

Visual acuity

What are the 'normal' visual acuity values?

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The 'normal' visual acuity values are established by the National Screening Committee and the British and Irish Orthoptic Society.

The UK Government guidelines state:

'A child who has undetected poor vision may show clumsiness, learning difficulties, behavioural problems and be disruptive in school' and 'impaired visual acuity can affect ability to learn and behaviour'.



For children four years and older, 'normal' visual acuity is accepted as 0.20 or less (less, ie: a smaller number, is better vision) with a letter chart. The accepted 'normal' for a picture chart is 0.10.

So your child has poorer than 'normal' vision if the score is:

- LARGER than 0.20 (eg: 0.275 or 0.4) with a letter test
- LARGER than 0.10 (eg: 0.15 or 0.3) with a picture test

Some use a different system, which is written as a fraction such as 6/6 or 3/3. In this system, the accepted 'normal' is 6/7.5 or 3/3.8 for letters and 6/6 or 3/3 for pictures.

So your child has poorer than 'normal' vision if the bottom number of the score is:

- LARGER than 6/7.5 or 3/3.8 for a letter test
- LARGER than 6/6 or 3/3 for a letter test

Most hospital clinics use the above system for scoring vision.

