different year groups on different days of the week and in some schools you can make an appointment on any school day. Check with your school nurse how things could work for you. Details of how to contact your school nurse are at the end of this leaflet. There will also be posters in your school with details of how to contact your school nurse and you could even ask at your health clinic or doctor's surgery.



**QWhat will the school nurse do with the information I tell them?**

**A** When you talk to your school nurse you talk 'in confidence' this means the school nurse will not talk about what you have said to other people or to your school. However, if the school nurse is concerned about your safety, for example, if you say something that makes your school nurse think that you or someone else is in danger, the school nurse will have to tell somebody else. The school nurse will tell you if they need to do this.



**QWhat if my school nurse can't help me?**

**A** School nurses can give you lots of advice and information about different health issues. They have contact with lots of different people so there will always be someone who can help you. There are also some links to useful websites at the end of this leaflet so you might want to check those out too.

For information and advice about being healthy and looking after yourself or if you need someone to talk to you might find it helpful to look at the following websites:

**[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)** – confidential 24-hour helpline  
**[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)** – confidential advice and emotional support  
**[www.lifebytes.gov.uk](http://www.lifebytes.gov.uk)** – health information for 11-14-year-olds  
**[www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk](http://www.mindbodysoul.gov.uk)** – health information for 14-16-year-olds  
**[www.there4me.com](http://www.there4me.com)** – emotional support and information  
**[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)** – confidential advice and information on drugs  
**[www.need2know.co.uk/health](http://www.need2know.co.uk/health)** – health information and advice  
**[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)** – information on staying healthy  
**[www.ruthinking.co.uk](http://www.ruthinking.co.uk)** – information on safe sex and sex education  
**[www.teenagehealthfreak.org](http://www.teenagehealthfreak.org)** – information on health issues  
**[www.embarrassingproblems.com](http://www.embarrassingproblems.com)** – advice on problems that are difficult to talk about

If you know of any other websites or contacts you think might be helpful, then let your school nurse know and they will be able to share them with other young people.

Young NCB  
[www.youngncb.org.uk](http://www.youngncb.org.uk)

Healthy Schools  
[www.healthyschools.gov.uk](http://www.healthyschools.gov.uk)



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### Contact details for your school nurse

Details of how to contact your school nurse should be stuck here. If you can still read this then get in touch with your school nurse and ask them to provide their contact details for this space!