Children's nurse

Child nursing involves everything from nursing a sick newborn to an adolescent road accident victim. You'll need to consider the care and support needed by the wider family, including parents and carers.

Why choose children's nursing

There are many reasons why you should consider a career as a children’s nurse. It offers you the chance to make a difference, a high degree of flexibility and a career with excellent employment prospects.

"To be able to go into that situation and be able to help calm the child down and assure the parent that everything was ok was incredible." Ewout, a student children's nurse.

Read Ewout's story in full [1]

Working life
Nursing a child is not just a question of caring for a small adult. Children have very specific health needs and you need to understand how a healthy child develops towards adulthood to minimise the impact of illness. This involves working in closely with the parents or guardians.

Communication is a factor when treating children. Adults can express their feelings and can identify the severity and nature of pain. A child may not be able to communicate this in such detail and the nurse needs to interpret child’s behaviour and reactions. Children's nurses need to be able to spot when a child's health takes a turn for the worse, which can often happen rapidly.

A child’s care takes place in a range of settings including hospitals, day care centres, clinics and in the community such as child's home.

Children's nurses are part of multidisciplinary teams that look after patients. You will be at the centre of teams that include doctors, hospital play staff, healthcare assistants, newborn hearing screeners, psychologists and social workers.

*I've been well guided and supported in my career choices to date, and the job I now do is one-of-a-kind*. Katie Ryan, practice educator

Read Katie’s story [2]

**Entry requirements**

To become an children's nurse the main route is through a degree course at university. Entry requirements for these courses can vary depending on where and how you’d like to study so it's important to check with universities. You can find a child nursing course to suit you using our Course Finder tool [3]. [3]

Typically you'll need a minimum of five GCSEs at grade 4/C or above, possibly in English language or literature and a science subject, plus two A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications for an undergraduate degree. Some universities may ask for three A levels or equivalent. If you already have a degree, you might be able to study for a postgraduate qualification.

There are other routes into child nursing such as nurse degree apprenticeships and nursing associate apprenticeships.

**New annual payments**

You'll be entitled to receive at least £5,000 a year towards your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back.

**Other routes into children's nursing**

Nursing degree apprenticeships are available with some employers and numbers are expected to continue to grow. Increasing opportunities to apply for nursing associate apprenticeships [4] are also expected. This can lead to nursing degrees or nurse degree apprenticeships.

**Must have skills**

Don’t forget - academic qualifications aren’t everything. Communication and interpersonal skills are crucial,
as well as strong judgement, be able to teach advise and manage people.

If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or a university course, you'll be asked to show how you think the values of the NHS Constitution [5] apply in your everyday work.

**Training and career development**

Once you have qualified as a children's nurse, there are a wide range of opportunities. You could specialise in a certain field such as health visiting or school nursing. You may want to move into management, teaching or clinical research.

**Pay and benefits**

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours on shift pattern which can include nights, early starts, evenings, weekends and bank holidays. As a child nurse, you’ll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [6], typically starting at band 5.

You’ll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave plus bank holidays.

- Live vacancies
  
  Expand / collapse
  
  ○ View Vacancy [7]

**Registered Paediatric Nurse**

Kettering General Hospital, Kettering, NN16 8UZ

- **Salary:**

  £24,907 - £30,615 per annum pro rota

- **Type:**

  Permanent

- **Employer:**

  Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

  ○ View Vacancy

**Paediatric Nurse**
Worcester, WR5 1DD

- **Salary:**
  - £15.66 to £25.05 p/h

- **Type:**
  - Bank

- **Employer:**
  - NHS Professionals - Flexible Workers

  - View Vacancy
  - View Vacancy [9]

**Paediatric Nurse**

London, SE22 8EF

- **Salary:**
  - £27.00 to £33.00 an hour

- **Type:**
  - Locum

- **Employer:**
  - Central Advertising - Other

  - View Vacancy
  - View Vacancy [10]

**Paediatric Nurse**

Aylesbury, HP19 8JR

- **Salary:**
£22.00 to £25.00 an hour

- **Type:**
  Permanent

- **Employer:**
  Central Advertising - Other

- View Vacancy
  - View Vacancy [11]

**Paediatric Nurse**

Moorfields - St George's Hospital, London, Tooting, SW17 0QT

- **Salary:**
  £37,638 - £44,780 Per annum inclusive of HCAS

- **Type:**
  Permanent

- **Employer:**
  Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy
  - View Vacancy [12]

**Paediatric Nurse - Nights**

Aylesbury, HP19 8JR

- **Salary:**
  £25.00 an hour

- **Type:**
Interested in nursing?

We’ll send you free, expert advice on starting a nursing career.

Let's go [13]

Other roles that may interest you

- Neonatal nurse [14]
- Health play staff [15]
- Health visitor [16]
- Healthcare assistant [17]