



CONCUSSION POLICY

Summary of changes

Staff member responsible	Revision date	Approved by	Approval date	Reason for update	Frequency of Review
Director of Sport & School Nurses		SSG	12/08/26		12 months or after serious incident

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PURPOSE

Dollar Academy is committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of all pupils. This concussion policy ensures that any suspected or confirmed concussion is recognised, managed, and monitored in accordance with best practice and national guidance, based on the “If in doubt, sit them out” principle. A graduated return to education and sport must be followed in all cases of suspected or confirmed concussion, with a minimum of 24 hours between stages.

SCOPE

- All school activities (curricular and co-curricular)
- All staff (teaching, support, and external)
- All volunteers and visiting coaches
- All pupils

RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Director of Sport	Ensure the policy is implemented and adhered to across all sporting activities. Oversee and organise staff / coach training related to concussion management.
First Aider / School Nurse at scene	Assess injury and provide immediate care. Gather information for later accident form submission.
School Nurse ‘follow up’	Collaborate with pupil, parents, staff and coaches during the ‘Graduated return to education/work & sport’. No return to contact training or matches until authorised by School Nurses. Add and update protocol stages on the iSAMS ‘off games’ tab for staff.
PE/Sports Staff & Coaches	Recognise symptoms, take immediate action, complete accident report form, inform school nurses and director of sport. Regularly review iSAMS ‘off games’ to ensure staged recovery is followed.
Parents	Support recovery in conjunction with school and any involved health services. Inform outside sports clubs.
Pupils	Report symptoms and avoid hiding symptoms, follow concussion protocol in conjunction with parents, school nurses, school staff, coaches and director of sport.

DEFINITION OF CONCUSSION

Concussion is a type of brain injury that can happen after a head injury, or a forceful knock to the body. It can occur even if you've stayed conscious (awake) after the injury. Concussions often happen when someone is playing sport and only 10% of concussions involve someone being knocked out. It can affect children differently to adults and recovery must be carefully managed.

RECOGNITION OF CONCUSSION

Common Symptoms can include:

- Headache, nausea, vomiting
- Dizziness, balance issues
- Blurred vision, sensitivity to light/noise
- Memory loss, confusion, "feeling foggy"
- Emotional changes: irritability, sadness
- Fatigue or sleep disturbance

Red Flag Symptoms (Seek emergency help/call 999 immediately)

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures or convulsions
- Weakness, numbness, or tingling
- Persistent or increasing headache
- Repeated vomiting
- Confusion or unusual behaviour

Immediate Action at Time of Accident: "If in doubt, sit them out"

- Call the pitch-side first aider or School Nurse to assist.
- Assess for red flag symptoms – call 999 for an ambulance and contact parents/carers immediately.
- If there are no red flag symptoms and it is safe to do so, remove the pupil from play immediately.
- Do not allow the pupil to return to play or PE that day.
- Following any head injury, the pupil must not undertake sport or strenuous physical activity for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Staff in attendance must complete a Dollar Academy Accident/Incident Form on SharePoint.
- Ensure School Nurses are updated with all relevant information to allow entry into the pupil's nursing record and appropriate follow-up.
- Staff in attendance to provide parents/carers with head injury and concussion advice leaflets, and signpost them to the Dollar Academy Concussion Policy online.

GRADUATED RETURN TO EDUCATION, WORK & SPORT SUMMARY

GRADUATED RETURN TO EDUCATION/WORK & SPORT SUMMARY (See full table below for detail)	
Stage 1	Relative Rest for 24–48 hours • Minimise screen time • Gentle exercise*
Stage 2	Gradually introduce daily activities • Activities away from school/work (introduce TV, increase reading, games etc)* • Exercise –light physical activity (e.g. short walks) †
Stage 3	Increase tolerance for mental & exercise activities • Increase study/work-related activities with rest periods* • Increase intensity of exercise*
Stage 4	Return to study/work and sport training • Part-time return to education/work* • Start training activities without risk of head impact*
Stage 5	Return to normal work/education and full training • Full work/education • If symptom-free at rest for 14 days consider full training
Stage 6	Return to sports competition (NOT before day 21) as long as symptom free at rest for 14 days and during the pre-competition training of Stage 5

