

# The Fylde Coast – School Age Neurodevelopment Pathway

ND Pathway Team

Information for Parents/Carers



## **What is the Fylde Coast School Aged Neurodevelopment Pathway?**

The Neurodevelopment Pathway (sometimes referred to as NDP or ND Pathway) is a process in which various professionals look at the needs of your child. It involves identifying your child's needs and providing support for children referred to the service with some difficulties that are outside of those that would be managed within individual services; this may include social communication difficulties. Parents/carers, schools and other professionals will be asked to identify your child's strengths and difficulties to form an all-round view of your child in different environments.

It is important to recognise that the pathway itself does not specifically offer any therapies or treatments. Rather, it allows for children and young people with a complex need to be considered by multiple agencies working together.

## **Who is involved?**

The Neurodevelopment Pathway team is made up of Paediatric Consultants, School staff, SENCO's, Speech and Language Therapists, the pathway Clinical Nurse Lead, Psychologist and the pathway admin team and navigators. The views of both parent/carers and staff from school are important in helping to understand the needs of your child. Once all of the information is available, professionals will come together and meet to discuss and identify your child's needs.

## **Why has my child been referred?**

Your child has been referred because you and a professional from health or education have noticed that your child has persistent difficulties affecting their everyday life in a number of different settings. You might have raised these concerns initially, or school may have spoken with you about their observations. All children must be referred by a professional to the Neurodevelopment Pathway, this might be a paediatrician, child and adolescent psychiatrist, SENCO, educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, speech therapist, school nurse, CAMHS practitioner or GP.

The professional who wishes to make a referral will ask for your consent to do so. They will also ask for your consent to allow information to be shared between other services, for example different health services and school. We also get consent to inform the SEND team and educational psychology for Blackpool.

## **What if my child isn't accepted onto the ND Pathway?**

On some occasions the referral is not accepted; in these cases the person who has made the referral is notified about this and the reason why it has not been accepted. They will then contact you to let you know.

## The ND Pathway Journey

The pathway is a need's (or problem) led integrated, multi-agency pathway for children and young people who are causing parental and professional concern and who require multiagency, specialist consideration of their neurodevelopment needs

Once accepted onto the ND Pathway there are four main stages along your journey, although the assessment may be stopped at any point along this journey should the Pathway Team receive enough information to make a decision:

Phase 1 - Understanding the Need

Phase 2 - Seeing the Paediatrician

Phase 3 - Further information

Phase 4 - The Multi-Agency Needs Led Discussion Meeting

All phases- Outcomes



Parent/carers will receive information & support throughout the journey.

## All phases - Outcomes

The pathway journey is always focussed on the needs of the child or young person. It is possible that at any point it will be identified that the best way to support the needs is outside of the pathway, based on the evidence gathered. As such, not all children will complete all four stages. It is also possible that the pathway may be paused if other priorities, and problems are identified and need addressing. For example, mental health or wellbeing needs or educational changes (such as a new school placement).

## PHASE ONE- Understanding the Need

The first phase of the pathway is to begin understanding your child's needs. The pathway Clinical Nurse Lead will contact you by telephone to explain the pathway process, answer any of your questions and identify what initial support could be offered to your child and your family. Information will then be gathered from yourself and from professionals.

**Information from home** - A questionnaire will be sent to you to complete detailing your observations of your child's strengths and difficulties when they are at home. You are also asked about previous problems, any assessments your child may have had and early development. Finally, there are some screening tools that are checklists recognised across the country as useful in gathering specific information. Please let the Clinical Nurse Lead know if you need help to complete these forms.

**Information from school** - A similar questionnaire will be sent to your child's school to get a better understanding of their strengths and difficulties whilst in a school setting. They will also detail any academic (key stage) results and may include formal information regarding education.

They will also be asked to complete recognised National screening tools in order to help the team understand your child's needs.

**SENCO** - specific information will also be gained from the school SENCO detailing their observations of your child's strengths and difficulties. Evidence of any approach/adjustments already made by the school (referred to as the **graduated approach**) would also be included.

### **Other relevant information**

It is possible that your child may have already been seen by other professionals prior to entering the neurodevelopment pathway. Reports from speech and language therapists, educational specialists, occupational therapists, CAHMS and mental health professionals or previous medical consultations will all be gathered to allow a complete picture of their needs.

## PHASE TWO – Seeing the Paediatrician

Once all the initial evidence has been gathered, the neurodevelopment team combine this with a full history from your child's hospital and community records and arrange for you to see a paediatric consultant who has expertise in assessing neurodevelopment needs. They will review all the evidence prior to meeting you.

In this meeting, they will ask about your concerns, try and explore gaps in the information gathered or clarify key points. They will also assess your child's neurodevelopment skills through interaction and conversation or sometimes ask the parent/carers questions.

At the end of this consultation, it is possible that sufficient evidence would have been gathered to identify a best way forward to meet your child's needs and in discussion with the Paediatrician you will exit the pathway at this point. If this happens the team will also contact you after your appointment to discuss what support may be available to help and support you and your child; this could be from the NHS or one of our Partner services.

