

KAT Return to Play after Concussion Policy

Kingstone Academy Trust follows RFU guidelines, which have been developed based on the Zurich Guidelines published in the Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport. Concussion must be taken extremely seriously to safeguard the short and long term health and welfare of young players.

1. Concussion

Concussion is traumatic a brain injury which is usually caused by hitting the head or a fall. It can happen at any time, anywhere: for example during sports, in the school playground, or at home.

Concussion must always be taken seriously and it is vitally important that any child/young person suspected of having concussion should immediately be stopped from continuing whatever activity they are doing and be assessed by a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance.

A second injury when a child has concussion can be extremely serious and may even be fatal. It is vitally important therefore that medical clearance is sought before your child returns to school/play. Children should not resume physical activities such as Physical Education (PE), sports or games until permitted to do so by a medical professional.

If your child suffers a concussion outside school, it is vitally important that you keep school informed so that they are aware of the potential dangers and any restrictions that may apply to your child's activities.

2. Symptoms

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek emergency medical attention right away.

- **One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other**
- **Drowsiness or cannot be awakened**
- **A headache that gets worse and does not go away**
- **Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination**
- **Repeated vomiting or nausea**
- **Slurred speech**
- **Convulsions or seizures**
- **Difficulty recognizing people or places**
- **Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation**
- **Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)**

3. Recovery

The majority (80-90%) of concussions resolve in a short (7-10 days) period. This may be longer in children and adolescents. During this recovery period the brain is more vulnerable to further injury, and if a student returns too early to contact sport, before they have fully recovered this may result in:

- **Prolonged concussion symptoms**
- **Possible long term health consequences e.g. psychological and/or brain degenerative disorders**
- **Further concussive event being FATAL, due to severe brain swelling – known as second impact syndrome.**

4. Graduated Return to Play Pathway

Kingstone Academy Trust follows a Graduated Return to Play Pathway for Young People (19 and under). The earliest return to sport involving any potential contact (either from another student or equipment) that we permit is **23 days after the concussion** has occurred. It must be emphasised that these are minimum return to play times and in students who do not recover fully within these timeframes, these will need to be longer. We recommend:

1. Two weeks rest - symptom free

It is reasonable for a student to miss a day or two of academic studies after concussion but extended absence is uncommon. Individuals should avoid reading, TV and computer games initially and then gradually re-introduce them. Then clearance by a doctor is recommended before the Gradual Return to Play Pathway is followed. KAT will also consult with the student's teachers to ensure that their academic performance has returned to normal prior to commencing their Gradual Return to Play Pathway.

- 2. Light aerobic exercise** - students can begin light exercise when they have they been symptom free for a period of 48 hours
- 3. Sport-specific exercise** e.g. running – no head impact activities
- 4. Non-contact training drills in lessons** e.g. ball passing
- 5. Full Contact practice in lessons** – normal training activities
- 6. Return to Play**

The student can progress through each stage as long as no symptoms or signs of concussion return. Under19s should take 2 days for each stage. If any symptoms occur while progressing through the pathway, the student must consult with their doctor before returning to the previous stage and attempting to progress again after a minimum 48 hour period of rest, without the presence of symptoms.

It is the parent's responsibility to obtain medical clearance before returning to play.

Note:

If there are concerns about the student's behaviour and approach to sports when playing or training that appears to put them at increased risk of concussion, then this will be addressed before return to play.