
Parents urged to ensure children are ‘eye-ready’ for the classroom (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/110591>)

Poor eyesight affects learning in school

Parents have been urged to ensure that their children’s eyesight is classroom ready – as families gear up for the full return to school and homework this week.

Optometrists have warned that poor eyesight can affect learning and lead to behavioural difficulties in the classroom – and if parents have any concern they should bring their child or teenager, whatever age, to their local Optometrist for an eye exam.

Optometry Ireland President Tania Constable recommended an eye exam “if you notice eye rubbing, closing or covering of one eye, if their eyes are not lined up when looking at an object, or if they complain of not being able to see the board clearly to take down homework”.

“Poor eyesight is proven to affect children’s learning – but this can be easily avoided with the right treatment or glasses. A routine eye exam can be carried out at your local Optometrist, who are in 350 locations nationwide.”

All children are entitled to a free State funded vision screening in primary school which usually takes place in Junior Infants. However, parents were advised not to wait for this if they have an immediate concern.

Ms. Constable said that excessive screen time – which is an increased risk in children’s lives today – can increase eye strain and may play a role in the development of short-sightedness, so to limit screens and spend time outdoors every day.

Short-sightedness is most likely to start between the ages of 6-13.

“We recommend good lighting when studying or doing homework. A well-lit, spacious area will reduce eye strain and encourage good posture.”

“Complaints of tired eyes or headaches after school can be a sign of an eye problem. Eyes continue to grow and develop so it’s important to monitor children’s eye health on an ongoing basis and your local Optometrist is there to help.”

Optometry Ireland added there is an urgent need for an over 8s public eyecare programme in Ireland – and the association called on the Government to fund this in Budget 2025.

Further Information

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www.optometryireland.ie (<http://www.optometryireland.ie>)

Optometry Ireland (OI) is the professional representative body for the vast majority of practising Optometrists in Ireland, including 700 members in 350 locations nationwide. OI works to ensure the highest possible standards in provision of clinical and dispensing eye-care services to the public.

Region

Nationwide

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