

Hospital eye checks for children

Information for parents from the Orthoptic Department

Your child has had an eye test in the Orthoptic Department

If this was a referral from the school vision screening:

A school nurse has tested your child's vision at school. They were asked to read letters with each eye and it was found that they were unable to see small letters appropriate for their age, or perhaps each eye saw a different amount of detail. Because of this, your child has been referred to the Hospital Eye Service for further tests and has had their appointment today.

After testing your child's eyes at the hospital, we have found that your child was able to see small letters/characters appropriate for their age. As a result it has been decided that they do not need to remain under the care of the Hospital Eye Service.

Why is eye testing important?

Eyesight, rather like walking and talking, is something that children must learn to do and it develops until they are about nine years old.

If defects in a child's vision are left untreated their sight may be permanently damaged. This could mean that in adulthood their quality of life might be affected, for example they may be refused a driving license or not able to take up a chosen career.

Who has tested my child's eyes at the hospital?

An orthoptist is a hospital based clinician who specialises in the development of vision in children.



What was tested at the hospital?

- The hospital tested your child's visual acuity, which is the clearest detail your child can see with each eye.
- They also examined your child for a squint or lazy eye.

The results of these tests will have been discussed with you before you left hospital.

What has not been tested?

The examinations which have just been carried out are for screening only. The following tests are outside the scope of your visit because your child was able to see small letters/pictures today.

- A test for glasses (refraction) has not been carried out.
- The inside part and back of your child's eyes have not been examined for abnormalities.

If you wish for your child to have these tests, you can take your child to an ophthalmic optician or optometrist. They are trained to carry out these tests. It is strongly recommended that you do this on a regular basis, especially if there is a family history of glasses wear, lazy eye, or childhood eye problems. Children's eyes can change as they grow and it is always a good idea to have their visual development monitored, even when they have passed their vision screening examination.

In their first year at school, every child has a vision test with the school nurse.

All optometrists are trained to carry out children's eye testing and refraction (glasses tests). You can go to an optician of your choice and the testing is free for all children under the age of 16 years. It is not necessary to have a referral from your GP.

This leaflet has been produced with and for parents

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