

Why does your child need an eye test?

- The UK National Screening Committee and Public Health England recommend vision screening should be offered to all children aged 4 to 5 years¹
- 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 develops 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 may impact progress at school, future ability to drive or career choices
- More information can be found here: www.nhs.uk/conditions/eye-tests-in-children

Screening test

- We will test the children in a quiet room within the school
- Each eye will be tested separately, by covering the other eye with a patch or glasses with one lens blanked out
- We will ask your child to either name or match letters on a card held 3 metres away
- Children do not need to know their letters to complete the screening
- Testing a child typically takes no longer than 5 minutes
- Most children enjoy playing this game and there are no risks associated with the test
- The testing is carried out by Orthoptists from the Russells Hall Hospital, who are experts in the investigation and treatment of eye disorders in children

Possible results

- If your child reaches the required level of vision you will receive a pass letter to put in their personal child health record (red book)
- If your child does not reach the required level of vision you will be sent a letter explaining the result and your child will be referred into the hospital eye service for a more detailed examination.
- If your child is absent or gave an unreliable result a further appointment will be sent to your address to attend for the eye test at Russells Hall Hospital.

Further information

- All our Orthoptists hold a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate
- The law on protecting personal information, known as GDPR, allows the NHS to use your child's personal information to invite your child for screening and ensure a safe and effective vision screening programme is provided across England. The sections of the GDPR that apply are article 6(1)(e) and article 9(2)(h)²
- All Orthoptists follow local and national guidance on infection control to minimise risks, such as wearing face masks
- Risk assessments will be completed prior to attending schools to ensure all steps are taken to minimise risk

Please be aware no screening test is perfect and vision changes as you get older. We only provide eye tests at reception age, following this we recommend to take your child to a local optician on an annual basis. Eye tests for children in full time education are free.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-vision-screening/service-specification>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/patient-confidentiality-in-nhs-population-screening-programmes/nhs-population-screening-confidential-patient-data#law>