

Your child has been referred for NHS Orthodontic Assessment

Your dentist has decided to refer your child to see an orthodontist about the alignment of their teeth and/or bite. At this assessment the orthodontist may feel that your child needs to have braces. They will discuss this fully with you so a decision about the right treatment can be made.

There are three main reasons for having orthodontic treatment: -

- To improve how the teeth and gums work.
- To improve the health of the teeth and gums.
- To improve the appearance of the teeth.

To receive NHS orthodontic treatment patients need to be assessed by an orthodontist using a special index called the Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN). When the index is measured at or above a level set by national guidance, it is clinically appropriate for them to receive NHS orthodontic treatment. Your dentist believes that this is applicable to your child and that a referral to an orthodontist to confirm this is needed.

You can choose the orthodontist who you would wish your child to see and your dentist can help you to choose if you would like them to. If you would like your child to see a particular orthodontist please let your dentist know when the referral is made. If you or your dentist don't have a preference they can refer your child to the nearest orthodontist with the shortest wait.

Your dentist will send a referral letter to the Hampshire Orthodontic Central Referral Centre. The referral centre may contact you to advise that alternative orthodontists have shorter waiting times. You can choose at that time to continue to wait or move your referral to an alternative orthodontist.

Your child must continue to have regular appointments with their own dentist as they need to work with the orthodontist throughout treatment. Failure to keep appointments with the dentist may mean that the orthodontist is unable to complete NHS treatment.

The orthodontist will contact you to arrange an appointment for a consultation with your child.

At the initial appointment the orthodontist will examine your child's teeth and mouth.

Your child should be accompanied by a parent or guardian and at the appointment the orthodontist will examine the mouth and teeth using a small mouth mirror and a ruler. X-rays, photographs and moulds (impressions) may also be taken. All of these measurements and records will help the orthodontist decide what the best treatment for your child is. They will then decide if your child does need orthodontic treatment.

If the orthodontist feels that your child would benefit from NHS orthodontic treatment, and they are suitable for treatment, they will discuss the options for braces with you and your child. If you disagree with this assessment your dentist can provide details of how an appeal can be made.

Braces will not be fitted at this first visit but further appointments will be arranged with you so the orthodontist can fit the braces.

Once treatment has started it is important that your child attends all appointments booked with the orthodontist and completes treatment at the practice. Failure to do so may mean that your child is no longer able to receive NHS orthodontic treatment.

If you have any questions regarding your child's orthodontic treatment please discuss these with your child's orthodontist or dentist.