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What does this service provide?

Who we are

We are a team of occupational therapists, occupational therapy apprentices and occupational therapy assistants based at 5 [Child Development Centres](#) across Brighton and Hove and West Sussex.

What we do

Occupational therapists (OT) help children and young people under the age of 18 (up to 19 if in special education) to achieve or maintain their independence at home, nursery, or school. We assess and support the development of the skills children and young people need to carry out daily activities. These are called functional skills. Functional skill difficulties can significantly impact a child's ability to perform everyday activities. These can be due to physical, developmental, or sensory difficulties.

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers and the child's education setting to maximise a child's practical skills and independence.? This may include supporting the child or young person to carry out an activity programme that the service recommends or making sure specific strategies are included in their daily home and school routine.?

We support children and young people to participate in everyday life in several ways, including:?

- self-care tasks such as getting dressed, eating independently or using the toilet?
- participating in activities at nursery or school such as painting, using a pencil or scissors and sitting on the carpet?
- playing with friends or participating in hobbies.?

Advice may also include examples of how to change everyday tasks so that they are easier for the child or young person to do and suggestions for equipment to use to help them.?

Types of services provided

Universal service

This is the first stage of support. Families and professionals are able to access our advice packs and video series via our webpage without the need for a referral. Please see the 'Universal resources' section further down the page for more details.

Services requiring a referral?

This level of support is for children and young people who require a little more help or more targeted and specialist assessment and intervention. This may involve a time limited period of assessment, treatment or targeted advice, and may be provided within the home, clinic or education setting.? A referral is required to access this level of support.? In most cases we will require evidence that universal resources have been explored and strategies have been tried prior to making a referral.???

Please see the referrals section below for further details.?

Appointment information

Appointment information

We offer face-to-face appointments, as well as telephone and video or virtual appointments. Most occupational therapy assessment clinics take place at your local Child Development Centre. For Centre addresses, please see the 'Where Can I access this Service' section on the Child Development Centre main page.

We sometimes visit children in special schools, mainstream schools, nurseries, and in family homes in the community, depending on the need.

More detailed information about the date, time and location of your appointment can be found on your appointment letter.

During an assessment, our occupational therapist will be assessing/gathering information related to any functional difficulties outlined in the referral.

Who you'll see at your appointment

Your child will meet members of our team in an occupational therapist only clinic; which includes occupational therapists, occupational therapy apprentices and occupational therapy assistants/technicians, or within a multi-disciplinary clinic.

How can I access this service?

We accept referrals from healthcare and education professionals, for children and young people under the age of 18 years (up to 19 if in special education) who live in Sussex and are registered with a Brighton and Hove or West Sussex GP.

Parents can 're-refer' if the child or young person has previously been seen by an SCFT Occupational Therapist within the last 12 months by contacting the service directly.?

School aged referrals should include evidence of universal strategies already tried at home and within the education setting to address the areas of concern.? Universal support should be implemented for a period of at least 3 months (or one school term) prior to a referral being made.?

Exceptions to this may include children with more complex physical needs or identified neurological conditions.??

We accept referrals for children or young people who present with at least three functional difficulties?that are impacting upon participation in everyday activities.

Making a referral

- in order to avoid delay, the referrer should include evidence that universal strategies have been trialled prior to a referral being made. Exceptions to this may include children with more complex physical needs or identified neurological conditions
- for children with specific sensory difficulties, we ask that you watch the video series available further down the page and implement appropriate strategies for at least 3 months. If difficulties persist with no obvious improvement being made, then a referral to the service should be considered
- when a referral is accepted, an acknowledgement letter will be sent to the referrer and to the child's parents / carers

Referrals will not be accepted if:

- the referral is incomplete or there is not enough information to make a clinical decision
- the referral reasons given do not meet the referral criteria for the Occupational Therapy Service

A letter stating why the referral has not been accepted will be sent to the referrer and to the child's parents / carers.?

We are unable to accept referrals for the following:

- Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) assessments
- Ayres Sensory Integration (ASI) Therapy
- where the primary need is related to social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Please consider a referral to CAMHS or The Integrated Front Door For Families

Please see links in the resources section below.?

[Download the referral form](#)

How can I contact this service?

Once we've received the referral for your child, our team will contact you and provide you with the relevant contact information for your locality team. Further contact details for each location can be found below, please see the Child Development Services page for Child Development centre addresses, opening times and parking information.

[Visit the Child Development Services page](#)

Waiting times

We aim to see all patients within 18 weeks of receiving their referral.

