



## Melrose Primary School

### Head Injury Protocol

Given the nature of activities at school, children may occasionally sustain minor head injuries. This advice sheet gives details of what symptoms and signs should be looked for in children who have hit their head whilst at school and when medical advice should be sought.

If, after a head injury, a child remains unconscious or suffers any form of reaction an ambulance should be called immediately and the parents contacted. If a child suffers from any of the following symptoms medical advice must be sought and, if advised, the child should be taken to see either their GP or to the nearest Accident & Emergency department by the parents or by school staff:

- Loss of consciousness
- Vomiting
- Sleepiness
- Fits or abnormal limb movements
- Persisting dizziness or difficulty walking
- Strange behaviour or confused speech

Children may appear well immediately after sustaining a head injury but show signs of complications later in the day. School staff must remain vigilant and take the appropriate action if the child develops a problem. If a child sustains a head injury whilst at school, the following information should be recorded from any witness.

- Was the child behaving in an unusual way before the injury?
- What happened to cause the injury?
- If they fell, how far did they fall?
- What did they hit their head against?
- Did the child lose consciousness? If so, for how long?
- How did they appear afterwards?
- Did they vomit afterwards?
- Was the child observed to have any other problem after the injury?

Regardless of whether the school seek medical advice about the child, this information should be given to parents afterwards, where possible. It may be that the child becomes unwell after school and the information will be helpful to parents if they need to see a doctor.

In addition parents will be notified by phone following any minor head injury to their child and invited in to inspect the injury. Each head injury will also be recorded in the accident book, recorded on Scottish Borders Council's electronic recording system and a note, advising of the injury, sent home with the child. These will be completed by the person dealing initially with the accident.

If an accident occurs during break or lunchtime the duty staff must ensure that the class teacher is aware of the injury.

## **General protocol guidance:**

All head injuries will be seen and assessed by a qualified first aider.

- After a head injury a pupil will be supervised for at least fifteen minutes even when there are no apparent or obvious symptoms.
- Pupils suffering from a head injury will not be left unattended by school first aid staff until they are confident that a serious injury has not been sustained.
- The school will ensure that a child is taken to hospital either by ambulance or car, accompanied by a qualified first aider in cases where there is any immediate doubt or concern about their condition.
- The school will insist that any casualty who has sustained a significant head injury is seen by professionals at the hospital, either by sending them directly to hospital (in the case of an adult) or by asking parents to pick up a child to take them to hospital (non-critical injuries).
- Parents, Head teacher, senior management and teaching staff will be made aware of all significant head injuries sustained in school.
- Where necessary the first aider will seek information from pupils, or supervising adults, who witnessed the accident.
- In the case of non-serious injuries not requiring external medical examination, where appropriate, parents will receive a phone call from a school first aider advising them of the injury, and the circumstances of the accident.
- The first aider in charge of treatment will keep a record of each pupil attended to, the nature of the injury and any treatment given. They will also record the time and location of the accident.
- Parents will also receive a "minor head injury" letter (see attached) to ensure they are fully aware of the injury and the need to monitor their child's wellbeing for the next 24 hours.
- The first aider will advise the class teacher of the incident as they return to class. In the event of a head injury in school, where the injury is of a non-serious nature, the first aider must either:
  - Escort the pupil to the receiving member of staff
  - Provide a copy of a bumped head notification to the receiving member of staff
- The first aider should not rely on a pupil to inform their teacher of their injury.
- Whilst the child remains in school they should be supervised to ensure no deterioration in their wellbeing.
- When a seemingly well pupil returns to class they will be advised to speak to their teacher or return to the school office if they begin to feel unwell.
- A child remaining in school after a head injury will be advised to avoid running around, playing strenuous games and undertaking PE for the rest of the day.
- The school will not offer the injured child any pain relief unless the school holds a completed medical form, signed by the parent or guardian, giving clear instruction to offer the medicine.
- The following signs have been recognised as symptoms of a serious head injury and they should be recognised by all staff:
  - Worsening headache
  - Nausea/sickness
  - Dizziness
  - Sleepiness
  - Failure to focus visually
  - Confusion
  - Memory loss
  - Dilated pupils
  - Paleness (shock indicator)
  - General distress/shakiness
  - Unsteadiness when they walk

Any pupil displaying any of these symptoms following a head injury should be assessed immediately by a first aider.