

SAPHNA Launches New Best Practice Guidance to Support Nurses Working in Independent and Directly-Employed School Settings

Friday 13 June, 2025

The School and Public Health Nurses Association (SAPHNA) has today launched its *Best Practice Guidance: Employment of Nurses by Schools* — a new resource to support nurses employed by independent (fee-paying) schools and state-funded schools that directly employ a nurse.

Nurses working in these settings undertake a vital and varied role, which may include supporting pupils with health conditions, administering medicines, delivering first aid, safeguarding, providing emotional wellbeing and mental health support, and contributing to the PSHE curriculum.

Public health is central to their practice — whether or not they hold the Specialist Community Public Health Nurse (SCPHN) qualification — and these nurses are well placed to positively influence the health and wellbeing of individual pupils and whole school communities.

Recognising the diversity of school settings and needs, SAPHNA's new guidance provides a flexible, best-practice framework to help schools develop high-quality and safe nursing provision. It is designed to support:

- Headteachers, governors and school leaders seeking to develop or review their nursing provision
- Nurses working in or considering roles within independent and directly-employed school settings
- Effective planning and delivery of safe, professional and cost-effective school nursing services
- Improved health, wellbeing and educational outcomes for children and young people

Sallyann Sutton, Professional Officer for SAPHNA, commented:

"We know that nurses working in schools are a lifeline for many children and young people — providing care, compassion and clinical expertise in complex and often isolated roles. We hope this guidance will be a valuable tool for both schools and nurses in shaping services that are safe, effective and truly centred on the needs of pupils."

While not mandatory, the guidance draws on professional standards from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and expert consensus from nurses working in the sector. It can also be used to inform recruitment, role development, contractual considerations and quality assurance.

For nurses working in these settings — and the schools that employ them — SAPHNA offers further support through its membership, providing access to advice, professional development and a national peer network.

The Best Practice Guidance: Employment of Nurses by Schools is available now at:
<https://saphna.co/independent-school-nursing/>

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E. info@saphna.co

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