



## CHILDREN'S EYE SERVICE



## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Please ask your orthoptist at your next appointment if you have any further questions to ask; they will be happy to help!

Hertfordshire Community **NHS**  
NHS Trust

## Squint

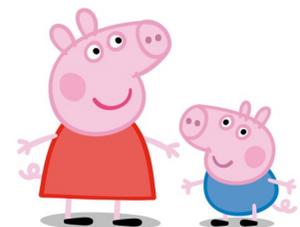


### CHILDREN'S EYE SERVICE

St Albans Children's Centre  
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St Albans  
AL3 5JB

Marlowes Health and Wellbeing Centre  
39—41 The Marlowes  
Hemel Hempstead  
HP1 1LD

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# Squint

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## What is a squint?

The medical term for a squint is strabismus.

A squint is when an eye turns or wanders so that it does not work with the other eye. The eye may turn inwards, outwards, upwards or downwards. The eye may turn all of the time or only sometimes (for example, when the child is tired or concentrating).

## What causes a squint?

The most common causes for squints in children are refractive error, eye muscle imbalance, genetics. However, it is not always possible to tell why a child has a squint.



## Will my child grow out of the squint?

Some very young babies have intermittent squints that get better by the age of 3 months. A squint that is still present after 3 months needs to be checked by an orthoptist or ophthalmologist.

## Why does the squint matter?

The sight in the eye with the squint may not develop normally because the eye is not being stimulated properly. This can lead to amblyopia, which is a “lazy eye” because the vision doesn’t develop.

The squint may make it difficult for the two eyes to work together and this may reduce the child’s depth perception (3D vision). This does not usually cause children any problems in their everyday lives but there are few careers they may not be able to do.

Some squint can affect the child’s appearance and make it difficult to tell where they are looking.

## What treatment may be needed?

- Glasses

Many children with a squint need glasses. The most common reason for glasses is that the child with long-sight is trying to focus which is causing one eye to turn inwards. The glasses help relax the eyes out. You will still notice the squint without glasses.

- Patching

A patch is placed over the “good eye” to strengthen the vision in the weaker eye. The patch only helps to improve vision, not the squint. It is important to improve the vision before further treatment for the squint.

- Surgery

If the child does not need glasses or still has a large squint with glasses on, then an operation on the eye muscles may be considered.

