

DYSLEXIA AND EYES




t h e **eye ACADEMY**
OPTICIANS

Windsor
01753
62 22 22

www.
TheEyeAcademy
.com

Guildford
01483
57 79 57

About Dyslexia

What is Dyslexia?

When a child or adult of normal intelligence struggles with writing, reading or verbal communication, they are said to have a specific type of learning difficulty, referred to as dyslexia.

What Causes Dyslexia?

It's not clear exactly what causes dyslexia. Recent studies indicate that there are a number of contributory reasons:

- 'Faulty wiring' during childhood development, of the part of the brain that processes information.
- Genetics: Dyslexia tends to run in families.

Dyslexia is not linked to IQ or intelligence and it affects people of all racial and social backgrounds

How Many People Are Affected ?

The condition is quite common, but has often been missed due to a lack of awareness.

Approximately 10% of the population are thought to have some degree of dyslexia, with boys being more affected than girls.

What are the Visual Symptoms?

The symptoms are many and varied and commonly include some or all of the following:

- Skipping words or lines
- Reading slowly or hesitantly
- Jumping around of words and letters
- Difficulty keeping track and frequently losing place
- Dark, light or coloured patches appear
- Blurring and doubling of letters or words

For this reason, it is important that those who have the symptoms of, or who've been assessed as having a specific reading difficulty, have a comprehensive Vision Assessment with an Optometrist (formerly known as Optician) that specialises in this field. The use of colour to help with specific learning difficulties is backed up by considerable accredited scientific research. Arnold Wilkins, Professor of Psychology at the University of Essex and Helen Irlen, an Educational Psychologist from California are two of the most prominent researchers in

Blurry

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Rivers

CHECKING FOR EYE PROBLEMS

At The Eye Academy, our specialist optometrists apply an accredited, systematic process when investigating dyslexia like symptoms.

Prior to the examination you will be asked to complete a personal history questionnaire. The optometrist will then use this information and tailor-make an examination that will investigate your child's symptoms. A typical examination will investigate:

- Uncorrected long sightedness
- Focussing problems when changing distances
- The benefits of colour therapy
- Eye muscle co-ordination
- Tracking
- Reading speed
- Headaches
- Sore aching eyes

To give accurate results and avoid the effects of tiredness, the assessment is conducted in two stages.



VISION THERAPY

After the examination, the optometrist will produce a report with their findings. If thought to be beneficial, the optometrist will devise a program of vision therapy. This may include all or a combination of the following:

- Eye Exercises
- Glasses
- Coloured Overlays

FOLLOW UPS

The progress of any vision therapy program will need to be monitored at regular intervals. The follow ups check for signs of improvement and the therapy is ammended based on the changes seen.

COLOURED FILTERS AND DYSLEXIA

Accredited research has shown that reading improves in approximately 20% of children when using a prescribed coloured filter. In 5% of children the increase in reading speed with overlays is greater than 25%.



What Are Coloured Filters?

These are either coloured plastic sheets that are laid over the page or a tint put in spectacle lenses. The filter colour varies from individual to individual. The specific colour required worked out during a Coloured Overlay Assessment.

Is There A Scientific Basis To Colour Filter Therapy?

Yes. The connection between colour and visual processing was first discovered by Helen Irlen, an American Educational Psychologist in 1980. She was the Director of the Learning Disability Program at California State University and her research showed a previously unidentified type of visual-perceptual problem that occurs when reading or studying.

She initially named this Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome (SSS), but it has now been renamed as Meares-Irlen Syndrome, based on the work additionally of Olive Meares, a teacher in New Zealand, who was also one of the first researchers to discover that spatial distortions affecting text could be reduced or eliminated by the use of coloured plastic overlays.

Subsequently the impact of colour on reading speed and accuracy has been extensively tested under scientific conditions by a number of renowned researchers including Professor Arnold Wilkins of Essex University.

The scientific validity has led to the therapy being used by many academic and non academic centres worldwide including The Institute of Optometry, which is an internationally recognized training and research academy in the field of Optometry.

During an assessment we measure the reading performance with and without filters. Filters are only prescribed if a significant improvement in either speed or accuracy is found.

I / My Child Is Not Dyslexic But Still Has Problems With Reading

While visual processing problems are more common in individuals who have specific learning difficulties, they also occur in about 5% of the general population.

Individuals suffering from such problems have Meares-Irlen syndrome, also commonly referred to as visual stress.

Visual stress is also relatively more common in people who suffer from Migraines, Headaches, Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder, Dyspraxia, Aspergers, Multiple Sclerosis and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.



How Do I Arrange For My Childs Eyes To Be Checked ?

Simply call us to make an appointment for a Dyslexia Vision Assessment at either our Guildford branch 01483 57 79 57 or Windsor 01753 62 22 22. We aim to make the assessments a fun and enjoyable process, ensuring your child is at ease throughout the examination.

Is There Anything That I Need To Bring To The Appointment ?

Yes, please bring the following:

- Any medication your child is currently taking
- Reading material your child may be struggling with
- Any glasses that have been previously prescribed by an optician
- Recent reports from an educational psychologist or teachers
- Any coloured filters that are used for reading

An individual does not need to be diagnosed as dyslexic before having a vision assessment at The Eye Academy.

If your child displays the visual symptoms of dyslexia, or is underachieving at school, we recommend a detailed vision assessment with one of our specialist optometrists.

Additional Childrens Services Include

Squint & Lazy Eye Therapy

Contact Lenses For Children

Colour Vision Defect Detection And Management

Baby & Toddler Vision Screening

Stylish Frames For Ages 6 Months To Teens

Protective Glasses For Children Including Sports Specs

Children's Prescription And Non-Prescription Sunglasses With Full UV Protection

An Award Winning Independant Optician

Other Available Services

Digital Retinal Photography

Glaucoma Detection

Complex Contact Lens Fitting

Dry Eye Assessments

Independent Laser Vision Assessments

Designer Frames And Sunglasses

1 Hour Spectacle Service

Corneal Mapping

