



Early Years and Nursery

The aim of this factsheet is to give you information and guidance if your child is starting nursery school. It includes information on tackling special educational needs.

Sometimes nurseries are reluctant to take children with heart conditions because of concerns about how to care for them. If you have this problem, you can ask your child's cardiac liaison nurse to speak to the nursery staff. Cardiac liaison nurses can explain your child's heart condition to nursery staff and are normally able to reassure them about any concerns they may have.

Information for the nursery

It is important to give the nursery information about your child's heart condition such as:

- the name of your child's heart condition
- your child's medical history including details of all the surgery they have had
- the names of any drugs your child is taking
- any side effects of drugs (for example, going to the toilet often, sensitivity to the sun, bleeding or bruising)
- any symptoms your child may have such as blueness, tachycardia (a fast heartbeat), breathlessness and so on.

If your child does have symptoms such as blue spells, tiredness or breathlessness, explain to the staff what these mean and how best to deal with them. Again, your child's cardiac liaison nurse (CLN) can be very helpful as they are trained to advise teachers and can often visit schools and nurseries.

A MedicAlert bracelet can be a useful extra reminder about your child's heart condition and other specific information such as allergies. The MedicAlert bracelet is also useful in emergencies to let medical staff know about the problem. To find out more about these bracelets, phone: 01908 951 045 or visit www.medicalert.org.uk.



Special educational needs

Some children with heart conditions may also have developmental and learning delays, problems with communication or behaviour issues. If you think your child is experiencing difficulties like these, they may have what are called 'special educational needs'. This means that they will need extra support at nursery and maybe later on when they start school.

All nurseries must support children with special educational needs under the National Standards for Daycare. If you think your child will need extra support at nursery, you can ask to speak to your child's teachers or SENCO (special educational needs coordinator). They will discuss your child's needs with you and assess them.

To inform CHF of a comment or suggestion, please contact us via info@chfed.org.uk or Tel: 0300 561 0065.

Evidence and sources of information for this CHF information sheet can be obtained at:

- (1) Medic Alert. 2017. Available at: www.medicalert.org.uk
- (2) GOV.UK. Childcare and early education. London: GOV.UK; 2017. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/childcare-and-early-education>
- (3) National Day Nursery Association. London. 2017. Available at: www.ndna.org.uk

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