

# Visual Impairment Service

## School Age Referrals Policy and Procedures

Most children and young people who need long term specialist support are referred by health professionals very soon after diagnosis. We only work with those who have a medically diagnosed visual impairment which results in one or more of the following:

- They cannot see well enough to read print
- They are not able to read beyond the fourth line on an eye chart with glasses (if worn) - i.e. have distance vision measurements of 6/18 (Snellen), 0.5 (Logmar) or worse
- They have significantly reduced fields of vision
- They have an eye condition which means their vision will deteriorate
- They have a significant cerebral visual impairment

### Before making a referral

- Parents who are concerned about their child's vision should visit their GP, optician or optometrist for a full eye health check.
- School staff with concerns should share their observations with parents so they can seek medical advice.
- If medical information indicates that vision is reduced even with prescribed glasses you can contact us for further advice.

### To make a referral you will need to:

- share concerns with parents or school staff (as appropriate)
- have parental permission to refer
- complete a Single Agency Referral Form (SARF):  
[http://www.ccc.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BD9F98F0-FEAC-4F64-940D-C1A8285C84D4/0/SARFForm\\_VI.pdf](http://www.ccc.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/BD9F98F0-FEAC-4F64-940D-C1A8285C84D4/0/SARFForm_VI.pdf)
- contact the Service on 01480 373434 to discuss the referral

It helps us if you can provide information to support the referral e.g. measurements from recent eye tests, details of problems accessing print or examples of poor co-ordination

**NB** We cannot accept a referral for a child just because they will not wear glasses – you will need to contact the eye clinic orthoptist or high street optometrist who prescribed the glasses.

**When a child is referred we will:**

- check that the referral is appropriate and contact you if not
- acknowledge written referrals in writing
- with written parental permission, request medical information from the Consultant Ophthalmologist, orthoptist or optician/optometrist (as appropriate)
- contact parents to discuss the role of the Service with their child and to ask about their child's use of vision at home
- arrange the initial assessment visit at a mutually agreed time and offer the opportunity for immediate verbal feedback for school/setting staff and parents

**The initial assessment consists of a range of activities which may include:**

- Discussion with relevant school staff e.g. class/subject teacher, SENCo, TA.
- Observation of the pupil in different situations e.g. in lessons, in the playground, moving around the campus.
- Formal assessments of functional vision – 1 to 1 in a quiet, distraction free area.
- Feedback to school staff – class/subject teacher/SENCo needs to be available.
- Feedback to parents (if they are available).

NB some children will need more than one assessment visit.

**On completion of the assessment a written report is provided which contains:**

- relevant information about the range of visual skills assessed with findings
- implications for those involved with the child
- strategies to help minimise problems related to vision
- Visual Impairment Service proposed action plan to include proposed visit frequency and nature of support offered.

**All reports are monitored by the Service manager and copies are sent to:**

- The person who referred the child.
- The parents.
- The school's head teacher.