

## POST-CONCUSSION RETURN TO SCHOOL LETTER

Dear School Staff:

[Student]\_\_\_\_\_ sustained a concussion on \_\_\_[Date]\_\_\_\_\_.

Recovery typically takes between several days to several weeks. The student should return to school as soon as they can tolerate it but many students will benefit from some accommodations to their school programme as they recover. As symptoms resolve and the student’s learning/cognitive functioning returns to normal, s/he can gradually progress to their normal school day with reduced supports.

**Current Symptoms:** The student is currently reporting the following symptoms as indicated by the (√) below. These can be viewed as targets for supportive classroom accommodations to assist a successful return. See suggested supports for these symptoms on page 2.

PHYSICAL		COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> Headaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling mentally foggy	<input type="checkbox"/> Irritability
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Memory problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety/ nervousness
<input type="checkbox"/> Blurry/double vision	<input type="checkbox"/> Nausea/ vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Slowed thinking/ performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Sadness
<input type="checkbox"/> Balance Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Dizziness	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling more emotional

**Return to School:** The student can return to school when:

- (1) S/he can concentrate on school work for 30 minutes before symptoms worsen significantly.
- (2) Symptom exacerbation reduces/resolves with cognitive rest breaks, allowing return to activity.

*Based on the current symptoms, he/she is \_\_\_\_\_ permitted to return to school.  
\_\_\_\_\_ is excused for \_\_\_\_\_ days*

**Safety Restrictions:** To reduce risk for re-injury, there should be

- \* No physical (risk) activity during recess
- \* No Physical Education (Gym) class
- \* No sports participation
- \* Other:\_\_\_\_\_

**Physical Activity:** Mild-moderate symptom-limited exercise (walking) daily is permitted.

Health Care Provider Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information \_\_\_\_\_

**Provision of School Supports:** Listed are some suggested accommodations for consideration by school personnel, tailored to the student’s specific symptoms:

<b>Post-concussion symptom</b>	<b>Effect on school learning</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
<i>Physical Symptoms</i>		
Headache	Difficulty concentrating	Frequent breaks, quiet area, hydration
Fatigue	Decreased attention, concentration, low energy	Frequent breaks, shortened day, attendance in fewer classes
Light/noise sensitivity	Worsening symptoms (headache)	Sunglasses, ear plugs/headphones, avoid noisy areas (cafeterias, assemblies, sport events, music class), limit computer work
Dizziness/ balance	Unsteadiness when walking, room feels like it is spinning	Elevator/lift pass (if available) Class transition before bell
<i>Cognitive Symptoms</i>		
Difficulty concentrating	Limited focus on schoolwork	Shorter assignments, decreased workload, frequent breaks, having someone read out loud, more time to complete assignments/tests, quiet area to complete work
Working/ short-term memory	Forgetting instructions, oral lecture, reading material, thoughts during tasks	Repetition; Written instructions Provide student with teacher generated class notes
Difficulty remembering	Difficulty retaining new information, remembering instructions, accessing learned information	Written instructions, smaller amounts to learn, repetition
Slow speed of performance / process	Unable to keep pace with work load, slower reading/ writing/calculation Difficulty processing verbal information effectively	Extended time to complete coursework, assignments, tests Reduce/slow down verbal information and check for comprehension
<i>Emotional Symptoms</i>		
Anxiety	Decreased attention or concentration, overexertion to avoid falling behind	Reassurance and support from teachers about accommodations, reduced workload
Irritability	Poor tolerance for stress (social, academic load)	Reduce stimulation and stressors (e.g., overwhelmed with missing work)

Note: Further information on the Symptom-Targeted Academic Management Plan (STAMP) can be found in (Gioia, in press)<sup>46</sup>