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## **Children's Eye Health Information Leaflet**



Children aged under 16 or under 19 in full time education are entitled to: -

- ✓ FREE NHS Sight Test
- ✓ FREE NHS Glasses
- ✓ FREE replacement glasses if lost or broken if aged under 16

# Eyesight Milestones

## Babies

- Babies eyes are more sensitive to bold colours and can see colour after around 3 months.
- Babies eyes are able to focus after a few months and should be able to follow you round the room.

*A quick check you can do is to cover each eye in turn. If baby doesn't like one eye covered more than the other, there may be a problem.*

## 6 months plus

- The eyes should now be fully developed.
- The baby can now judge depth and see 3D shapes.
- Can in rare cases need glasses.

*Look out for a white reflection glimmer in the eyes as this may indicate a problem (may be seen in photos when looking directly at the camera).  
Our optometrists can check this for you.*



## 4 years plus

- Now a child should be having regular eye examinations, if not already done so, even if no apparent problems.
- 6-7 years is one of the key age groups for short sight to develop.
- Treatment of lazy eye is most successful before the age of 7.

*A squint or lazy eye may not be obvious and often runs in families.*

## Growth Spurt

- 1 in 5 teenagers are short sighted and 12-13 years is a key age for it to develop.
- Eyes continue to grow and develop and it is important to monitor a child's vision on an ongoing basis regularly.
- If complains of headaches or tired eyes after school, this may indicate an eye problem.

### Problems & possible warning signs

- Rubbing their eyes a lot (*except when tired, this is normal to do*).
- Being clumsy and having poor eye/hand coordination.
- Excessively watery eyes.
- Avoiding reading, writing or drawing.
- Complaining of blurred or double vision.
- Unexplained headaches.
- Sitting very close to the television.
- Holding books or objects up close to the face.
- Screwing up eyes or closing one eye when reading or watching television.
- Closing one eye when out in bright sunshine.

*Remember, the earlier a problem is picked up, the easier it is treated.*

Even if your child does experience any problems it is still important to have regular eye examinations, as the earlier a problem is picked up the easier it is to be treated.

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We are not just looking at the vision of the eye but also the health of the eye and surrounding anatomy.

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Once your child reaches school age we recommend that they have an eye examination.