

B4 SCHOOL CHECK: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

18 August 2008

What is the B4 School Check?

The B4 School Check is a free check available to groups of children turning four. The Check helps to make sure your child is healthy and can get the most benefit from school. It is a chance to discuss your child's health and development with a nurse.

The B4 School Check is the final Well Child check. It is not designed to pick up every health problem your child might have, so if you have any concerns about your child at any time, talk to your family doctor.

We want you to be involved. We need your help to fill out two questionnaires about your child's development and behaviour. An early childhood educator or teacher who knows your child well will also be asked to fill out the behavioural questionnaire. Your child will also have their vision and hearing tested.

How does my child get a B4 School Check?

Your local B4 School Check provider will invite you and your child to attend and will ask for your consent before a check will begin.

How does the B4 School Check happen?

The B4 School Check usually takes about 45–60 minutes. Most of it will be done by a nurse with you there because you know your child best. Your child's eyesight and hearing will usually be tested by vision and hearing technicians, and this test may happen separately.

If you or the nurse think your child has a possible problem or difficulty, the nurse will discuss this with you and offer to refer you to other services that may help. The nurse can also help if your child has missed out on any immunisations.

What happens after the B4 School Check?

After your child has had their B4 School Check the nurse will discuss the Check with you and you can get a copy of the results. If your child has a Well Child Tamariki Ora Health Book, bring it along to the B4 School Check and the nurse will fill out the details.

If your child needs anything more, the nurse will offer to refer them to another service. This could be to another nurse, a doctor, a specialist such as a paediatrician or speech–language therapist, the dental service, or someone who can help with behavioural problems. If a referral is needed you will be asked for your permission to pass on your child's information.

What happens to information collected as part of the B4 School Check?

The results of your child's B4 School Check will be given to your family doctor. Only the vision and hearing test results will be given to his/her early childhood education centre, kōhanga reo, and/or school. The sharing of further information will need your permission.

Your child's name, date of birth, ethnicity and National Health Index (NHI) number will be recorded by your B4 School Check provider and stored in the national information system along with the results of the Check.

Any information stored can only be accessed by properly authorised people who are working with your child; co-ordinating the B4 School Check, or who are managing the information system.

At the B4 School Check the nurse will explain what happens to the information collected, who will have access to it, and what will be shared with your family doctor, early childhood centre or kōhanga reo, and the school your child is going to attend or attends.

Will the B4 School Check mean the five-year-old (new entrant) checks are phased out?

Yes, the B4 School Check replaces the new entrant checks which have been offered in many areas. However children who may miss having a B4 School Check when they are four years old will have another opportunity to get the Check when they start school.

What were the findings from the B4 School Check pilot?

A pilot of the B4 School Check ran from August to November 2007 and an evaluation showed high levels of approval and support from parents for the check.

- 98 percent of parents would recommend the B4 School Check to their friends and family
- 99 percent felt the check was delivered in a culturally appropriate manner
- 92 percent of parents had a high level of satisfaction from the B4 School Check.

Where will the checks take place?

This will vary between DHBs depending on who has been contracted to provide the services. The checks could take place at a doctor's clinic, a preschool, a kōhanga reo, or another community centre (or at school).

How long will each check take?

Most checks will take between 45 to 60 minutes.

Who will do the checks?

The B4 School Check will be delivered by a variety of providers, including practice nurses, public health nurses, Maori and Pacific providers, Well Child Tamariki Ora providers, and vision/hearing technicians. .

When will be checks be available in my area?

Phased service delivery will be underway from September 2008 onwards.

For more information about the B4 School Check:

- talk to your family doctor or nurse, Well Child Tamariki Ora provider or public health nurse
- visit the Ministry of Health's website (www.moh.govt.nz/b4schoolcheck)
- call the free 24-hour health advice service Healthline (0800 611 116), which includes a Well Child line that provides parenting advice and health education information.