## PHASE THREE – Further Information

The Paediatrician may feel that further information and multi-agency information is needed to better understand the difficulties that your child is experiencing. They could therefore refer for support or information from others, including:

- **Speech & Language Therapist**

A speech & language therapist with neurodevelopment expertise. They will assess your child's social communication strengths and difficulties. As this needs a child to interact, it is possible this could take more than one appointment or even in some cases need to be tried in different locations. It is always individualised to achieve the information needed to better understand the needs of your child.

- **Other specialities that may need to be involved**

CAMHS, clinical psychologists, educational psychologist, and specialist teaching services are some of the range of services that may be asked to provide information to the multi-agency needs led discussion meeting.

## PHASE FOUR – The Multi-Agency Needs Led Discussion Meeting

The multi-agency needs led discussion meeting will occur once all the relevant multi-agency information is complete. This meeting involves at least the following groups:

- A paediatrician with expertise in neurodevelopment
- A speech and language therapist with expertise in neurodevelopment
- An educator with understanding of special educational need (this could be a specialist teacher or your school SENCO)
- The Neurodevelopment team staff, including clinical lead nurse and administrative teams

Additionally, any and all relevant professionals are invited to give their own information, including:

- Any school staff best placed to present and discuss the information
- CAHMS practitioners
- An educational psychologist or clinical psychologists

They will discuss this information, identify your child's strengths and difficulties. They will also work together to try and produce a clear plan as to how your child's needs may be best supported moving forward.

It is also common that collectively they will agree on other actions or evidence that needs to be collected to better support and understand your child's needs. This would be arranged and your child then brought back to panel at a later date.

The professional group may also find significant evidence of a neurodevelopment condition and then apply a nationally recognised diagnostic tool to assess the evidence against. One example would be the Diagnostic Service Manual (DSM, current version V) criteria for assessing children for Autism. This can then allow clarification as to whether your child meets the criteria for diagnosis or whether they do not.

In all cases, your child's needs are at the centre of the discussions. An agreement on the best ways to support these needs is important, regardless as to whether a child is assessed as having a neurodevelopment permanent diagnosis or not. Suitable support from a range of organisations will be considered.

## ALL PHASES - Outcomes

At whatever point on the pathway, outcomes can be clarified. A further meeting will be arranged with the consultant to discuss this. At this appointment the Consultant will go through the information, talk about your child's strengths and difficulties, and tell you the outcomes and plan.

On the occasions when it is decided to wait for a set period of time and then review your child again, this will be discussed with you. This could be because the information they currently have isn't conclusive and the group feel that a period of waiting and a further review is required before a final decision is made on both understanding the needs and what methods are best to meet them.

The Clinical Nurse Lead will also contact you after your appointment to discuss what support may be available to help you, in order for you to help and support your child; this could be from the NHS or one of our Partner services. This support would be available for you **with or without a diagnosis** – it is recognised by the pathway team that whilst a diagnosis may not always be made, to have progressed along the pathway is evident that there are some needs and support your child and family will need.

## The Pathway Journey at a Glance

### Triage

- Referral received - accepted or rejected
- Families notified if accepted and Clinical Lead Nurse will telephone
- Professional that referred notified if rejected with rationale, information and support

### Phase 1

- Information requested from home, SENCO, school & other specialties already involved with your child
- Once all received combined with any NHS hospital & community history

### Phase 2

- Appointment with the Paediatrician
- Sufficient evidence may support an exit of the pathway at this point

### Phase 3

- Other professionals may be asked to see your child and provide further information

### Phase 4

- Multi-agency needs led group comes together to discuss all of the information
- A decision will be made how all agencies can work together to better support your child
- A plan will be made to demonstrate show this will happen

### Outcomes - all phases

- Further appointment with the Paediatrician to go through the decision making and plan from the mutli-agency needs led discussion meeting
- Clinical Nurse Lead will contact you to further explore ways to help you to support your child

### Support - all phases

- Local Offer
- Contact the Pathway Team
- Signposting to help and support services within the NHS and our Partners

## SUPPORT - The Local Offer

Throughout the Neurodevelopment Pathway process, you may have questions about how your child will be supported before, during and after the pathway. It is important to recognise that the pathway itself does not specifically offer any therapies or treatments. Rather, it allows complex needs to be considered by multiple agencies working together. As such, it is almost certain that most children referred will already have support occurring from agencies through education or the community.

Every Local Authority has a 'Local Offer'. This is information of every service and organisation that can support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families.

If you live in Fylde or Wyre search for the 'Local Offer' at [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

If you live in Blackpool search for the 'Local Offer' at [Blackpool local offer - FYi Directory](#)

### The Pathway Team contact details:

## Questions to Ask my Health or Pathway Team



## Other sources of information:



### ND Pathway Team

Telephone: **01253 952852** and **01253 952503**



### Hospital switchboard

Telephone: **01253 300000**

## Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives.



You can contact them via tel: **01253 955589**

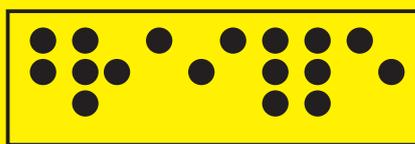
or by email: **bfwh.patientrelations@nhs.net**



Further information is available on our website:

**www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955520**



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Date of Publication: **18/05/2022**

Reference No: **PL/1378**  
Review Date: **01/05/2025**