

Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program



Vision screening

Information for school staff

The Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program (PSNHRP) is a Queensland Government initiative aimed at optimising the health and wellbeing of Queensland children during their first year of school, with a key focus on free vision screening for prep students. Registered Nurses, based in communities across Queensland, offer this service to prep students in all state, catholic and independent schools.

Why is this important?

- In 2024, 74 per cent of children who were referred by the PSNHRP were found to have a visual abnormality.
- Vision loss can result in poor learning outcomes, behavioural issues and difficulty concentrating. The vision screening program provides the opportunity for visual abnormalities to be detected early to minimise the long-term impacts on a child's learning.

How does the program work?

- *The Public Health Act 2005 (Qld)* authorises school principals to disclose student and parent information to certain school health program providers. This allows our program to contact parents/guardians for consent and follow up. Paper forms can be sent to the school for parents who do not wish to be contacted directly by our program.
- There is a licence agreement in place between PSNHRP and both the Department of Education and Catholic Education Diocese which outlines the mutual responsibilities for delivery of this program. This information will be shared with the school principal.
- The program uses two non-invasive screening tools: A letter matching tool to check visual acuity and an automated screening device. Screening takes approximately five minutes per child with minimal disruption to the child's learning.
- This is a screening program only. If a vision concern is found, the parent/guardian will receive a phone call from the nurse to discuss referral to an eye health professional for further assessment. The parent/guardian of every child that is vision screened will be notified of the results in writing.

What do classroom teachers need to know?

- Children who do not have a valid consent form signed by a parent/carer will not be screened by the PSNHRP. Late consent forms will be accepted on the day.
- Parents do not need to be present for screening but are advised to contact the school to arrange, should they wish to be present.
- On the day of screening the registered nurse will:
 - Identify each child by asking them their full name, date of birth and parent/guardian name. Your assistance in preparing the children for these questions prior to the screening would be greatly appreciated.
 - Set up the screening room and provide a simple explanation of the screening process to the children.
 - Require teacher aide assistance to support supervision of the children and ensure accurate identification of each child.
 - Require children who already wear glasses to bring them to the screening.
- Once screening is complete, the principal will be notified of any students requiring further assessment by an eye health professional, if parental or guardian consent has been obtained to share this information.

Should you wish to provide feedback or have any questions about the program, please contact the program. An online survey will be sent to the school principal following completion of screening.

Contact us

Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program

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w www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/our-work/prep-vision-screening



Children's Health Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Returning from Visit artwork produced for Children's Health Queensland by Casey Coolwell-Fisher, CHABOO.



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