

HCP 0 – 19 Public Health Nursing Service
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Date - January 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE: Eye Test for children (ages 4 to 5 years)

Routine eye screening is not carried out in your child's school; this means as your child's vision is not checked at school, you will need to take them to your local opticians for an eye examination. You will need to make an appointment at your local optician.

Vision continues to develop from birth to around 8 years of age. Children rarely complain of having poor vision and it can easily go unnoticed, especially if it only affects one eye. Reduced vision can have an impact on a child's learning and development. This is why we recommend your child has an eye examination at age 4 to 5 years. The eye examination will ensure that your child has good vision in both eyes, and that their vision is developing normally.

The Eye Test

An eyesight test is particularly important if there's a history of childhood eye problems, such as squint or lazy eye, in your family.

The eye test is entirely safe and non-invasive. Most children enjoy it.

The optician will carry out tests specifically designed to detect eye problems.

Don't worry about the cost, as all NHS sight tests are free for children under the age of 16

Causes of eye problems

There are a number of different eye problems that can be detected during eye tests, including

- **childhood cataracts** – cloudy patches in the lens of the eye that are present from birth
- **lazy eye (amblyopia)** – where the vision in one eye does not develop properly
- **squint (strabismus)** – where the eyes look in different directions
- **short-sightedness** (myopia) – where distant objects appear blurred, while close objects can be seen clearly
- **long-sightedness** (hyperopia) – where you can see distant objects clearly, but nearby objects are out of focus
- **astigmatism** – where the transparent layer at the front of the eye (cornea) is not perfectly curved
- **colour vision** deficiency (colour blindness) – difficulty seeing colours or distinguishing between different colours; this is more common in boys than girls

Spotting signs of an eye problem

- The eyes not pointing in the same direction
- complaining of headaches or eye strain
- Problems reading – for example, they may need to hold books close to their face and they may lose their place regularly
- Problems with hand-eye co-ordination – for example, they may struggle to play ball games
- Being unusually clumsy
- Regularly rubbing their eyes
- Sitting too close to the TV

Speak to a GP or go to an optician if you have any concerns about your child's eyes or vision. The earlier a problem is picked up the better.

Children can have an eyesight test at any age. They do not need to be able to read or even speak. An eyesight test is particularly important if there's a history of childhood eye problems, such as squint or lazy eye, in your family.

Please arrange with your local optician for your child to have a free NHS sight test.

Please telephone the Optician practice to book an appointment. You may have to wait a few weeks before an appointment can be offered.

A sight test will identify any problems. The optician will be able to explain the results and any next steps with you during the sight test.

If you need any support in making an appointment with the opticians, please let us know by contacting the service on – 03333583328 or email shropcom.adminleonardst@nhs.net

For further information, please refer to

[Eye tests for children - NHS](#)

Yours faithfully

Healthy Child Programme 0-19 Service

Public Health Nursing – Telford and Wrekin