



Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to you today within the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding between NHS England and the Clinical Council for Eye Health Commissioning (CCEHC). The CCEHC is aware of the extensive work that NHS England has done in developing and trialling the NHS England Special School Eye Care Service (SSECS). We and our member organisations have been, and remain, supportive of the development of an appropriate service which delivers eye care for children with special needs.

We are concerned by the delay and apparent lack of progress in the current evaluation process and subsequent commissioning of a long-term solution that supports those children who require such a service. In addition, we also consider that any potential restriction of such a service to purely residential schools would be a denial of service to children with identical needs but different social circumstances, notwithstanding the goals set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

We would therefore strongly urge NHS England to commission a School Eye Care Service for children with special needs which:

- Allows for appropriate adjustments to be made to facilitate the delivery of care in an environment best suited for each individual child.
- A service which ensures equity of access to care whatever the needs of an individual child.
- Ensures that children are not forced to be seen, unnecessary for their care needs, by the Hospital Eye Service in a secondary care setting.
- We believe and would stress that all these points should be addressed by any commissioned service.

The CCEHC membership covers the whole spectrum of organisations working in eye care, and we are keen to continue a dialogue with NHS England on this issue, as well as to use our good offices to inform your evaluation and support progress in commissioning an appropriate service for these children with special needs.

We look forward to hearing from you as how best you consider such a dialogue can be taken forward.

Kind regards,

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