

Why do I need my eyes tested?

Advice and information for parents brought to you by
Keith Holland & Associates
Optometrists

Award winning eye care for all the family



Your child's eyesight is precious. Without good vision children can suffer enormous setbacks to learning and the development of their life skills. Many parents do not realise that eye sight can be tested from a very early age and that it is recommended that **children should have an eye examination at least by the age of three**, or earlier if you think there may be a problem. Special tests have been devised for very young children and the earlier a problem is detected the more effectively it can be treated. The great thing to remember is that **eye examinations don't hurt!**

Why is it important to get them tested early?

Any defect - such as a squint - will cause problems later on unless treated at an early age. **A child's vision is fully developed by the age of 8.** Vision screening checks are often carried out by doctors, health visitors and other medically trained personnel, but these are not as comprehensive as a full eye examination carried out by an optometrist. It's a common misconception that children's eyes cannot accurately be checked until they can read, but we have several special tests that can be carried out at a very early age. As the child develops and communication skills improve, more detailed tests are also possible. 3-D vision, for example, can be tested with pictures of familiar objects.

Importance of regular visits:

Just as children visit the dentist at regular intervals, it is well worth making regular visits to see the family optometrist. Many eyesight defects such as long or short sightedness, astigmatism or squint can be inherited, so if there is a history of any of these in your family your child's eyesight should be tested on a regular basis.

If left uncorrected for too long some sight defects cannot be put right, but establishing a routine of regular eye examinations can minimise the chances of a sight defect being carried into adulthood. At certain stages children's eyes may need to be examined at intervals of months rather than years, and your optometrist is the person to advise you on the frequency of visits.

What if my child needs glasses?

If the time comes when a child needs to wear glasses, this need not be seen as a disadvantage. We stock a wide variety of spectacle frames that are comfortable, practical and stylish! All are well designed and attractive, with features such as adjustable nose pads and saddle bridges for small, unformed noses, and spring hinges for durability and comfort. Children's lenses are normally made of plastic or polycarbonate which means they are light and safe and can be treated with a variety of coatings for extra comfort.

Are contact lenses an option?

Yes! We fit lenses to children as young as five years of age.

How much does the eye exam cost?

If your child is under the age of 16 years old or 16 - 18 and in full time education then they qualify for an eye examination **without charge** under the N.H.S.



Are glasses free under the N.H.S for children?

No. Following the eye examination, parents are entitled to a voucher towards the cost of any glasses or contact lenses prescribed. The value of the voucher will be determined by the prescription needed. The cost of a pair of children's glasses will normally depend on the quality of the frame and the quality of the lenses. Certain larger organisations are able to buy their frames and lenses in bulk and thus this is why in some establishments you may find that the voucher value covers the full cost of a pair of children's specs. However, at Keith Holland & Associates, we pride ourselves in offering high quality frames and lenses to both children and adults along with expert care and service. This allows us to offer award winning eye care to all the family. Normally the average additional cost of a pair of children's glasses (after taking off the voucher value from the full price of the glasses) is around £20.

Would you like to book an eye examination for yourself and your child?

We would be delighted to see you at either of our practices! For an appointment please telephone either St George's Road Practice on 01242 233 500 or our St Paul's Medical Centre Practice on 01242 269 686.

For more information on any of our services please visit:

www.keithholland.co.uk

Alternatively for more information specifically related to vision and learning, please visit: www.visionandlearning.co.uk

We look forward to seeing you in one of our practices very soon!