

Our ref: LM/KH/JA

Enquiries to:

Orthoptic Screening Service

Newcastle Eye Centre

Royal Victoria Infirmary

NE14LP

Tel: 0191 2824434

Email: tnu-tr.nec.vision@nhs.net

Date: 14 September 2021

Dear Parent / Guardian

Northumberland County Council commissions Newcastle NHS Trust to provide vision screening to all children in Reception Year. During 2020/21 the screening programme was disrupted significantly by the impact of Covid 19 with many children and classes being missing from school so we are writing to you to advise of further action you **may** need to take.

For children who started Reception Year in 2020.

Children often cope very well with some eye problems which need to be identified and treated early to avoid lifelong visual loss. For this reason, it is important that even children with apparently normal vision should be tested. The screening assessment ensures that your child has good vision in both eyes, and that their vision is developing normally. It is performed at this age so that any reduced vision or difference in vision between each eye can be picked up before the visual system is fully developed and any treatment necessary can be started.

If your child falls in any of the groups below then you **do not need to do anything**. You should ignore this letter if your child -

- Has already had a vision test at school

Or

- Is currently under the care of an Ophthalmologist / Orthoptist / Optometrist at your local Hospital Eye Clinic

Or

- Is currently under the care of a local Optometrist (Optician) or had a recent sight test

If none of the above applies, please arrange with your local optometry practice (optician) for your child to have a free NHS sight test.

Liz Morgan, Director of Public Health
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www.northumberland.gov.uk



Please telephone the practice to book an appointment. You may have to wait a few weeks before an appointment can be offered. You will not have to pay for the sight test. We recommend your child has this sight test in case she/he has a problem which requires treatment. Young children rarely complain about having reduced vision. If only one eye is affected it is even less likely to be noticed by the child, parents or anyone else. A sight test will identify any problems. The optometrist (optician) will be able to explain the results and any next steps with you during the sight test.

For further information, please visit www.nhs.uk/childrens-eyes

Yours sincerely



Liz Morgan
Director of Public Health