Brighton and Hove

Contact details

Telephone: 01273 265 806**Email:** SC-TR.OTSeasideview@nhs.net

[Download the referral form](#)

Worthing

Contact details

Telephone: 01903 286 710**Email:** SC-TR.PaedOTWorthing@nhs.net

[Download the referral form](#)

Chichester

Contact details

Telephone: 01243 793 641**Email:** SC-TR.PaedOTChichester@nhs.net

[Download the referral form](#)

Hayward Heath

Contact details

Telephone: 01444 414 100**Email:** SC-TR.ChildrensOTMidSussex@nhs.net

[Download the referral form](#)

Crawley and Horsham

Crawley Child Development Centre contact details

Telephone: 01293 301010**Email:** SC-TR.ChildrensOTNorth@nhs.net

Hilltop Children's Unit contact details

Telephone: 01403 227 000**Email:** SC-TR.ChildrensOTNorth@nhs.net

[Download the referral form](#)

Where can I find resources for this service?

Universal resources

The following resources are designed to provide support and advice for children and young people who are experiencing difficulties with practical skills that are affecting how they participate in everyday activities. The resources should be used as a pre-referral problem solving tool to ensure that strategies have been tried before a referral to Occupational Therapy is made.

These resource packs and the video series are intended as a guide only and a referral to our occupational therapy service should be considered if:

- the need appears more complex, or the solutions offered have been trialed and there is no obvious improvement
- the child has an identified neurological condition which may require more specialist support
- the child has a degenerative condition, and their needs are changing

Additional resources

Brighton and Hove specific resources

- [Support for Children and Young People \(CYP\) - Brighton and Hove Wellbeing Service](#)
- [Front Door for Families](#)
- [Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service \(BHISS\)](#)

If your child needs an assessment for changes to be made at home to help them be safe and more independent, as well as to organise equipment, this is delivered by a different service. They need to be referred to the [social care occupational therapy service for children](#).

West Sussex specific resource

Where the primary need is related to social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Please consider a referral to CAMHS or The Integrated Front Door For Families. Please see links below:?

- [The West Sussex Integrated Front Door \(IFD\)](#)
- [SEND toolkit | Tools for schools](#)
- [Physical and sensory – including medical needs | Tools for schools](#)
- [Graduated approach to services for schools](#)

Additional support to address social, emotional and mental health difficulties is available via the following local services:?

- [Emotional wellbeing information and support](#)
- [Mental Health Support Team in Schools](#)
- [Youth Emotional Support Service \(YES\)](#)

Children and young people who require a housing report or assessment for changes to be made to the home environment and/or equipment provision should be referred to the [WSCC Lifelong Occupational Therapy Team](#).

Requests for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment should be directed to the [West Sussex SEN Assessment Team](#).

[Additional impartial advice and support.](#)

Children and young people who are at high risk of or have experienced a breakdown in their educational placement should be referred to the [Intensive Planning Team](#).

Additional advice to support Emotional Based School Avoidance is available to schools via the [EBSA toolkit](#).

Children and young people who require a housing report or assessment for changes to be made to the home environment and/or equipment provision should be referred to the [WSCC Lifelong Occupational Therapy Team](#).

Children's Occupational Therapy resource for primary schools

This resource has been designed by the Community Occupational Therapy Team, to focus on the most common functional difficulties identified within mainstream schools.

Occupational Therapy for Children

Sensory strategies and resource

A resource to support parents and education staff to address children's occupational therapy needs at home and school.

Occupational Therapy for Children

Sensory videos

The Occupational Therapy for Children Service has created a sensory video series, covering a range of practical advice.

Video Occupational Therapy for Children

Friends and family test

Have you received care or treatment from this service? Please complete one of our friends and family tests below to help us improve our services to you:

- [Brighton and Hove](#)
 - [Chichester](#)
 - [Crawley](#)
 - [Haywards Heath](#)
 - [Worthing](#)
-

Related Pages

Related pages

- [Child Development Services](#)
 - [Autism and social communication assessment pathway](#)
 - [Children's Specialist Nursing](#)
 - [Paediatric Myalgic Encephalomyelitis \(ME\) and Chronic Fatigue Service \(CFS\)](#)
 - [Physiotherapy Service for Children](#)
 - [Waves Weight Management Clinic](#)
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Get the best from your NHS

If you want to share a compliment, raise a concern or if you are just not sure who to speak to you can contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

Tell us what matters to you

[Find out more about PALS and share your feedback](#)

Link: <https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/services/occupational-therapy-for-children>