

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to provide you with an update and some assurances regarding NELFT's Community Children's Teams' current response in relation to COVID-19. During this period we have had to make some changes to the community paediatric and therapy services we provide so that we can support the critical and essential functions on the NHS. This means that in some areas the service we provide is slightly reduced or changed.

We will endeavour to reduce disruption as much as possible but a level of prioritisation will be required so that we can maintain a fair and equitable service that is as responsive as possible to the children that have the highest level of clinical need or that are at risk of long term harm should they lack access to medical or therapy intervention. Responding to initial information requests for Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and supporting children with established EHCPs will remain a priority to us as stipulated by the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer, NHS England. Irrespective of whether the child is currently physically attending school or not, the majority of contacts will be carried out virtually first where possible to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Our website has a wide range of resources and information that may be helpful for schools, nurseries or parents and can be found at: <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-essex-childrens-integrated-therapies>

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions on the contact details below:

Physiotherapy: please call 01277 695200 and leave a message or email Brentwood.IntegratedTherapyTeamAdmin@nelft.nhs.uk.

Speech and Language Therapy: please email BasildonChildrensTherapies.admin@nelft.nhs.uk and a member of our team will call you back.

Occupational Therapy: please contact the Children's OT Duty Desk if you need to speak to an OT about a child on 0300 300 1670 (Mon – Fri 10.00 – 1.00) or email ThurrockChildrenstherapies.Admin@nelft.nhs.uk.

Community Paediatricians Brentwood: please call 01277 695204 or email Brentwoodmedicaladmin@nelft.nhs.uk

Community Paediatricians Basildon: please call 01708 574322 or email BasildonMedicalAdmin@nelft.nhs.uk

Community Paediatricians Thurrock: please call 0300 300 1566 or email Thurrockmedicaladmin@nelft.nhs.uk

We foresee this being the situation until the end of the spring term at the earliest, but will keep you informed of any changes. We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience these changes might cause to you and your family.

Kind regards,



Michael Caruana Smith
Head of Children's Services Essex and Thurrock