

## PATIENT INFORMATION

# Children's glasses

### Glasses voucher

Following your child's appointment with the optometrist you will be given a voucher to take to your local optician for dispensing. The voucher tells the optician what power the glasses need to be and pays a set amount towards the cost of the glasses.

You can take the voucher to any optician's shop to choose the glasses. The value of the voucher depends on the strength of your child's glasses. The voucher should cover the cost of basic lenses. Some glasses frames will be fully covered by the voucher value, whilst you will need to pay extra for some frames and thinning of the lenses if required.

### Choosing glasses

The dispensing optician will measure your child's face and advise you on the best type of glasses frame.

### Problems with the fit of the glasses

If you notice that the glasses are falling off the bridge of your child's nose and they are not looking through the lens you should go back to the optician as soon as possible to get them adjusted. The optician should adjust the fit of the glasses for free.

### Broken or lost glasses

If your child's glasses get broken or lost, please contact the optician who provided the glasses to organise repair or replacement.

The hospital is only able to provide vouchers for spare glasses in exceptional circumstances.

Try to encourage your child to look after their glasses. They should try to:

- Keep the glasses in a case when not being worn.
- Try not to put the glasses down on the lens surface.
- Use both hands to take the glasses off.

## **Types of prescription**

Long sight (hypermetropia) – occurs when light entering the eye focuses too far behind the retina at the back of the eye. The vision will be blurred at all distances but will be worse for near objects.

Often children with long sight will try to see clearly by focusing using the lens inside the eye. Children with a small amount of long sight may be able to do this without any difficulty. Children with greater amounts of long sight may not be able to focus enough to get clear vision, or the focusing may lead to eyestrain, or a squint (turn in the eye). Glasses are needed to help with the focussing.

Short sight (myopia) – occurs when light entering the eye focuses in front of the retina. Children with short sight have difficulty seeing things far away but will see close objects quite clearly.

Astigmatism – is caused by the eye not being perfectly round, more like a rugby ball shape. The uneven shape of the eye means that it is not able to focus light evenly causing a blurred image.

## **Sunglasses and tinted lenses**

Other than in exceptional cases (where there is a medical condition which makes the eyes sensitive to sunlight) the hospital is not able to provide vouchers for sunglasses or tinted lenses.

## **Settling into glasses**

Many children settle into wearing glasses quickly but for some it may take a little longer. Initially try putting the glasses on at times when they are doing an activity they enjoy, if your child takes the glasses off, give them a rest and try again later. Support and encouragement are important to help your child accept the glasses. The more your child wears the glasses the quicker they will settle into them. The full benefits of wearing glasses may take some weeks or months to be noticed.

## **Wearing the glasses**

You will be advised by the hospital optometrist or orthoptist when your child should wear their glasses. In most cases children should wear their glasses as much as possible.

Depending on the strength of the glasses it may be best to leave them off for sports and playtime, however this should be discussed with your orthoptist/optometrist.

For older children who play sports, it is possible to buy special safety sports glasses.

## **Will my child always need glasses?**

This is different for every child; it will depend on their prescription and whether they also have an associated squint.

Vision continues developing during childhood until around the age of 8. It is important for your child to wear their glasses fulltime during these years to allow their vision to develop to full potential.

Some children will be able to safely stop wearing glasses when they are around 10 years old whilst most will need to continue glasses wear all their lives.

If you have any further questions relating to your child's eyesight or problems with wearing glasses, please contact the orthoptic department.

**If you need to speak to the orthoptist, please contact:**

Orthoptic Department, Eye Department, Level 2 Outpatients, Torbay Hospital, Lowes Bridge,

Torquay TQ2 7AA

Tel: **(01803) 654442**