



How to get your child's glasses

Information for parents from the Orthoptic Department

Your child has been prescribed glasses. This leaflet gives advice on:

- what to consider when choosing a frame
- what opticians you should choose
- how to pay for your child's glasses, and
- what to do if your child's glasses break.

If after reading this leaflet you have questions, please speak to your orthoptist.

We want to hear your views on the information we provide. Please let us know if you feel we should have included any other information.

What is the Hospital Eye Service (prescription) (HES3) form the eye department has given me?

The HES3 is a voucher, which carries the prescription for the strength of the lenses your child needs. It is worth a sum of money, which goes towards the price of your child's glasses.

This voucher / prescription is valid for 12 months, for one pair of glasses only.

What should I do with the HES3 form?

You should take the form to a registered optometrist's or optician's. They can provide you with a pair of glasses. They will not need to re-test your child's eyes, but you must take your child along for fitting purposes.

Which optician should I choose?

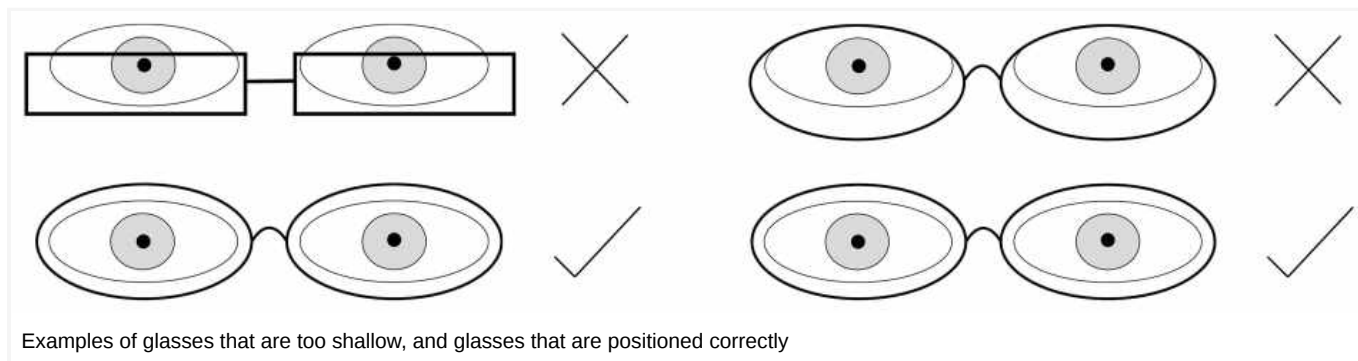
We cannot advise you to go to a particular optician. You should go to one where you can ask for help from an optometrist or a dispensing optician registered with the General Optical Council. They will have had at least three years specialist training to make sure they are fully competent to deal with such specialist items as children's glasses. These are the only people legally allowed to dispense to children under 16 years of age.

They will give professional advice on:

- the choice of lenses and frames available for your child, and
- help you select the best option for your child's needs.

What should I consider when choosing my child's glasses?

- The glasses frame must not be too shallow. This will prevent the risk of your child looking over the top of the lenses rather than through them.



- The width of the frame should be sufficient to make sure your child's eyes are centrally placed within the lenses. The sides of the frame should not be in contact with either side of your child's head.
- The sides of the glasses should follow closely the shape of your child's ear. They should have no more than 3 to 3.5cm length behind their ear.
- Sports straps and silicone ear hooks can be useful to keep the frame in place. Discuss your options with your optician, who can advise you further.
- Ask your optician / orthoptist for information about plastic frames for babies or children with small features.

Do I have to pay for my child's glasses?

This depends on which optician you choose and which frames you decide to have. The HES3 voucher contributes towards the cost of the glasses. Most opticians stock a range of frames covered by the voucher value, which are free of charge.

If you choose a designer or specialist type of frame or thinned lenses you may need to pay extra towards the cost of these glasses. Ask about this before deciding which optician you buy the glasses from. Costs can vary between providers.

What do I do if my child's glasses break?

This is common, as children do break their glasses, but it is not a cause for concern. Take the frame back to the optician who dispensed them as soon as possible. They can organise a replacement or repair, often free of charge.

Children's glasses need regular adjustment to make sure:

- the lenses are sitting correctly in front of their eyes, and
- that the frames are not crooked.

If the sides of the frame press into the side of your child's head leaving indentation grooves, this means that the glasses are too small or your child has grown out of them. Visit your optician to see if the glasses can be re-adjusted / replaced.

Remember if the glasses are uncomfortable your child is less likely to want to wear them.

Can my child have a second pair of glasses?

The hospital will usually only pay for one pair of glasses. If you need a second pair, you should discuss this with the optician who makes the glasses. You will be expected to pay for the second set of glasses yourself.

In some cases of very high prescription, a second voucher may be issued to you at a later appointment. This will be once your child's vision has been established with the new glasses. This would only happen for the first pair of glasses, as previous pairs can be used as spares after this.

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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