Stage	Focus	Description of activity	Comments
Stage 1	Relative rest period (24-48 hours)	Take it easy for the first 24-48 hours after a suspected concussion. It is best to minimise any activity to 10 to 15-minute slots. You may walk, read and do some easy daily activities provided that your concussion symptoms are no more than mildly increased. Phone or computer screen time should be kept to the absolute minimum to help recovery.	
Stage 2	Return to normal daily activities outside of school or work.	• Increase mental activities through easy reading, limited television, games, and limited phone and computer use. • Gradually introduce school and work activities at home. • Advancing the volume of mental activities can occur as long as they do not increase symptoms more than mildly.	There may be some mild symptoms with activity, which is OK. If they become more than mildly exacerbated by the mental or physical activity in Stage 2, rest briefly until they subside.
	Physical Activity (e.g. week 1)	• After the initial 24-48 hours of relative rest, gradually increase light physical activity. • Increase daily activities like moving around the house, simple chores and short walks. Briefly rest if these activities more than mildly increase symptoms.	
Stage 3	Increasing tolerance for thinking activities	• Once normal level of daily activities can be tolerated then explore adding in some home-based school or work-related activity, such as homework, longer periods of reading or paperwork in 20 to 30-minute blocks with a brief rest after each block. • Discuss with school or employer about returning part-time, time for rest or breaks, or doing limited hours each week from home	Progressing too quickly through stages 3 - 5 whilst symptoms are significantly worsened by exercise may slow recovery. Although headaches are the most common symptom following concussion and may persist for several months, exercise should be limited to that which does not more than mildly exacerbate them. Symptom exacerbation with physical activity and exercise is generally safe, brief and is self-limiting typically lasting from several minutes to a few hours.
	Light aerobic exercise (e.g. weeks 1 or 2)	• Walking or stationary cycling for 10-15 minutes. Start at an intensity where able to easily speak in short sentences. The duration and the intensity of the exercise can gradually be increased according to tolerance. • If symptoms more than mildly increase, or new symptoms appear, stop and briefly rest. Resume at a reduced level of exercise intensity until able to tolerate it without more than mild symptom exacerbation. • Brisk walks and low intensity, body weight resistance training are fine but no high intensity exercise or added weight resistance training.	
Stage 4	Return to study and work	• May need to consider a part-time return to school or reduced activities in the workplace (e.g. half-days, breaks, avoiding hard physical work, avoiding complicated study).	Progressing too quickly through stages 3 - 5 whilst symptoms are significantly worsened by exercise may slow recovery. Although headaches are the most common symptom following concussion and may persist for several months, exercise should be limited to that which does not more than mildly exacerbate them. Symptom exacerbation with physical activity and exercise is generally safe, brief and is self-limiting typically lasting from several minutes to a few hours.
	Non-contact training (e.g. during week 2)	• Start training activities in chosen sport once not experiencing symptoms at rest from the recent concussion. It is important to avoid any training activities involving head impacts or where there may be a risk of head injury. Now increase the intensity of exercise and resistance training.	
Stage 5	Return to full academic or work-related activity	• Return to full activity and catch up on any missed work.	Individuals should only return to training activities involving head impacts or where there may be a risk of head injury when they have not experienced symptoms at rest from their recent concussion for 14 days.
	Unrestricted training activities (not before week 3)	• When free of symptoms at rest from the recent concussion for 14 days can consider commencing training activities involving head impacts or where there may be a risk of head injury.	Recurrence of concussion symptoms following head impact in training should trigger removal of the player from the activity.
Stage 6	Return to competition	This stage should not be reached before day 21* (at the earliest) <u>and</u> only if no symptoms at rest have been experienced from the recent concussion in the preceding 14 days and now symptom free during pre-competition training. * The day of the concussion is Day 0 (see example below).	Resolution of symptoms is only one factor influencing the time before a safe return to competition with a predictable risk of head injury. Approximately two-thirds of individuals will be able to return to full sport by 28 days but children, adolescents and young adults may take longer.

CONCUSSION INFORMATION & LINKS

- Concussion. NHS Inform <https://shorturl.at/1U9IK>
- UK Concussion Guidelines for Non-Elite (Grassroots) Sport (2024) <https://shorturl.at/6H8TT>
- If in doubt sit them out. Scottish Sports Concussion Guidance: grassroots sport and general public (2024) <https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/ztfnilyc/concussion-guidance-2024.pdf>
- Scottish Rugby Concussion Hub <https://scottishrugby.org/rules-and-regulations/player-welfare/concussion-hub/>
- Rugby Right Scottish Rugby's annual Welfare E-Learning Course for all coaches and match officials. <https://scottishrugby.org/community-game/game-development/all-courses/rugbyright/>
- Scottish Rugby. Concussion e-module for players, volunteers and parents (2023) <https://share.articulate.com/HoTe1aiUNt0mCpC5zWRkP>
- Sports Scotland 'If in doubt, sit them out – Grassroots sports concussion e-learning module'. https://learning.sportscotland.org.uk/product?catalog=IIDSTO_concussion_2024