



Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Eye tests for children

Information for parents and carers



Orthoptic Department,  
Oxford Eye Hospital

**It is important for all children to have their eyes checked at the earliest opportunity, if there is any concern about their vision. Otherwise, they should have a routine vision screening test at 4-5 years of age.**

## **School Vision Screening**

This is provided by the Oxfordshire Orthoptic Service and carried out by one of the Orthoptists based at Oxford Eye Hospital.

**All children, whether they go to a state or private school, are offered a vision screening check during their first year at school.** This checks their vision, eye alignment, eye co-ordination and binocular (3D) vision.

If your child does not pass this test they will be referred to either the Oxford Eye Hospital service or you will be advised to take them to a local Optician (Optometrist).

## **What should I do if I am concerned about my child's eyes before this time?**

Speak to your GP or Health Visitor, who will refer your child to the Oxford Eye Hospital service. They will be seen by one or more of the Eye Team. This may be the Orthoptist, Optometrist or Ophthalmologist.

We also have a service at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.

It may be possible for your child to be seen at one of our Community clinics. These are held at Abingdon, Bicester, Didcot, Wantage and Witney.

## **I am worried that my baby's eyes aren't straight and they seem to have a squint. What should I do?**

Your baby should be seen by an Orthoptist. Speak to your Health Visitor or GP, who can make a direct referral to the Orthoptic Service. This will be at the Oxford Eye Hospital, the Horton General Hospital in Banbury or at one of our Community clinics.

## **My child missed their school eye test. What should I do?**

Take your child to a local Optician (Optometrist) to be checked. They will be able to make an onward referral to the Oxford Eye Hospital service, if needed. Eye tests for children are free.

## **I have older children who were checked when they were younger. Do they need regular eye checks?**

Regular checks with an Optician are advisable; at least once every 2-3 years. If your child complains of vision problems, has symptoms which you think may be eye related or you have any other concerns about their eyes, you should take them to a local Optician sooner than their next routine review. Alternatively, you can speak to your child's GP.

## **I am short sighted and started wearing glasses in my teens. Should I get my teenage son/daughter checked?**

The need for glasses often runs in families, so it would be advisable for your child to be checked by a local Optician. Short sight often does not develop until later on and your child may have passed their first school vision screening without a problem.

# My child often confuses their colours. How do I get this checked?

If there are concerns about your child's colour vision, an Optician can perform a screening colour vision test (Ishihara test). The test is easier to do once a child reaches 5 or 6 years of age, as they will need to know some numbers. The Optician can then refer your child to the Optometry Department at the Oxford Eye Hospital for further assessment, if there are any concerns.

## How to contact us

If you have any further questions please call the Eye Hospital.

Tel: **01865 234 567**

and listen to the options for the Orthoptic Department or Optometry Department

8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday

If you need an interpreter or would like this information leaflet in another format, such as Easy Read, large print, Braille, audio, electronically or another language, please speak to the department where you are being seen. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter.

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