



Ballyclare Secondary School

CONCUSSION POLICY

Concussion is caused when force has been transmitted to the head. It can have a range of symptoms which does not always include loss of consciousness. All concussions are serious and can happen in any sport or activity. Most people recover within a few days but sometimes recovery can take longer. Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) is a rare condition that occurs when a person with symptoms relating to concussion suffers a second head injury. SIS may occur days or weeks after the initial concussion. Although the second injury may be relatively minor, it can lead to collapse and can be fatal.

The purpose of this protocol is to help:

- Recognise the dangers of concussion
- Educate everyone to be able to recognise and manage concussion and hence minimise the associated risks.
- Remind everyone that the benefits of sport and activities far outweigh the risks.
 - Roles and Responsibilities to educate pupils, parents, and all staff on how to recognise concussion and follow the guidance in this protocol, in the interest in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupil. They should report any suspected concussion to the school nurse or seek immediate emergency medical assistance as appropriate. In addition, they should complete an Incident Report Form, available from a First Aider. All staff should be informed of any pupil who has presented with suspected concussion.

Sports Staff If concussion is suspected based on the application of the guidelines outlined in the Concussion Recognition Tool should,

- Remove the player from the game at once
- The player should not be returned to any activity until they are assessed medically
- No-one with suspected concussion should be left alone or allowed to drive
- Clear information must be passed on when handing the player over to parents/carers of what you know about the suspected concussion
- Appropriate training should be undertaken to help reduce the risk of concussion.
- Ensure all staff are notified of suspected concussion and a formal record should be kept as required by Health & Safety Legislation

- The pupil should be medically assessed either at the scene or taken by the school/parent/carer to A&E or a GP. Parents/carers of a pupil who has suspected concussion following an incident in school will be given guidelines on points to look for when dealing with suspected concussion.
- There should be no return to play or strenuous or sport related activity and return to play protocol followed.
- When a pupil is placed on a graduated return to play protocol by a health care professional, it is important that the school, parents/carers and all staff understand that this means restrictions to the levels of exertion or physical contact should be applied to all their activities. The school will follow the following Graduated Return to Play Protocol: Rehabilitation Stage Exercise at each stage of rehabilitation No of Days Total Days 1. No activity. Complete physical and mental rest. 14 days 14 days 2. Light aerobic exercise. Walking/swimming/stationary cycling. 2 days 16 days 3. Sport-specific exercises. Running drills. No contact. 2 days 18 days 4. Non-contact training drills. Progression to more complex training drills. 2 days 20 days 5. Following medical clearance* full contact practice. May participate in normal training activities. 2 days 22 days 6. After 24 hours, return to play. May return to full play. 1 day 23 days *The School's preferred protocol is to receive clearance from a medical practitioner. Parents must complete and return a concussion clearance form after stage 4 of the graduated return to play protocol.

When a pupil is placed on a graduated return to learn protocol, the exact details will be unique to each individual but will involve a graduated reintroduction to school activities and will include some/all of the following:

Reassurance from all in the school that the pupil will be supported through their recovery

- Shortened school days
- Extra time for assignments
- No/limited homework
- Postponement of exams/assessments and regular review of progress.2

INFORMATION FOR BALLYCLARE SECONDARY PUPILS WITH SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

Dear Parent/Carer Following an incident your son/daughter has a suspected concussion. They have been assessed and have displayed one or more of the following symptoms:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsion
- Balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness
- Mood changes
- Fatigue or low energy
- Confusion

- “Don’t feel right” • Headache
- Dizziness • Feeling slowed down
- “Pressure in head”
- Blurred vision • Sensitivity to light
- Amnesia
- Feeling like “in a fog”
- Changes in normal behaviour

It is our recommendation that they be checked by a medical professional to assess the severity of the injury. Until symptoms have disappeared they should not be allowed to drive, use mobile devices or computers and they may need to rest at home. In line with school policy we will apply the compulsory Graduated Return to Play protocol, which can be accessed on the school website: Pastoral Care →Concussion Protocol.