

VISION SCREENING IN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) SCHOOLS

WHY DO WE TEST VISION OF SEN CHILDREN EVERY YEAR IN SCHOOL?

Research has shown that children with SEN are more likely to develop vision problems. Vision problems can impact on behaviour and learning. It is therefore recommended that children with SEN undergo a specialist vision assessment by an Orthoptist. The familiar school environment is often an ideal setting to carry out these assessments. It also means that children do not need to be brought to the clinic and more comfortable with their surroundings.

WHAT TESTS WILL MY CHILD HAVE IN SCHOOL?

All children who attend an SEN school are offered a vision assessment with an Orthoptist. Parents are able to opt out the service via consent letters which are sent out before each assessment. Once consent is obtained, the child will have a vision assessment, any children suitable for outside opticians are discharged to their care. Those that are not, are followed up at least yearly.

You can read on what an orthoptist does here: [What is an Orthoptist? - British and Irish Orthoptic Society](#)

WHICH SCHOOLS DOES THIS SERVICE COVER?

The Community Eye Service provides full orthoptic vision screening in special schools.

Primary schools covered: Springside, Newlands primary and Millwood.

Secondary schools covered: Redwood secondary school and Elmsbank.

Any children already under the care of another eyecare provider is not screened. They are monitored on a regular basis depending on their need. Once at High School the need for Orthoptic involvement is usually less.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY CHILD'S VISION IS REDUCED OR A PROBLEM IS SUSPECTED?

If vision is found to be reduced in one or both eyes, or if a problem is suspected, a glasses and eye health appointment will be arranged in school or community clinics. This appointment will be with an Optometrist (Optician). Eye drops are usually required to dilate the pupil (so that a full and accurate assessment can be done). Parents will need to sign for eye drops if required. Parents are invited to attend the Optometrist appointment in school, if they wish, but do not have to if consent has been provided. If your child needs a further assessment they can be referred to an Ophthalmologist (eye doctor) which will be in a hospital.

DO THE EYE DROPS MAKE MY CHILD'S VISION BLURRY?

Your child's vision may be blurred for several hours, and it can take up to 30 minutes for the drops to work.

WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS GLASSES?

Your child will be provided with a prescription (voucher). This can be taken to a dispensing Optician or Optometrist in the high street. The optician will take measurements and help choose comfortable glasses that fit your child properly. There is no need for another eye test. Children's glasses should be worn all day every day unless otherwise advised by a health professional.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD BREAKS THEIR GLASSES OR THE FRAME DOES NOT SUIT?

If the glasses are broken and need to be repaired, you will have to go to the same opticians where you have given your voucher and they should be able to repair them for you if the voucher is in date. Some vouchers may last a year, and some may only last between 3-6 months, this will be clarified when given. You can also go to your own opticians to change the frame if it is not suitable for your child's face, this will be investigated by your opticians who will then decide if the frame is suitable or not. Once you have chosen to give the voucher to the opticians, you will not be able to get glasses elsewhere until the voucher expires.

WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS TWO PAIRS OF GLASSES?

Please ask the orthoptist or optician if you feel this is needed due to your child's condition. The orthoptist/optician will be able to advise you if your child is suitable or eligible for this.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments!

We are always interested to hear your views and feedback. If you have any comments about our leaflets or service, please scan QR code below.



Please ask your nurse or doctor if you have any further questions.

Next review date: January 2024

Responsible clinician/author: Jehad Hassan - Orthoptist

© northern care alliance NHS Trust - <https://www.northerncarealliance.nhs.uk/>