

Head Injury & Concussion

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Date for Review:	September 2027
Lead for Review:	Deputy Head Pastoral & Boarding

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of all students by establishing clear guidelines for managing head injuries and concussions in the boarding school setting. The policy aims to raise awareness about concussion symptoms, proper management protocols, and when to seek professional medical care.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, and medical personnel at Guildhouse. The policy is in effect both during school hours and after-school activities, including weekends.

Awareness and Prevention

Students and staff will be educated annually about the signs, symptoms, and risks of concussions. This includes training for all staff members involved in physical activities and sports to recognise potential head injuries and know the steps for response.

Definition of Concussion and Head Injury

A concussion is a type of mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) that occurs when a blow or jolt to the head or body disrupts normal brain function. It can happen during sports, physical activities, falls, accidents, or other events. Symptoms of a concussion can include, but are not limited to:

- Headache
- Dizziness or balance problems
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Confusion or memory issues
- Loss of consciousness (may or may not occur)

Immediate Response to a Head Injury

If a student sustains a head injury, the following steps should be immediately followed:

1. Stop all activities: Where possible, the student should be removed from the activity, game, or event and should not be allowed to continue physical activities until assessed. Where the injury requires the student to remain in

location, medical assistance should be contacted to attend the location to assess the student and provide the necessary medical support.

2. **Assess symptoms:** The student will be assessed by the School Nurse at the onsite medical facilit. A basic evaluation will determine whether the student exhibits any concussion symptoms.
3. **Provide First Aid:** If the student exhibits signs of severe injury (e.g., prolonged unconsciousness, seizures, excessive vomiting), the student must not be moved, and emergency medical services will be contacted immediately at the site of the injury and the student will be transferred to the local hospital for further evaluation. When the injury is within the confines of the school, again the student must not be moved and the School Nurse or a qualified First Aider will assess and contact the emergency services if required.
4. **Concussion Protocol:** If a concussion is suspected, the student will be removed from all physical activity and monitored closely. A medical assessment will take place by the School Nurse and referred to general hospital or the nearest Urgent Treatment Centre(UTC).

Medical Evaluation and Return to Sport or Normal Routine (Guidelines)

In the event of a suspected concussion, the following protocols will be followed:

1. **Assessment by Medical Professional:** The school's nurse or an external health care provider will perform a thorough assessment, including evaluating symptoms.
2. **Post-Injury Rest:** Following a concussion, the student must rest both physically and cognitively. They will be given time to recover and will not participate in physical activities, sports, or cognitively demanding tasks (like tests or studying) for at least 24-48 hours, or as recommended by the School Nurse or external healthcare professionals. The student will be added to the Duty Report on Reach for Boarding during the week to ensure they are monitored within their respective House over a period of time determined by the School Nurse. Notes to be entered on to the medical elements of Reach and clear recommendations from the school nurse to be shared.

3. **Gradual Return to Activity:** Once the student is symptom-free and cleared by a School Nurse or healthcare provider, a gradual return to sports activities protocol will be followed. This involves:

- Light aerobic exercise
- Sport-specific activities (without contact)
- Full-contact practice (if applicable)
- Return to full participation in sports and activities

Academic Considerations

Students recovering from a concussion may experience difficulty with focus, concentration, and memory. The school will accommodate academic requirements by:

- Offering additional time for assignments or exams, subject to applying through Exam Boards for Access Arrangements
- Reducing screen time (if necessary)
- Providing a quiet space for studying and resting
- Providing support for students who need adjustments in their classwork schedule

Parent/Guardian Communication

The school will immediately inform the parents or guardians of any head injury or concussion, including details of the injury, symptoms observed, and the next steps for medical evaluation and treatment. Parents of day students will be required to provide written consent and documentation from a healthcare provider before the student is allowed to return to full physical activity or sports.

Ongoing Monitoring and Support

Following a head injury, the student will be closely monitored by the school's medical team during the day and by the Houseparent out of hours. Staff members will keep track of any additional symptoms or changes, and communication with parents or guardians will remain ongoing. The student will be regularly checked for improvement and any new symptoms. Boarding staff will be updated as to monitoring within the Boarding House and action to take when deterioration or other symptoms present.

Record Keeping

A detailed record of the incident, medical assessments, and recovery will be kept on Reach and Pastoral Alerts used to indicate after care and continuation of care within

Boarding. This information will be readily available to school staff and in circumstances will be kept confidential within REACH.

Safety First

To keep students safe, if a student is not cleared by a healthcare professional, they will not be allowed to take part in physical activities or sports. The school is committed to prioritising student health and safety above all other considerations.

Related Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Boarding Handbook

Health and Safety Policy

First Aid Policy

Medical Provision Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Educational Visits and Trips Policy

Risk Assessment Policy

SEND Policy

Examinations and Access Arrangements Policy



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