

28/04/2021

### Eye tests for children in reception 2020/2021

Although serious vision problems during childhood are rare, routine eye checks, also called vision screening, are offered to all young children in reception to identify any problems early on. For over 30 years Orthoptists from The North Middlesex Hospital have provided these eye checks to children in reception in schools in Haringey.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions put in place, the team have not been able to carry out eye checks of children in reception 2020/2021 and your child has therefore missed this essential check of their eye.

### Why are eye checks necessary?

The sooner any eye problem is found, the sooner you and your child will be able to get any treatment and support needed. Eye checks can detect if there is reduced vision in one or both eyes at an age when treatment has the potential to improve their vision. Children may not realise they have a problem, so without routine tests there is a risk a problem may not be spotted.

It is estimated that 1 in 50 children currently has a lazy eye condition, called Amblyopia. Amblyopia can be treated successfully in younger children by for example providing the child with glasses, but if undetected it can result in permanent lifelong reduced vision.

Because your child has not had an eye check this year as part of the screening programme, we strongly encourage you take them to a local optician as soon as possible. The optician will be able to carry out a free NHS sight test for your child, and if they find any issues, they may be able to treat this with glasses, or refer your child to the Hospital eye services if they feel this is necessary.

If you are not sure where your nearest optician is, you can find out through this NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-an-optician> where you can add your postcode and see a list of opticians in your local area.

Kind regards,

Clare Miller

Head Orthoptist

