

Glasses for children

Information for parents and carers



Outstanding
Care for One+All

Who is this leaflet for?

Your child has been referred to the hospital optometrist (optician) who will examine the health of their eyes and carry out a test called refraction – this is to see if your child will need glasses.

This test usually requires drops called cyclopentolate, which you will have been given prior to the appointment. These drops will make the pupils become larger (dilate) and it will relax their eye muscles temporarily. The drops take around 30 minutes to work and your child may notice that their vision stays blurred for a few hours after the drops have been administered.

How can the optometrist tell if my child needs glasses?

The optometrist uses a special torch (retinoscope) to shine a light in each eye. They will look at the reflection seen from the back of the eye and use different lenses in front of the eye.

The results of this test will allow the optometrist to be able to see how much long sight (hypermetropia), short sight (myopia) and astigmatism your child has. This leaflet explains what each of these conditions are.

A prescription will be issued if your child needs glasses.

My child has just started wearing glasses but complains that they can't see very well with them. Why is this?

This is not unusual and it is part of getting used to wearing them. The more the glasses are worn initially, the quicker the child will settle into them, so it is very important to persevere with them.

It can take several weeks, sometimes a few months for your child to get the full benefit of wearing the glasses.

I can't see through my child's glasses, are they correct?

Being able or unable to see through another person's glasses is no indication of whether or not they are correct. The strength of the lenses will depend on your child's glasses prescription. This is unique to your child and is not related to whether or not another person can see through them.

If your child is long sighted their eyes will look bigger (more magnified) the stronger the lenses are. Don't be alarmed at the amount of magnification created by your child's lenses – this can happen even if they only have a slight long sight prescription as the lenses act like a magnifying glass to bring things closer.

If your child is short sighted their eyes may appear smaller through the lenses for short sight correction.

Should my child wear their glasses all day?

Yes, unless you have been advised otherwise by the orthoptist or optometrist at the hospital. A child's visual system develops from birth up to around 8 years of age. It is therefore important for your child to wear their glasses full time to allow their vision to develop to its full potential.

Will my child always need glasses?

This is different for every child. It will depend on their prescription and whether they also have an associated squint.

Some eye conditions can improve but many children need to continue wearing glasses into their teenage years and some will need them all of their life.

What is long sight (hypermetropia)?

Most children are born slightly long sighted. This naturally reduces up until they are around 6 years old. In some children, the long sight remains in one or both eyes. Depending on how long sighted they are, it can blur their vision when they are trying to see things close up or far away.

In some children, uncorrected long sight may lead to them developing a squint, where one of the eyes turns inwards.

What is short sight (myopia)?

This may be present from birth or develop as the child gets older. Children with short sight may have difficulty seeing things far away and, depending on the amount of short sight, may also have to hold things very close to read.

What is astigmatism?

This is caused by the eye being 'rugby ball shaped' rather than round. Astigmatism causes blurred vision when trying to see things far away and also when things are very near. It can occur on its own or can be combined with long or short sight.

Sometimes the amount of long sight, short sight or astigmatism can be different in each eye – this is called anisometropia. In this situation, if the glasses are not worn, the eye with the larger prescription may become weaker or lazy (see leaflet on amblyopia).

Further information

The British and Irish Orthoptic Society

➔ Website: www.orthoptics.org.uk/home

Moorfield's Eye Hospital

➔ Website: www.moorfields.nhs.uk/children

Squint Clinic

➔ Website: www.squintclinic.com

The hospital eye service prescription HES3

The HES3 form has been issued by the hospital optometrist and it entitles your child to one pair of glasses.

It can be taken to any optician of your choice. They do not need to perform an eye test on your child – the form has the details of your child's glasses prescription and which lenses to dispense.

Please ensure your child is with you so they can be measured for glasses and try them on, it is essential that the correct shape and size of frame is dispensed. Please see overleaf regarding helpful tips on spectacle fitting.

Most opticians have a range of frames that are covered by the HES3 voucher. If they do not have a suitable pair, you can visit other opticians (taking the form with you).

The opticians will also have a range of other frames and lenses that are not covered by the HES3 voucher but you can choose to pay extra for if you prefer.

Your child is entitled to a wearable pair of glasses for up to one year from the date of the voucher. If anything happens to the glasses during this time, for example, they become scratched, too small, lost or need adjusting, you will need to return to the opticians where the glasses were dispensed.

Please be aware that if you have chosen to pay extra for the original glasses, you may be obliged to pay each time your child's glasses are repaired or replaced. Please check with the optician regarding the charges you may be liable for in the event of repair or replacement before the glasses are dispensed.

The HES3 form entitles your child to one pair of glasses. However, if you would like your child to have a spare pair, you have the option to purchase a second pair.

Only one HES3 voucher can be issued unless a change in the lenses is indicated, for example if your child's prescription has changed.

Any questions?

If you have a query regarding the HES3 form, please contact the Optometry Department:

- ➔ Telephone: 01872 253287
- ➔ Email: rch-tr.optometry@nhs.net

For general enquiries, please contact the Orthoptic Department:

- ➔ Telephone: 01872 253287
- ➔ Email: rch-tr.rchtorthoptic@nhs.net

Helpful tips on spectacle fitting

A good size of lens so that your child does not look over the top of them.

The ends should be adjusted to grip at the ears so that the frame does not slip down the nose.



Fit closely around the bridge of the nose so that the frame is centred. Some frames have nose pads to adjust.

The width of the frame should fit at the temples.

Notes



To get this information in a different format
call 01872 252690

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