

Optometry Department

Children's Glasses **Frequently asked questions**

Information for parents and carers.

What is Astigmatism?

Astigmatism is commonly due to the front of the eye (cornea) being an irregular shape. This is also known as a 'rugby ball shaped eye'. Light is not focussed clearly on the retina at the back of the eye, and this can make the vision blurred at all distances. This can occur with myopia (short sight) or hypermetropia (long sight).

What is Myopia (Short sight)?

Short sight is commonly caused by the eye being too long. Light entering the eye from a distance is focussed in front of the retina, and this makes the distance vision blurred. Near vision is usually clear.

What is Long Sight (Hypermetropia)?

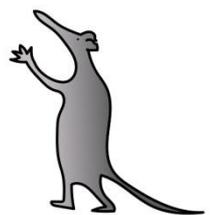
Long sight is usually caused by the eye being too short, so that light entering the eye is focussed behind the retina. Children who are longsighted can struggle to see near and distance vision clearly. Some children can over-focus to try to compensate for this problem, however they may have a squint where the eye turns in, or symptoms such as eyestrain. In adults this affects the near vision making it blurred.

Are glasses free for children?

Children under 16 and under 19 in full time education receive a voucher towards the cost of a pair of glasses. Most opticians have a range of glasses where the total cost is covered by the voucher, however you can pay extra towards other glasses of your choice.

Where do I get glasses from?

Any registered dispensing optician or optometrist can dispense glasses to children. You will need to take your child with you so that the optician can advise you on the best fitting frames.



When should my child wear their glasses?

Usually the glasses are for full time wear, unless your optometrist/orthoptist has told you otherwise. It is helpful to mention to your child's school teacher/nursery that glasses should be worn.

What happens if the glasses get broken or lost?

If you take the glasses prescription (white copy) to the optician, they can issue a repair voucher towards the cost of repairs/replacement.

Can I get a spare pair of glasses?

Alder Hey NHS Trust can only provide a voucher for one pair of glasses. You are able to purchase spare pairs from your optician using the glasses prescription (white copy). You can also ask your local CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) for funding for a spare pair, however this is discretionary.

Can my child have prescription sunglasses?

Your optician can dispense prescription sunglasses, however the NHS is unable to provide a voucher towards the cost unless they are 'clinically necessary'. Therefore there will be a charge for them.

Encouraging your child to wear their glasses

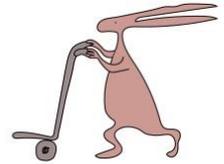
- Make sure your child's glasses are fitting comfortably on their nose and behind their ears.
- Your local optician can help with adjustments to the frame.
- Try to encourage your child to look through their lenses rather than over the top of their glasses.
- Choose an activity that your child enjoys doing and encourage them to wear their glasses for this. Then, aim to increase the time the glasses are worn.
- A 'star chart' or reward chart can be helpful to encourage daily glasses wear.

It can take a few weeks for your child to adapt to their glasses. Their world may appear different to them with their new glasses and this can take some time to adjust to. Some children don't like objects near or on their face, however once they adapt to the glasses they will be happy to wear them.

For further information

If you have any queries or would like further information please contact:

Pathway Co-ordinators on 0151 282 2961/2839



Please let us know if you change address or telephone number.

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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