

Press Release

28 April 2022

BSPD promotes prevention focused approach to children's oral health

In response to news today that a school in West Yorkshire has brought in dental charity support, Professor Claire Stevens CBE, BSPD Spokesperson said:

BSPD believes that every child and young person should be able to access preventively focused, NHS dental services by their first birthday – a Dental Check by One (<https://dentalcheckbyone.co.uk>) and from thereon have a 'dental home' – an ongoing relationship with their care provider. We recognise that the current dental contract doesn't work for children.

The pandemic has shone a harsh spotlight on some long-standing issues including the persistent and immoral inequalities we see in children's oral health. Our members, many of whom were redeployed to support the nation-wide covid response, are working hard to recover children's dental services equitably and fairly but this will take time. In some regions our teams are working at 180% of pre-covid capacity as we strive to reduce the currently unacceptable waiting times for procedures under general anaesthesia.

The oral health of children and young people must be prioritised, and new models of care explored. In particular, the development of Child Friendly Dental Practice schemes with the upskilling and contractually enabling of primary care colleagues should allow children to receive evidence-based care closer to home.

Ends

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About BSPD

- The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD) has an established place in the dental profession thanks to the dedication of dentists stretching back over almost 70 years. BSPD's mission is to improve the oral health of children and young people. The Society's executive committee provides strategic direction in line with our 3-year plan and oversees our engagement with other special interest groups and political decision makers. BSPD is now in a strong position to campaign for and implement improvements in children's oral health in the UK.
- BSPD membership has grown steadily over the last few years with a broadened profile. Anyone in the dental profession with an interest in children's oral health is welcome to join the Society. There are full and associate membership categories which encompass our growing groups of members. These include dentists, dental care professionals (DCPs), dental and DCP students, international members and all members of the dental team. We are clear that you do not need to have a dental qualification to be a member of BSPD, just a genuine passion for children's dentistry. Discover more at <https://www.bspd.co.uk>