

# EYE HEALTHCARE

## BACK TO SCHOOL

It's that time of year again when we need to think about all the tasks associated with preparing for the new school term. One important item on that list is ensuring healthy eyes for your child. A completely painless sight test from your optician will ensure peace of mind. If there are any issues, many of these can be easily rectified once addressed in time.

The underlying conditions of **lazy eye** (Amblyopia) and **long sightedness** (Hyperopia) tend to be more elusive as they show no symptoms. If the former goes untreated before eight years of age, that eye will not develop in life, whereas the latter will cause problems with concentration, poorly functioning eye(s), temporal and frontal headaches, and quite often lead to **squint** (Strabismus).

**Short-sightedness** (Myopia), whereby small detail in the distance, e.g. overhead projections, white board, writing on the TV etc.

become blurry, is an important issue. The early symptoms here are where the child often 'screws up' their eyes.

**Astigmatism** – whereby the front of the eyeball is 'rugby ball' shaped as opposed to 'football' shaped tends to give distortion of images and a form of blurring. Approximately 90% of our population have some small degree of astigmatism, but the more pronounced cases do need direct intervention with spectacles. Also the far out possibility of **eye disease** e.g. congenital cataract need not be discounted.

If a child's sight deteriorates, it often goes unnoticed as the child's comprehension of what a clear image should be becomes uncertain, as they feel this is normal. This underpins the need for regular eye checks.

Noel McCrystal  
BSc.(Hons.)MCOptom.Dip.Sc.V MASv.P

Scotch Street Centre  
T: 028 87722379

[www.mccrystalopticians.com](http://www.mccrystalopticians.com)