



Paediatrics

Many serious visual problems are preventable if detected and treated early.

From our first days of life, our visual system is used to take in and process information. It is well known that if a child does not see clearly or if their eyes do not work effectively together then a child's development, performance in learning and classroom tasks may be affected. Therefore the management of visual problems at an early age provides the child with clear, single and efficient binocular vision, allowing them the capacity to function to the best of their ability. Consequently, all children should be examined by three years of age.

Our experienced paediatric ophthalmologists will tailor the examination of your child's eyes to meet the needs of their age group – from babies through to teenagers.

Special testing procedures for each age group will put your child at ease and assist the clinician to obtain accurate and valuable information.

6-8 Weeks: Infants should be fixing and following their parents face as a guide, and eye movements should be normal. Turned or crossed eyes require immediate examination from your GP or Optometrist, and referral to an Ophthalmologist for further assessment.

Up to 3 years: The symptoms listed above for children aged 6-8 weeks also apply to children aged up to 3 years. Lazy eye (amblyopia) is a condition that can only be treated in childhood.

Pre School: Visual screening is critical in the detection of lazy eye or other causes of poor vision. These are often undetected as there are few outward signs. Lazy eye can occur in up to 2% of young children. Early treatment of lazy eye is important as it allows correction. It is not possible to improve vision at an older age.

> 6 years: Children may complain of difficulty with vision at school for reading or board work, or complain of difficulty when viewing television. These symptoms may indicate a simple need for spectacles when more serious conditions are excluded. With any vision difficulty, it is best to have the eyes examined to prevent a possible condition from worsening.

At any age: Painful or itchy eyes, red irritable eyes or eyes discharging water or mucus suggest infection or inflammation. See your GP or Optometrist immediately. They will refer on to an Ophthalmologist as appropriate.