

Vision Related Learning Difficulties

Learning difficulties are the result of many interrelated and complex processes of growth and development, of which vision is only one. However, vision accounts for up to 80% of what is learned and approximately 15% of 5 to 12 year old children have vision-related learning difficulties. Identifying and correcting a potential visual defect is an important step in helping a child with their education.

Following is a checklist that may indicate a child may be having difficulties with their eyes or vision and an eye examination to investigate this further would be indicated.

Appearance:

- Crossed or turned eyes
- Reddened, watering, burning or itching eyes
- Blinks frequently
- Very sensitive to light

Behaviour:

- Dislike or avoidance of close work
- Short attention span for the child's age
- Turning or tilting head to use one eye only
- Closing or covering one eye
- Placing head close to book when reading or writing
- Frowning while reading or doing blackboard work
- Reading errors of omission, insertion or substitution
- Writing which becomes smaller and crowded
- Irritability, or unusual fatigue after maintaining visual concentration

Behaviour(cont'd):

- Losing place while reading. Using a finger or marker to guide eyes
- Saying words aloud or lip reading
- Difficulty remembering what has just been read
- Repeating and errors when calling words
- Persistent letter or word reversals after year 2
- Poor hand-eye co-ordination. Difficulty throwing or catching a ball, buttoning clothes, tying shoes etc.
- Eye rubbing or tired eyes after near concentration

Complaints:

- Headaches, nausea or dizziness
- Complaints of blurring or double vision at any time
- Difficulty adjusting focus to see blackboard or book