

CHILDREN'S NURSE

Children's nurses provide care for children and young people with acute or long-term health problems.

Entry requirements

You could get into this job through an apprenticeship and then take a child nursing degree.

You'll need a degree in children's nursing, leading to registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

You'll need to pass occupational health checks and background checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

You may be able to get NHS funding to pay for your course fees and help with your living expenses.

Volunteering and Experience

Relevant paid or voluntary experience may help when applying for a degree in children's nursing.

Skills and Knowledge

You'll need:

- good observational skills
- the ability to make decisions and act quickly when you notice changes in children's health
- the ability to comfort, reassure and gain children's trust
- excellent listening skills
- the authority and confidence to deal with children or parents in stressful circumstances
- the ability to teach parents or carers basic nursing skills

What you'll do

Your day-to-day tasks may include:

- working with doctors to assess the needs of ill, injured or disabled children
- deciding what level of nursing care is required
- working closely with parents and carers to help them cope with having an ill child in hospital, and how to care for them after returning home
- interpreting children's behaviour to recognise if their health has become worse

The help you give could include:

- checking temperatures
- measuring blood pressure and breathing rates
- helping doctors with physical examinations
- giving drugs and injections
- cleaning and dressing wounds
- carrying out blood transfusions and drips (intravenous drips)
- using hi-tech medical equipment

You'll work closely with other professionals including healthcare assistants, doctors, social workers and hospital play specialists.

Salary Guide

Starter: £22,000 to £28,500

Experienced: £26,000 and £41,000

Highly Experienced: £41,000 or more

Typical Hours per week

37.5 hours

You could be required to work

Evenings, Weekends, Night Shifts and Bank holidays.

Working Environment

You'll work in a special children's hospital or hospice, on a children's ward in a general hospital or, after further training, in paediatric intensive care. You could also work at a GP practice or child health clinic.

Career Path and progression

With experience, you could go on to specialise in an area like burns and plastics, child protection, cancer care, neonatal nursing or intensive care.

You could also progress to sister, ward manager or team leader with responsibility for running a ward or a team of nurses in the community. You could go on to other management roles, like matron or director of nursing.

You could train as a health visitor, neonatal or school nurse, or practice nurse in a doctor's surgery.