

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital

King's Lynn

NHS Foundation Trust

Your child's first visit – Ophthalmology Department, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn

To begin with:

If your child is old enough we will check his/her vision using letters or pictures. As it is important to know the vision of each eye separately, each eye has to be covered in turn – usually with special glasses or a patch which does not hurt. If the child is unable to do a vision test we can still assess his/her eyes.

Most children will see the Orthoptist for an eye muscle balance/squint check. This is done using pictures and a light. The majority of children enjoy doing these tests. The Orthoptist will also ask you if there is a family history of lazy eye or squint etc., and whether or not you or your child have noticed any eye problems.

To enable the Ophthalmologist to examine your child's eyes properly Cyclopentolate 1% eye drops dilating eye drops are put into both eyes. These drops may sting for a moment when they are administered. Some children complain but others don't at all. The drops can take up to half an hour to work. The drops enlarge the pupils and stop the child from being able to focus; this means that the child will have difficulty seeing to read for about 24 hours – their distance vision will be unchanged. The child will also be dazzled by bright lights, so if your clinic appointment is on a sunny day please bring a cap or sunglasses. The pupils will remain dilated for a few hours.

Eye examination by the Ophthalmologist:

Children of any age can have their eyes examined. All the child needs to do is sit, either alone or on somebody's knee, with their eyes open. The ophthalmologist, using a special light which does not hurt will find out whether or not glasses are needed and will make sure that the eyes are healthy. The Ophthalmologist will tell you the results of the eye examination of your child.