



Committed to promoting the development of children's nursing through evidence based information about practice and education

## **Association of British Paediatric Nurses Position Statement on Children's Nurse Education**

### **Introduction**

Children's nursing across the UK is a story of evolving care, professionalism, and specialisation since the first formal paediatric nursing programme was set up in 1899 at the London Hospital. It reflects broader changes in medical care, social attitudes towards children<sup>1</sup>, and the development of nursing as a profession. Children's nursing education is now integrated into university nursing degree programmes.

The key requirements for children's nurse registration are completion of an NMC-approved degree programme in children's nursing. Programmes typically last for three years and must cover the NMC standards of proficiency for nurses, ensuring students develop the skills and knowledge needed for safe and effective practice.

### **Association of British Paediatric Nurses (ABPN) Position**

ABPN have contributed to the debate on the education and training of children's nurses ever since their inception in 1938 and continue to iterate the need for a recognition of the specific needs of children and their families.

For over a century nursing regulatory agencies have recognised the need for children's nursing to be different from general nursing. The knowledge, skills and competencies required to care for children and young people is different.

ABPN firmly believe that field specific<sup>2</sup> preparation of nurses is essential, whether that is for providing child centred care within family focused settings, supporting children and young people facing mental health challenges, managing consent, legal and ethical issues or dealing with the unique nature of paediatric conditions whether in an acute setting or in the community, including home, school and children's hospices.

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<sup>1</sup> The term child/children is used to describe infants (including neonates), children and young people up to the age of 25 years

<sup>2</sup> In the UK, nurses study a specific field of practice as part of their nursing degree and each field has a specific type of registration with us. There are four fields of nursing: adult nursing; children's nursing; learning disabilities nursing; mental health nursing

It is imperative to retain the safeguards to prepare sufficient numbers of registered children's nurses to care for children, at present that is through field specific education, with appropriate clinical placements and support from practice supervisors and assessors to ensure that practice learning complies with the NMC Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education.

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