



# Student Concussion Policy

## Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

## Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia – Victorian Schools Limited (EREA-VSL), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA-VSL schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students\*.

\*Student includes any person enrolled in the College, either as a day pupil or as a boarder.

## Student Concussion

Concussion is a type of brain injury caused by a blow to the head or anywhere on the body, which transmits a force to the head. Most commonly, it causes temporary impairment, and the symptoms may develop over the hours or days following the injury. This means that it may be difficult to determine, by either staff, parents or medical practitioners, immediately after the injury whether a person is concussed. Cognitive functions in children and adolescents may be affected for up to the 2 months following concussion.

Concussion occurs most often in sports which involve body contact, collision or high speed. In most cases a person will recover from concussion without intervention, provided they have an adequate period of rest in order to recover.

St Patrick's College acknowledges that it is not feasible to eliminate the risk of concussion in sport. However, it is committed to responding to suspected or actual concussion in a way that facilitates the recovery of the student and does not put them at risk of further harm.

It is our policy that:

- A student suspected of having concussion will be removed from sport and not allowed to return to sport that day;
- A student who has been hit in the head or the body showing some symptoms where concussion cannot be ruled out, will be treated as if they have concussion – 'if in doubt sit it out';

- The College will work together with parents to ensure that a student with actual or suspected concussion obtains medical attention and only returns to school and to sport under appropriate guidance;
- Any student who has a diagnosed concussion will not return to learning until 48 hours after all of the symptoms of concussion have stopped;
- When recovering from concussion, the priority will be for the student to return to learning before returning to sport;
- Students are encouraged to wear helmets, mouth guards or other protective equipment, even though they may not be instrumental in preventing concussion, as they do prevent other types of head injuries such as skull fracture and subdural haematoma;
- Staff will be trained in how to identify the possible symptoms of concussion and the immediate action they will need to take to ensure the safety of students who are suspected of being concussed;
- Staff will be briefed on how to treat a student returning to school and physical activity following a concussion;
- A student who has been concussed who returns to school will be provided with a modified learning program if required, and a graduated return to sport.

Following a diagnosis of concussion, the student should have complete physical and cognitive rest. They should only return to learning after being symptom free for at least 48 hours.

The return to learning may require that the student be given a reduced workload and /or more frequent breaks. If there is a recurrence of concussion symptoms, the student should return to complete cognitive and physical rest.

Return to sport should be graduated along the following steps, and any recurrence of symptoms will require a return to the previous step for at least 24 hours:

1. After the student has returned to learning without a recurrence of concussion symptoms, after 24 hours they may participate in light aerobic activity.
2. If there is no recurrence of symptoms at Step 1 after 24 hours, then the student may participate in basic sport-specific drills which are non-contact and no likelihood of head impact.
3. If there is no recurrence of symptoms at Step 2 after 24 hours, then the student may participate in more complex sport-specific drills which are non-contact (this may include resistance training).
4. If there is no recurrence of concussion symptoms after a minimum of 14 days, then the student may return to contact activities. However, a medical practitioner should review the student before the student returns to contact activities.
5. If there is no recurrence of concussion symptoms at Step 4 after 24 hours, then the student may return to the sport.

Parents/carers are instrumental in working with the College to manage student concussions. While watching students, parents/carers may also see an injury or a delayed sign or symptom that a College staff member or first aid officer did not witness and therefore provide important information.

**Parents/carers are required to:**

- Notify the College of all medical conditions including details regarding previous concussions and relevant medical conditions to ensure the school has the correct procedures in place; and
- Notify the College if the student has suffered concussion at a non-College event as well as measures put in place by a medical practitioner.

**Where concussion occurred at College, the parent/carer should:**

- Notify the College of the medical treatment and advice received from a medical practitioner;
- Provide clearance from the medical practitioner where requested by the College as a precondition to returning the student to sport;
- Comply with staff directions for time out of College for the student's condition if required in accordance with this policy.

Parents may find assistance in making a tentative diagnosis, by accessing the Concussion Recognition Tool 5.

**Parents are required to notify the College of a student's concussion incident, by completing the Student Concussion Reporting available through the Parent Access Module (PAM).**

In some instances, you may be eligible to make a claim through the College's Insurance provider, Catholic Church Insurance. If you would like to receive further information on this, please contact [adminsupport@stpats.vic.edu.au](mailto:adminsupport@stpats.vic.edu.au) or 5331 1688.



### Status of Policy

This policy has been downloaded from CompliSpace, is endorsed by EREA-VSL and is reviewed annually.

Policy owner	St Patrick's College - Ballarat
Approving authority	Principal
Approval date	Sept 2025
Risk rating	<b>HIGH</b>
Date of next review	Jan 2027
Publication details	School website

#### POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION

Assigned TERE Board Framework	Child Safety
Related policies	Accident Management Policy Anaphylaxis Policy First Aid Policy OH&S Policy Pastoral Care Policy Supervision (General) Policy Supervision (Yard Duties) Policy