

**British Veterinary Association/Kennel Club/  
International Sheepdog Society  
Eye Scheme**

**Information for owners**

The BVA/KC/ISDS Eye Scheme is primarily concerned with examination of eyes of dogs for inherited eye disease in KC and ISDS registered dogs and also includes examination of the eyes and adnexa (adnexa = lids, lacrimal apparatus, orbit and para-orbital areas). At present certificates of eye examinations are issued in respect of inherited conditions of the eye only and not for inherited conditions of the adnexa. Eleven different inherited conditions in pedigree breeds of dog are currently certified under the Scheme (Schedule A). In addition, a number of other conditions that *may* be inherited are listed as "under investigation" (Schedule B). It is possible for non-registered pedigree and non-pedigree dogs to be examined under the Eye Scheme, but the results from such animals are not published. The aim of the Eye scheme is to reduce or eliminate the incidence of inherited eye disease by ensuring that dogs used for breeding have healthy eyes, and to recognise new and emerging problems.

It is possible to arrange for examination of litters of puppies or individual dogs.

**Individual dogs** can be examined at any age but, in general, the best age for the first eye test and issue of a **Certificate of Eye Examination** is after the dog has reached one year of age and before it is used for breeding. If the dog is registered with the Kennel Club and/or International Sheep dog Society, the results of this examination are sent for publication. Because the age of onset of non-congenital inherited eye disease varies according to such factors as the type of disease and breed of dog, annual re-examination may be necessary. Panellists will advise owners as to the requirements for any subsequent eye examinations.

**Litter screening** only applies to congenital (present from birth) and early onset conditions in puppies of up to 12 weeks of age. For conditions such as Collie Eye Anomaly (CEA), it is best to screen litters as early in life as possible (5-6 weeks of age) because minor lesions may not be detected ophthalmoscopically by the time the puppies have reached 12 weeks of age. The situation is more complicated for various types of inherited retinal dysplasia and it is best to obtain information on specific

breeds direct form the Panellist. Results of litter screening are recorded on a **Litter Screening Form** and are not published.

The certificate is in three parts. The details of the dog and the owner are recorded in the first (upper) section, together with the date of the last examination. Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010, all dogs presented for **individual examination** are required to be permanently identified (PI) before examination and certification. Microchip or tattoo are both acceptable for PI and the identification will be verified prior to examination. The owner or agent will be required to sign and date this part of the certificate and provide the relevant owner registration documents **before** the examination is performed. The second (middle) section indicates the method(s) of eye examination used by the panellist and records any variations from normal (i.e. inherited and non-inherited anomalies and abnormalities) which are detected during examination; so, for example, conformational defects such as entropion and ectropion as well as acquired abnormalities such as corneal scars, would be recorded in this section. The third (lower) section lists the inherited eye diseases which can be certified under the Eye Scheme Procedure Notes current on the day of examination in the specific breeds listed in the Procedure Notes. In a breed where no inherited eye disease is detailed in the Procedure Notes, and in non-registered dogs, none of the boxes will be marked.

Puppies presented for litter screening do not require PI at present.

The completed certificate is issued to the owner or agent at the time of the examination. However, if the necessary registration documents are not produced, the certificate cannot be completed and issued. Results in such circumstances may be withheld until the full and correct documentation is provided.

*"Clinically affected"* signifies that the dog shows evidence of inherited eye disease(s) specified.

*"Clinically unaffected"* signifies that, at the time of examination, the eye is not clinically affected by the disease(s) specified. **Some dogs will develop non-congenital inherited diseases when older, so re-examination is essential for the establishment of clear breeding lines in most breeds.**