

Head injury, concussion and return to play policy

Introduction

Dollar Academy seeks to provide a safe return to all activities for pupils after injury, particularly concussion. As such, Dollar Academy has established this policy to outline procedures for staff, parents and pupils to follow in the management of head injuries.

Definitions

Head injury is a trauma to the head that may or may not include injury to the brain.

Concussion is the sudden but short-lived **loss of mental function** that occurs after a blow or other injury to the head (a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion).

Please note that there is no such thing as mild concussion.

Recognition of Concussion

Common signs and symptoms of head injury resulting in concussion:

Signs (observed by others)	Symptoms (reported by pupil)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil appears dazed or stunned • Confusion • Unsure about game, score, opponent • Moves clumsily (altered co-ordination) • Balance problems • Personality change • Responds slowly to questions • Forgets events prior to injury • Forgets events after the injury • Loss of consciousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Fatigue • Nausea or vomiting • Double vision, blurry vision • Sensitive to light or noise • Feels sluggish • Feels 'foggy' • Problems concentrating • Problems remembering

Management

At the time of injury, the pupil is to be removed from the activity/game and **not to return to play that day**. If this occurs on a school day the pupil should be escorted to the Nursing Centre or the School Nurse should be called to assess the pupil at the site of the incident (ext. 299/07917 434754/07881 811669). If the injury is serious an ambulance should also be called immediately by the staff with the pupil. At weekend fixtures, a doctor, the School Nurse, First Aider or Physiotherapist (for the 1stXV) will be at the pitch side and will attend to the injured player. Parents or Houseparents (if the pupil is a boarder) will be contacted by the school nurse as soon as possible after the event.

If there are signs or symptoms of concussion, the pupil must be seen by a health professional or first aider and they may advise that they are taken to the GP or A&E. Treatment involves physical and cognitive rest until symptoms resolve. The symptoms usually go away entirely within three weeks, but in some cases a longer time frame for recovery may be necessary. Some pupils play for a club

side as well as school. Players and parents **must** ensure that both the school and club are informed of the head injury or concussion.

Dollar Academy is aware of the New UK Wide Concussion Guidelines for Grassroots Sport (April 23'). The Scottish Rugby Union are currently reviewing this guidance and have advised all player to follow the new Graduated Return to Play Protocols. However, Dollar Academy considers the previous SRU pathway to be more robust and have decided to continue in this precautionary manner until an official statement is released by the SRU. This means that any pupil diagnosed with concussion should have 14 days off all physical activity once symptom free with a gradual return to sports (non-contact) over the next 8 days if remaining symptom free. This means that a pupil with a concussion will be off contact sports for a minimum of 23 days and longer if symptoms persist.

MINIMUM RETURN TO PLAY INTERVALS WHEN FOLLOWING GRADED RETURN TO PLAY (G RTP) PROTOCOL

AGE GROUP	G RTP Stage 1 Minimum Rest Period	G RTP 2 Stage 2 to 5	G RTP 6 Minimum Return to Play Interval
Children and Adolescents (aged 18 and under)	14 Days	4 Stage G RTP Progression every 48 hours, if symptom free	14 day rest + 8 day G RTP = Day 23 post injury

During the initial period following a suspected concussion diagnosis a pupil should take it easy for the first 24-48 hours. It is best to minimise any activity to 10–15-minute slots. Walking, reading and some easy daily activities are all acceptable as long as symptoms are not increased. Phone or computer time should be kept to the absolute minimum to help recovery.

Further reading

Your 'one-stop-shop' for everything you need to know about concussion.

[Concussion Hub - Scottish Rugby](#)

[Head injury and concussion - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

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