



## Vision Support Team

### Team for Children with Vision Loss

# Retinoblastoma

#### What is Retinoblastoma?

Retinoblastoma is a rare type of eye cancer that can affect young children.

- It is a growth of cells in the retina. The retina is the light-sensitive lining on the inside of the eye. The light causes the retina to send signals to the brain. The brain interprets the signals as images.
- It most often affects one eye. Very occasionally it happens in both eyes.
- It should be noted that although this is a form of cancer it is a very treatable form of cancer.

#### How does this affect the way the child sees?

They may:

- develop loss of field of vision in the affected eye making it difficult to see people and objects from the side of the affected eye till later (please refer to our leaflets on field loss for advice and strategies).
- have depth perception difficulties.
- have full loss of vision in the one eye.
- in the rare occurrence of both eyes being affected, the vision will be affected in both eyes.

#### How will it affect the appearance of the eye?

- The appearance of one or both eyes may change with a white colour in the centre circle of the eye when light is shone in the eye. It might show up in flash photos.
- Eye redness, pain or eye swelling.
- Eyes that seem to be looking in different directions.

#### What can be done to help?

- Make an appointment with a doctor for a referral to Hospital Ophthalmology for medical treatment as soon as possible.
- The child will require regular interventions and advice from the Hospital Ophthalmology department.
- The child will regularly require medicated treatment eye-drops under the guidance of the ophthalmologist.
- The child may be prescribed glasses.
- If the vision in the **good eye is reduced, or the condition is affecting both eyes** seek referral to the [Vision Support Team](#) for Vision support and advice from a Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment.

#### How can parents, family, friends, and teachers make a difference?

- Ensure the eyes are bathed regularly and kept clean, using a warm flannel, in a damping motion and not a rubbing motion as directed by Ophthalmologist
- Ensure eye drops are used frequently- as instructed by the Ophthalmologist.

- If the child requires eye drops used within the school day, this will need support from a designated school staff member.
- If the child reports painful eyes, follow up with the Ophthalmologist.
- If the child has a flare up, they may temporarily need the following:
  - ✓ To sit at the front/specific side (depending if there is field loss).
  - ✓ Have enlarged print
  - ✓ Support for reducing the effects of glare from the sunlight and overhead lights, i.e., sunglasses for outside and blinds in the classroom.

Please note the font used in this information leaflet is called Verdana and is used because it is one of the most visually friendly fonts for people with vision difficulties and is also Dyslexia friendly too.

**Further information for Birmingham Vision Support Team Local Offer**  
**website:** [Birmingham Vision Support Team](#)

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