

Orthoptic Department
Eye Unit
Main Building
Royal Stoke University Hospital
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 6QG
01782 674 330

Vision Screening Programme - Information for Parents and Guardians

Dear Parents and Guardians

As part of national guidelines it is required for orthoptists to carry out a routine eye test on children who are in reception class. I would be grateful for the opportunity to explain the screening programme to you.

Orthoptists will go into school to perform the tests and are specially trained to test children's eyes, treat squints and lazy eyes etc. The tests are short simple matching games with letters or pictures, which will include the wearing of a disposable patch or a pair of glasses (cleaned between children) with one eye covered, to test the vision of the other eye.

Why does my child need an eye test?

- Vision screening tests are designed to see if your child has reduced vision in one or both eyes. The aim is to detect problems early so your child can receive effective treatment.
- Vision continues to develop from birth to around 8 years of age. Children rarely complain of poor vision, particularly if it affects just one eye, so problems can easily go undetected.
- Reduced vision can have an impact on a child's learning and development and is caused by the brain receiving an unclear image from one or both eyes.
- Reasons for reduced vision could include the shape of the eye or a turn/squint in one or both eyes. Treatment options may include glasses and/or a patch worn over the eye with best vision.
- **For more information about child vision screening:** www.nhs.uk/childrens-eyes

When will testing take place?

- We will be starting visiting schools October 2023 and we continue throughout the academic year.
- In the meantime, if you have any concerns regarding your child's eyes, please contact the Orthoptic Department at Royal Stoke Hospital on 01782 674330 where an Orthoptist will discuss your concerns with you and may arrange for your child to be seen in an Orthoptic clinic for an assessment.
- Alternatively you can attend your own optician for advice or speak to your school nurse.

Action

We hope you will be willing to have your child's eyes tested and may have previously received a consent form, but we would be grateful if you would read this again and send it back to school if appropriate.

If you **DO** want your child to have the eye test:

- You do not need to take any action
- Your child will be tested in school and you will be informed of the result.

If you **DO NOT** want your child to have the eye test

- Please complete the form at the end of this letter and send it back to school as soon as possible.

If your child already sees someone about their eyes eg. Ophthalmologist, Optician or Orthoptist

- Please complete the form on the back and return it to school, as these children will not be tested.

We are required to share your child's data with Stoke-on-Trent city council. If your child required further tests at the hospital or with the Optician we will also share information with these health professionals. If you do **NOT** want this data sharing or would like further information please call 01782 674330.

If you have any questions regarding the eye test please contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours faithfully

Claire Carrick
Head Orthoptist

and

Laura Worrall
Lead Orthoptist for paediatrics and vision screening

Children are eligible for their MMR booster at 3 years and 4 months of age. To get the best protection from preventable diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella, children require two doses of MMR vaccine and to be up to date with routine vaccinations. Please check your child's Red Book or call your GP to discuss or arrange an appointment.

If you do NOT wish your child to have an eye test in school, please complete the following form:

Childs Name.....

My child is already being seen for their eyes

☐

Other reason (Please state below)

☐

.....
.....
.....

School.....

DOB.....

Address.....

.....
.....

Date.....

Signed.....
(Parent/Guardian)

If your child is found to have an eye problem the orthoptist may mention this to the teacher. The orthoptist will also ask for your telephone number so you can be contacted to arrange an appointment.

Please tick the box if you:

Do NOT wish us to talk to the teacher regarding your child.

☐

Do NOT wish your telephone number to be given out.

☐

(This will only be used to allow the opticians/Orthoptists to contact you regarding an appointment)