



## **Purpose**

Concussion (also known as mild traumatic brain injury) refers to a head injury with a temporary loss of brain function. Concussion can cause an array of physical, cognitive and demonstrative symptoms. Concussion is the result of direct trauma to the head, such as from falling, getting hit or being in an accident.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the processes that St Margaret's Berwick Grammar (**SMBG, the School**) will follow should a student suffer a direct head trauma.

## **Scope**

This Policy applies to all staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers and contractors.

## **Incident Response**

Where a student suffers a direct head trauma in the course of sport/physical activity the student must be removed from the game/activity immediately. All students with suspected concussion need urgent medical assessment. Formal diagnosis of a concussion can only be made by a Medical Professional. The Concussion Recognition Tool<sup>1</sup> (**Appendix A**) can be used to help in the recognition of a concussion. It is important to note, however, that brief evaluation tools are **not** designed to formally diagnose concussion and cannot replace a comprehensive medical assessment.

Where a student exhibits any of the following symptoms (known as RED FLAGS), an ambulance must be called immediately:

- Loss of consciousness or suspected loss of consciousness
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Amnesia/Temporary memory loss
- Seizure or convulsion.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Neck pain or tenderness.
- Blurred vision, dizziness or sensitivity to light and/or noise.
- Weakness or tingling/burning in limbs
- Pressure in head/headache

## **On site**

When head trauma occurs, staff on site must make immediate contact with the School Nurse or designated First Aid Officers to allow for assessment of the student. If the head trauma occurs after School Hours, or the School Nurse/ First Aid Officers are unavailable, staff should assess the student's symptoms in accordance with the Concussion Recognition Tool and determine if an ambulance should be called. Parents should be notified as soon as possible.

Where an ambulance has been called, staff are required to provide appropriate first aid until such time as it arrives and handover to ambulance services can be completed.

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<sup>1</sup> free tool for people without medical training to help identify concussions in children, adolescents and adults



### **Offsite**

Where the head trauma occurs off site (school activity, camp or excursion) staff must administer first aid and must call an ambulance.

Where an ambulance has been called, staff are required to provide appropriate first aid until such time as it arrives and handover to ambulance services can be completed.

Contact with the School Nurse/ First Aid Officers should be made as soon as practicable to ensure that the incident has been recorded appropriately and that the School Nurse/ First Aid Officers can monitor the return to learning and return to sport process.

### **Unconscious Students**

Where a student is unconscious, first aid should be commenced. However, the student should only be moved by qualified health professionals, trained in spinal immobilisation techniques. Where no such professional is present, an ambulance must be called.

### **Referral to Healthcare Practitioner**

Following any head trauma at a school event (on or off site) the School Nurse/First Aid Officer will complete an Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Concussion Referral & Clearance Form. This form requires a full diagnostic review from the student's healthcare practitioner. A copy of this form is included in **Appendix B**.

### **Parent Notification**

Parents are to be notified in the event of any Head Trauma (including where concussion isn't suspected).

Where concussion is suspected but an ambulance was not called parents will be directed to collect their student and take them for medical assessment.

### **Outside Activities**

Parents must report to the School any occurrences of Concussion outside of SMBG activities. Once notified, SMBG will only allow a student to return to Learning and/or Sport in accordance with guidelines outlined below.

Staff have a duty of care to pass any information received regarding out-of-school hours head knocks to the School Nurse/First Aid Officers for follow-up.

### **Returning to School**

#### **Study**

Following a concussion, a student should not return to learning until a doctor's medical clearance. This is to be provided to the School and actioned as per "*Contact*."

#### **Sport**

SMBG follows the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) 'Graded return to Sport Framework' and is reliant on a student's Healthcare Practitioner for determining when a student may return to sport. In accordance with these guidelines, no student may return to sport for a minimum period of 21 days since the head trauma.



Returning to sport may only be determined by the student's Healthcare Practitioner and must be recorded on the AIS Concussion Referral & Clearance Form and provided to the School.

Clearance will be actioned as per 'Contact'.

### **Other Head Trauma**

Where a student suffers a head trauma that does not meet the threshold for a concussion response (e.g. minor bump with another child with no concerning symptoms) appropriate First Aid should be applied and contact made with the student's parents.

### **Contact**

Upon Notification of Concussion the School Nurse/First Aid Officers will circulate a communication to all staff notifying them of the student having suffered concussion, including an image of the student to aid identification, and confirming that the student is not to participate in Sport or physical activity until such time as the Principal or delegate advises of clearance to do so.

Communications from other sources (including students and/or parents) that indicates a student may return to Learning and/or Sport are not to be actioned or relied upon, but to be referred to the Principal or delegate for discussion.

### **Record of Concussion incidents**

Incident Report must be provided to the School Principal.

### **Related Policies and Resources**

- First Aid Policy
- AIS Concussion Guidelines <https://www.ausport.gov.au/concussion>
- Concussion Recognition tool <https://bjism.bmj.com/content/bjsports/57/11/692.full.pdf>
- Head Injury- General advice [https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact\\_sheets/Head\\_injury/](https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Head_injury/)
- Head Injury- return to school and sport [https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact\\_sheets/Head\\_injury\\_return\\_to\\_school\\_and\\_sport/](https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Head_injury_return_to_school_and_sport/)
- GSV/SIS policies
- Appendix A- Recognition Tool
- Appendix B- Concussion Referral & Clearance Form

### **Review**

This policy is to be reviewed and approved every three years, as a minimum. This policy is subject to change without notice at the sole discretion of SMBG.

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