

SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL START TO SCHOOL

At Kirwan State School, we realise that starting school is a significant event for every child and it is important to ensure that all students start successfully.

As a parent/carer you can assist with this success by giving them the best start possible by having their eyes and ears checked.

When having their eyes and ears tested, ask your optometrist or audiologist if they conduct **Developmental** or **Behavioural** eye/ear tests.



So what is the difference between a standard test and a Developmental/ Behavioural eye test?

A typical eye examination evaluates visual acuity (20/20, 20/40 etc), the need for glasses, and eye health.

While these are important aspects of vision, these tests may not detect many other types of visual disorders that affect reading and learning. Up to 75% of vision problems including most eye teaming (binocular vision), focusing, tracking and visual processing problems, will be missed by a basic eye exam or screening. A Developmental/ Behavioural eye test will make sure that things like the focus, how the eyes team together, how they move across a page, convergence and 3-D perception are measured.

Over 80% of what a child learns in the classroom is learned through their vision.

For more information visit <http://behaviouraloptometristsunshinecoast.com.au/learning-disabilities-and-dyslexia/link-vision-learning/>.



So what is the difference between a standard test and a Developmental/ Behavioural hearing test?

Your audiologist will select the tests that best suit your child's age, ability and overall circumstances. That will usually involve a combination of [behavioural and physiological tests](#).

For example, with older children, the audiologist will usually do a hearing test and a check of middle ear function to see whether the ears are congested, as well as a test of how clearly they understand speech by listening to words through headphones.

If the assessments show a hearing impairment, your audiologist will first confirm the results.

For more information about behavioural or physiological hearing tests visit:

<http://www.hearing.com.au/hearing-assessments-young-children/#sthash.re1Bp7Po.dpuf>.

Having these tests done will assist with your child's best possible start to school.

It is important that copies of all reports are provided to the school.

DOES MY CHILD REALLY NEED A BEHAVIOURAL EYE TEST?

A behavioural eye test checks a number of things that a regular vision test doesn't. These skills are essential for learning, especially reading.

Behavioural eye tests check for:

- **Tracking** – this skill is needed in order for a child to keep their position on a page when reading. Tracking is when the eyes can follow the line of words across the page without skipping or jumping words or lines. Children with tracking problems can skip or transpose words, lose their place, and have difficulty comprehending what they have read.
- **Focus** – at close range, this is required for reading. This skill is needed to maintain a clear image for extended periods of time. It also includes the ability to quickly shift focus when looking from near to far, such as when looking from our desk to the board. Print will become progressively blurry as they read for longer periods of time, and their eyes will fatigue from the strain of trying to keep the print clear.
- **Visual Perception** – these skills help children
 - Distinguish between similarly spelled words, such as was/saw, then/when, on/one, or run/ran;
 - remember what a word looks like or recalling the same word read earlier on a page or previous page;
 - remember characters in order (important for spelling);
 - know left from right which can cause a child to read and write reversed letters such as b for d;
 - or locate an object on a busy page.
- **Depth Perception** – refers to our ability to determine distances between objects and see the world in three dimensions. If a child has problems with depth perception, they will experience difficulties with reading, may have blurred or double vision and bump into things or not be able to catch a ball that is thrown or rolled to them.

The following optometrists offer Behavioural Eye Tests funded by Medicare:

- Greenfields (Castletown) – 4771 2417
- Virginia Henry (North Ward) – 4724 1700

Please request a Behavioural Eye Test when making an appointment to ensure your child has the necessary vision skills essential for learning, and ask the optometrist for a report to give to your child's teacher.

Help us give your child the best chance for learning.