

# Head Injury and Concussion Protocol



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Responsible Person:	Nurse Manager
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## HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION

A bump on the head, a head injury and concussion can occur in many different situation; at home, in the school environment, participating in sport and just by going about the normal activities of daily living.

### What is concussion?

A concussion is a disturbance in brain function caused by a direct or indirect force to the head. It results in a variety of non-specific signs and symptoms and most often does not involve loss of consciousness.

### Signs and symptoms of concussion

See below of some of the signs and symptoms that may be present in a person suffering from concussion. This is by no means an inclusive list.

Dizziness	Confused	Loss of consciousness
Headache	Difficulty in concentration	Pressure in head
Nausea and vomiting	Not retaining information	Feeling generally unwell
Blurred vision/visual disturbances	Sensitive to light	Drowsiness
Emotionally labile	Feels slowed down	Fuzzy headed
'Don't feel right'	Poor coordination	Feeling dazed or stunned

### Managing concussion

There is no specific treatment for concussion but there are things that can be done to avoid further brain injury and to aid recovery.

- Rest and moderating activity are key to making a full recovery from concussion. The RFU say that 'After a concussion the brain needs to rest, so initially the player should have complete rest from all physical and brain activities such as; exercise, reading, television, computer, video games and smart phones. Sleep is good for recovery. There is however a balance needed and too much complete rest is thought to delay recovery, so returning to light activities of daily living as soon as the symptoms have started to reduce is advised. No more than 24hrs complete rest is all that is needed in most cases. Once symptoms have resolved they can gradually re-introduce normal activities but during this time they should NOT return to sport or activities with a predictable risk of further head injury. If symptoms return then reduce the levels of provoking activity, rest and then reintroduce them more gradually.' (see *Appendix 1: Graduated Return to Play (GRTP)*)

- In line with the RFU guidelines, St John's School recommends that pupils have 24hrs complete rest post injury where concussion is suspected. This may require the pupil to be absent from school.
- Alcohol; concussion can reduce tolerance to alcohol and can mask the symptoms of the condition worsening. Alcohol should be avoided for the first few days after injury and preferably until pupil is fully recovered
- Driving; Driving requires a lot of concentration. When suffering from concussion reactions are less sharp and decision-making impaired. The pupil should avoid driving until their symptoms have resolved.

Concussion is complex and effects individuals in different ways. The following link gives a very informative and comprehensive overview of concussion, what to expect and how to manage it. <https://play.buto.tv/T3QDn?t=13>

## **Management of Concussion within School**

### **If a pupil receives a bump to the head during the School day**

- Where appropriate, first aid will be given and Health Centre staff called to attend if necessary
- Pupil is escorted to the Health Centre
- School Nursing staff will make a full assessment and give appropriate care
- Witness may be asked for information regarding the injury to aid assessment
- The pupil will be monitored in the Health Centre by the School Nurse for a minimum of 30 minutes
- If the pupil is exhibiting no signs or symptoms of concussion they will return to academic lessons
- The pupil will not attend PE or Games for the remainder of the day
- The pupils parents will be informed and Head Injury information will be given to the pupil and parents
- The pupils House and teaching staff will be informed
- The pupil will be asked to attend the Health Centre and see the School Nurse if feels at all unwell during the remainder of the day.
- If Boarding, the pupil is instructed to inform House Staff if they feel at all unwell.
- The pupil is to see attend the Health Centre the next day to be reviewed by the School Nurse
- If the School Nurse is at all concerned, the parents will be contacted and appropriate action taken

### **If a pupil has suspected concussion following a blow to the head, face, neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring**

*NB. School recognises that head injury and concussion can occur from a blow to any part of the body when damaging forces are transmitted to the brain.*

#### **During the School day**

- Where appropriate, first aid will be given and Health Centre staff called to attend if necessary
- Pupil is escorted to the Health Centre
- School Nursing staff will make a full assessment and give appropriate care
- Witness may be asked for information regarding the injury to aid assessment
- The School Nurse will monitor the pupil and a Concussion Assessment check list completed (*Appendix 2*)
- The pupil will be monitored for the minimum of 30 minutes
- Parents will be informed and asked to collect their son or daughter from school
- Parents will be advised to seek medical advice as necessary
- Pupils are advised to rest at home for 24 hours post head injury (*see Appendix 1*)
- Pupils will attend Concussion Clinic on the Monday following their head injury to be assessed by the School Doctor
- Until seen in Concussion Clinic, the pupil must abstain from all sport and physical activity
- House staff and teaching staff will be informed that the pupil has suspected concussion
- The pupil will be placed on the Graduated Return to Play (G RTP) protocol (*see Appendix 1*)
- Pupils are to be reviewed by the School Nurse on a daily basis until symptom free

#### **During sports training or fixtures**

- If a player sustains a blow to the head, face, neck or body and concussion is suspected they are removed from playing/training immediately
- The player is assessed and the appropriate first aid is given
- The player is referred to the medical team in attendance and any advice given by them adhered to
- If no medical team are in attendance the players parents will be asked to take the player to A&E for a medical assessment

- The players parents are informed and asked to collect their son or daughter
- Head injury advise is given to the player and parents
- Parents will be advised to seek medical advice as necessary
- Pupils are advised to rest at home for 24 hours post head injury (*see Appendix 1*)
- Pupils will attend Concussion Clinic on the Monday following their head injury to be assessed by the School Doctor
- Until seen in Concussion Clinic, the pupil must abstain from all sport and physical activity
- The pupil will be placed on the GRTP protocol (*see Appendix 1*)
- Pupils are to be reviewed by the School Nurse on a daily basis until symptom free
- Coaches will inform the Health Centre and House staff that the player has sustained an injury

### **Bump to the head, head injury or concussion sustained while not taking part in a school activity**

If a pupil bumps their head or sustains any injury out of school that results in concussion or possible concussion, parents and guardians must inform the School. Please contact the Health Centre on 01372 385485 or email [healthcentr@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:healthcentr@stjohns.surrey.sch.uk)

The pupil will be assessed, referred to Concussion Clinic and placed on the GRTP protocol if concussion is suspected. (*see Appendix 1*)

### **Managing academic studies when suffering with concussion**

- The Health Centre produces a table of all pupils who are concussed. The table works as a traffic light system and shows what stage of GRTP the pupils are in and the level of activity is permitted in each stage. (*see Appendix 1*)
- The list is emailed to all House, academic and games staff on a weekly basis and updated as necessary.
- Individual pupils House staff and teachers will be emailed informing them when a pupil has sustained a concussion
- The staff are aware that pupils suffering with concussion may have difficulty concentrating for long periods and retaining information
- Staff are aware that a pupil may need to limit the time they can look at screens and computers
- If a pupils feels unwell in class they will be sent to the Health Centre for review by the School Nurse
- Staff are aware that concussion effects people in different ways and that symptoms and recovery time vary between pupils

## Appendix 1

### GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY (GRTP)

St John's School has adopted the RFU Graduated Return to Play protocol across all sports and activates when a pupil is suspected to have concussion. 'Concussion must be taken extremely seriously to safeguard the short and long term health and welfare of players.' Please see the 'Recovery and Return to Play' document which accompanies *Appendix 1*.

The School has developed a traffic light system to aid pupils, parents and staff to easily see which stage of the **5 Stages of GRTP** protocol the pupil is on. When a pupil commences on the GRTP protocol they will be given a copy of this table and details of the expected dates they will move from one **Stage** to the next.

GRTP STAGES					
DAY	STAGE	REHABILITATION STAGE	EXERCISE ALLOWED	OBJECTIVE	NOTES
Day 1 post injury	1	Rest	Complete rest from all physical and brain activities eg. exercise, TV, computers and screens	Rest the brain post injury	Recommend not attending school for 1 day
Day 2 - 14		Rest	Gradually return to normal daily activities and academic study. <b>NO sport or any physical activity for 14 days</b>	Recovery	Symptoms should gradually reduce. If symptoms occur rest for 24hrs and resume activity
Day 15 - 16	2	Light aerobic exercise	Walking, low intensity - swimming, PE lessons, cycling	Increase heart rate and assess recovery	If symptoms occur while progressing through the GRTP Stages, the pupil should rest for a minimum of 48hrs and until symptom free. They may then return to the previous Stage.
Day 17 - 20	3 + 4	Non-contact sports specific exercise and training drills	Sports training sessions, PE lessons, activities - progressive increases in complexity, intensity and decision making	Add movement, increase exercise and cognitive load. Assess recovery	
Day 21	5	Full contact practice	Normal training activities, full contact practice		Assess recovery, restore confidence
Day 23	6	Return to play	Player rehabilitated	Safe return to play once fully recovered	

APPENDIX 2

**Concussion Assessment Signs & Symptoms Checklist (Presenting immediately after Head Injury)**

Pupil's name:

Date & Time of Injury:

Where injury occurred:

How Injury Occurred:

Description of symptoms: *(include if any loss of consciousness, memory loss or seizures immediately following injury:*

Any previous knock to head or concussion: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

**Place an X in any boxes that apply. Observe pupil for at least 30 minutes.**

Observed Signs	0 min	10 min	20 min	30 min	___ min	Comments
Appears dazed or stunned						
Is confused about events						
Repeats questions						
Answers questions slowly						
Can't recall events prior to injury						
Can't recall events after injury						
Loses consciousness (even briefly)						
Shows behaviour or personality changes						
Generalised Headache						
"Pressure" in head						
Nausea or vomiting						
Balance problems or dizziness						
Feeling tired						
Blurry or double vision						
Sensitivity to light or noise						
Numbness or tingling in limbs						
Does not "feel right"						
Difficulty thinking clearly						
Difficulty concentrating						
Difficulty remembering						
Feeling more slowed down						
Felling sluggish, hazy, foggy						
Irritable						
More emotional than usual						

**Pupils with one or more of the signs or symptoms of concussion after a bump, blow or jolt to the head should be advised to see their GP or go to A&E for assessment.**

**Pupil must go to A&E immediately if s/he has any of the following symptoms:**

- Loss of consciousness, however brief
- One pupil larger than the other or unusual eye movements
- Drowsiness or cannot be awakened
- Severe or worsening headache
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- If vomiting
- Slurred speech

- Seizures
- Difficulty recognising people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness or agitation
- Unusual behaviour
- Blood or clear fluid leaking from the nose or ear
- Unusual breathing patterns

**All pupils must be given a Head Injury advice sheet after a bump to the head. Parents must be informed and also House staff.**

Parents informed: Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_ House Staff informed: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil returned to class: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil sent home: \_\_\_\_\_ Collected by: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil sent to A & E *Details*: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Injury information sheet given: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Pupil placed on GRTP program: \_\_\_\_\_ GRTP form completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Information given to pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ Parents informed: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff informed: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil referred to Concussion Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_