

How to get your child's glasses

Information for parents from the Orthoptics Department

This leaflet gives advice to parents or carers whose children have been prescribed glasses, to help them get an appropriate frame. We hope that it will answer any questions you may have but if after reading this leaflet you still have questions, please speak to your orthoptist.

We are keen to hear your views on the information we provide, so please let us know if you feel we should have included any other information.

What is the Hospital Eye Service (prescription) (HES3) form the eye department has given me?

The HES3 is a voucher which carries the prescription for the strength of the lenses your child needs. It is worth a sum of money which goes towards the price of your child's glasses.

This voucher/prescription is valid for 12 months, for one pair of glasses only.

What shall I do with the HES3 form?

You should take it to a registered optometrist's or optician's, where they can provide you with a pair of glasses. They will not need to retest your child's eyes, but you must take your child along for fitting purposes.

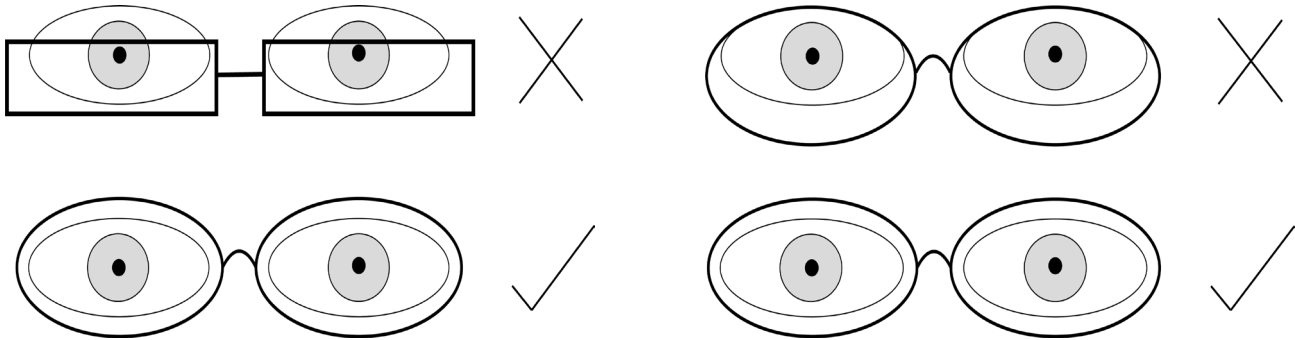
Which optician should I choose?

We are not able to advise you to go to a particular optician, but you should go to one where you are able to request help in choosing and fitting the frames from an optometrist or a dispensing optician who is registered with the General Optical Council. These people have undertaken a minimum of three years specialist training to make sure they are fully competent to deal with such specialist items as children's spectacles (only these people are legally allowed to dispense to children under 16 years of age). They will give professional advice on the choice of lenses and frames available for your child and help you select the best option for your child's needs.



What should I consider when choosing my child's glasses?

- The glasses frame must not be too shallow, to prevent the risk of your child looking over the top of the lenses rather than through them.



- The width of the spectacles frame should be sufficient to make sure your child's eyes are centrally placed within the spectacle lenses. The sides of the frame should not be in contact with either side of your child's head.
- The spectacle sides should follow closely the shape of your child's ear and should have no more than 3 to 3.5cm length behind their ear.
- Sports straps/silicone ear hooks can be useful to keep the frame in place. Discuss your options with your optician, who can advise you further.
- Ask your optician/orthoptist for information about plastic frames for babies or children with small features.

Do I have to pay for my child's glasses?

This depends which optician you choose and which frames you decide to have. The HES3 voucher contributes towards the cost of the glasses. Most opticians stock a range of frames covered by the voucher value resulting in glasses that are free of charge. If you choose a designer or specialist type of frame or thinned lenses you may need to pay extra towards the cost of these glasses. Ask about this before deciding which optician you buy the glasses from, as costs can vary between providers.

What do I do if my child's glasses break?

This is very likely to happen, as children do tend to break their glasses, but it is not a cause for concern. Take the frame back to the optician who dispensed them as soon as possible, so they can organise a replacement or repair, often free of charge.

Children's glasses need regular adjustment to make sure the lenses are sitting correctly in front of their eyes and that the frames are not crooked. If the sides of the frame press into the side of your child's head leaving indentation grooves, this means that the glasses are too small or that your child has grown out of them. Visit your optician to see if the glasses can be re-adjusted/replaced.

Remember if the glasses are uncomfortable your child is less likely to want to wear them.

Can my child have a second pair of glasses?

The hospital will usually only pay for one pair of glasses. If you feel you need a second pair, you should discuss this with the optician who makes the glasses. You will be expected to pay for the second set of glasses yourself.

In some cases of very high prescription, a second voucher may be issued to you at a later appointment, once your child's vision has been established with the new glasses (this would only happen for the first pair of glasses as previous pairs can be used as spares after this).

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation