



# Specialist Equipment Information for Schools

NOVEMBER 2016

## Current procedures and useful information

This leaflet provides information about accessing and maintaining specialist equipment for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for the following categories of school in Norfolk:

- Primary or secondary phase maintained mainstream schools.
- Primary or secondary academy schools.
- Primary or secondary free schools.
- Maintained complex needs schools.
- Academy special schools.
- Maintained nursery settings.

For the purpose of this document 'child' means child or young person.

The Dedicated Schools Grant provides the funding to ensure that school's fulfil their duties within the Equality Act 2010 regarding 'auxiliary aides and equipment' to enable reasonable adjustments to assist with access to the curriculum.

### Referrals

The process for getting specialist equipment for a child is as follows:

- School makes a referral to the Paediatric Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist (specialist) if the child is already known to the

service. Otherwise a medical referral will be needed from the school nurse to the specialist.

- The specialist carries out an assessment.
- For equipment below the financial threshold (£100 for mainstream schools and £250 for special/complex needs schools) the individual school will purchase the recommended equipment.
- For equipment above the financial thresholds, the specialist will send the request and copy of the assessment to NPS Group (who are commissioned on behalf of Norfolk schools to deliver the service).

The specialist and NPS will check if the equipment is in stock or whether it needs to be purchased.

- The specialist will undertake appropriate training once equipment has been delivered to the school.

**Loan Policy** All equipment is provided on a loan basis for the duration of the child's assessed needs. If a child moves to a school outside of Norfolk the specialist equipment should be returned to NPS.

Should the child's assessed need change, the equipment is no longer required or it becomes obsolete, the school should inform NPS. The equipment can be collected and recycled to be assessed for use for other children.

Schools must not keep equipment except where an OT assessment identifies the piece of equipment is suitable to meet the needs of another child in that school.

### **Repairs and Servicing of Specialist Equipment**

Schools are responsible for the upkeep and servicing of specialist equipment that Norfolk County Council lends them to support a child.

Where breakage or damage occurs through lack of care it is considered reasonable for the school to pay for the repairs.

Some schools have signed up to a Building Maintenance Programme Contract and these do include the servicing and inspection of hoists and changing tables.

All electric equipment should be charged for one hour a day to maintain the battery. The battery life will then be improved and will reduce the need for schools to pay for replacements that cost between £100 and £200.

Some batteries if allowed to go completely flat usually can't be charged and have to be replaced.

### **Moving and Handling Assessment / Staff Training**

To make a referral for a moving and handling assessment and/or for staff training please contact the Access and Services Team (AST). See Contact Info box for details.

Ideally for children with a September start date, referrals should be made around Easter time, one term in advance.

If the referral is approved by the AST, a specialist will arrange a suitable time to visit the school to carry out an assessment and/or staff training.

### **Safety and Maintenance of Standing Frames**

Please make sure you retain any manufacturer's handbook and tools or information that you receive with the standing frame.

The physiotherapist will set up the standing frame and give advice on how to position the child within it, making sure they are symmetrical and aligned correctly.

You will also be shown how to get the child safely in and out of the frame. If you are advised to hoist the child into the frame, please do so. Hoisting will help to protect your back and keep the child safe.

Keep the equipment clean, instructions will be in the handbook or the physiotherapist will advise. Discarded food, paint, sand or glue will all affect the ability to adjust the frame easily.

Although most standing frames have wheels, they are not intended as a mobility device and children should not be transported in them.

Do not leave a child unattended whilst they are using the standing frame.

Contact the physiotherapist if:

The child experiences pain or discomfort while standing.

You encounter difficulties safely positioning the child within the frame.

Anything on the equipment becomes displaced or the frame feels wobbly or loose.

The child has grown and the equipment needs adjusting.

### CONTACT INFO

If you have any queries, please contact one of the Commissioning Team:  
[robert.innes@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:robert.innes@norfolk.gov.uk)  
[emily.lown@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:emily.lown@norfolk.gov.uk)  
[sarah.cubitt@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.cubitt@norfolk.gov.uk)

### MAINTENANCE ENQUIRIES AND RECYCLING OF SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT

If you have unused equipment which can be recycled please contact Gary Underhill, F & E Technician at NPS Group [gary.underhill@nps.co.uk](mailto:gary.underhill@nps.co.uk)

01603 706117