

HERTFORDSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE
REFERRAL GUIDELINES

*In the first instance parents/carers and professionals are advised to access the resources and activity sheets on our website
<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-occupational-therapy/>*

Under 1;6 years			
Children under 1;6 years will be starting to co-ordinate their movements during everyday activities such as dressing and eating. They will be using both hands during play with toys.			
	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Struggles to hold arms or feet out for parent when being dressed.</p> <p>Unable to drink from a cup, even with adult assistance.</p> <p>Not holding a spoon and attempting to self-feed. Likely to be very messy.</p>	<p>Struggles to hold a large crayon/chalk/marker and make a mark on paper.</p>	<p>Struggles to hold toys in their hands.</p> <p>Not using both hands to explore toys.</p> <p>Not yet able to throw/cast a ball.</p> <p>Not yet able to manipulate blocks/cubes and place one on top of another to make a tower of 2.</p>
By 2;0 years			
Children aged 1;6years to 2;0years will become more independent with daily activities, but will still need adult assistance with many daily tasks such as brushing teeth and eating. They may begin to show a preference for using one hand more than the other.			

	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Struggles to take shoes, socks or a hat off. May find putting a hat or shoe on difficult.</p> <p>Not yet able to hold a brush to attempt brushing teeth or hair.</p> <p>Not yet able to hold a spoon and bring food to their mouth.</p> <p>Not yet able to hold a cup with both hands and bring to up to drink.</p>	<p>Struggles to grip a pen/crayon/marker and make scribbles or dots or lines.</p>	<p>Not yet able to build a tower of three blocks.</p> <p>Finds it difficult to carry small toy items whilst walking.</p> <p>Struggles to throw a ball overarm and forwards without falling over.</p>
By 3;0 years			
Children aged 2;0 – 3;0 years will be able to manage more items of clothing and need less assistance with daily activities, such as toileting and washing. They are developing their ability to use pens/pencils and their ability to manipulate building blocks in play is improving.			
	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Struggles to pull trousers/underwear down.</p> <p>Not yet able to put on a hat or shoes.</p> <p>Struggles to unbutton large buttons.</p>	<p>Finds it difficult to hold a pencil/pen.</p> <p>Struggles to copy a circle shape and simple crossing lines.</p> <p>Not yet able to copying cutting with toy scissors.</p>	<p>Struggles to build block towers of up to 9 or build a simple 'bridge' with three blocks.</p> <p>Not yet able to catch a large ball between their extended arms.</p>

	Finds it difficult to use a fork and spoon to feed themselves.		Struggles to throw a small ball forwards without falling over.
By 4;0 years			
Children will be able to dress and undress, although will still need help for buttons and fastenings. They are able to independently eat and wash their hands. They are developing their simple drawing skills and are able to play with a ball.			
	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Not yet able to pull clothes off or on.</p> <p>Struggles to brush their own teeth, wash or dry their hands.</p> <p>Not yet able to eat with a spoon and fork.</p>	<p>Struggles to hold a pencil/pen with a tripod grip.</p> <p>Not yet able to copy cross shapes or attempt drawing a simple stick person.</p> <p>Struggles to use scissors, even with adult assistance.</p>	<p>Not yet able to use building blocks to create a bridge with three blocks or copy building three 'steps'.</p> <p>Struggles to throw, catch or bounce a ball.</p>
By 5;0 years			
Children are independent in most daily activities, although they will still be developing their skills. They are developing their handwriting and cutting skills, as well as building models with building materials.			
	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Finds it difficult to put socks and shoes on.</p> <p>Not yet able to toilet independently.</p> <p>Struggles to assist with brushing teeth/hair or washing themselves.</p>	<p>Not yet able to copy a square or letter shapes used in their name.</p> <p>Struggles to cut out simple shapes along a broad line even with adult assistance.</p>	<p>Not yet able to build models using several building items.</p> <p>Not yet able to play a range of games with a ball.</p>

By 8;0 years			
Children will be more effective using a pen/pencil and scissors. They will know familiar routines and be able to complete tasks within these.			
	CARE ACTIVITIES	FINE MOTOR SKILLS	PLAY & ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS
Refer to Occupational Therapy if...	<p>Finds it difficult to dress and undress themselves.</p> <p>Not yet able to toilet independently.</p> <p>Struggles to wash themselves independently.</p> <p>Not yet able to use a knife and fork independently.</p>	<p>Not yet writing upper and lower case letters and struggles to write on the line and/or with sizing of letters.</p> <p>Struggles to use scissors or tools such as a ruler independently.</p>	<p>Struggles to know where their body is to co-ordinate their body movements e.g. during PE activities.</p> <p>Struggles to complete familiar routines at home or school.</p> <p>Not yet able to pack a bag with items for a known event e.g. going to school, although may still need adult assistance.</p>