

# First Aid – Guide for parents

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If a child is injured or unwell at school they will be seen by a first aider. Normally this is either the School Office, Designated Midday Supervisor for First Aid or Other qualified member of staff.

## What is First Aid

First aid is the immediate, initial care given to an injured or suddenly ill person. It is administered to preserve life, prevent the condition from worsening, and promote recovery until professional medical services can be obtained.

It can range from simple actions like cleaning a minor cut and applying a bandage to more critical, life-saving interventions such as performing CPR or controlling severe bleeding. The core principles of first aid involve:

- **Preserving life:** Taking action to keep the person alive.
- **Preventing further harm:** Ensuring the situation doesn't get worse.
- **Promoting recovery:** Starting the healing process and making the person more comfortable.

First aid is a crucial link between the moment an emergency occurs and the arrival of professional medical help. It is often performed by someone with basic training but can be administered by anyone who has the knowledge and confidence to act.

## What Happens When My Child Bumps Their Head?

We follow clear guidelines to assess every head bump. We will:

1. Assess the incident: We'll ask the child what they hit and how it happened, noting any dizziness.

2. Observe the child: We'll look for immediate signs of concern, such as changes in alertness, new bruising, swelling, or changes in behavior.
3. Provide comfort: A cold compress or ice pack may be used, and the child will be encouraged to rest for a period of observation.
4. Decide on next steps:
  - If the child recovers well with no concerning signs, they will be given a head bump sticker and return to class. They may be advised to avoid activities like PE.
  - We will notify parents with a sticker, text, and email at the end of the day. In some cases, we will also make a phone call.

It's important to remember that symptoms can change. While we record the most accurate information we have at the time—based on what we saw and what your child told us—symptoms of concussion can appear up to three weeks later. Please continue to monitor your child carefully after a head bump.

## What happens if my child has a non-emergency injury?

We will, where appropriate:

- Clean
- Dress
- Cold compress or ice
- Rest and comfort

Sometimes it will be necessary for parents / guardians to clean further, or redress injuries when a child gets home. A good general rule to remember is this: A dressing is most helpful in the initial stages of healing. Once the wound is dry to the touch, has a firm scab, and is no longer at risk of getting dirty or rubbed, you can typically leave it uncovered to let it "air out."

## What happens when my child is unwell?

**First Steps** - When a child is unwell, they will be brought to the medical room or a safe, supervised space. We will take a temperature if a fever is suspected and may repeat this as needed. To provide comfort and assess their condition, we may offer a sick bowl, encourage them to use the toilet, or provide a drink. We might also suggest they remove a jumper if they're hot, apply hot or cold packs, and encourage them to rest.

**Next Steps** - If we think it's necessary, we'll call a child's parent or guardian. This may be to:

- Ask you to collect your child.
- Request more information on their recent health.
- Ask you to bring in medication.
- Suggest you come in to assess your child yourself.

## What happens in an Emergency?

1. We will call an ambulance or 111 if a child is seriously injured or ill and we consider it to be an emergency.
2. Call child's parent/carer: As soon as is reasonable, once an ambulance or 111 have been called, we will contact a child's parent/guardian.
3. Follow medical advice: Throughout the contact to the emergency services and parents/guardians a first aider will remain with the child at all times and follow medical advice.

4. Record Keeping - We will record details of this event on Arbor and we will log incidents with the Southampton City Council Injury/Serious Incident records

## How do you record First Aid

We use Arbor to record First Aid, illness, injury or accidents. We will ask your child what happened and we will record their account. Sometimes, someone else may have witnessed what happened and may describe it differently to us. We will make the record as accurate as possible based on the information we have – Please keep in mind that this may not always exactly match what your child describes when they get home.

## Why does my child's injury look worse than what was described in the email I received?

Injuries, especially grazes and bruises, take time to form. We see injuries at the earliest opportunity, often immediately after they happen. At this point the bruising may still be developing - when you see an injury right after it happens, what you're seeing is the beginning of a process. The full picture, including the most prominent bruising or a fully-formed scab, will develop over time as the body responds and begins to heal. This is why children may arrive home with bruising or marks that were not visible to us at the time of assessment.

## Why doesn't the first aid email I received explain the behaviour issues my child described to me about how they were injured?

Our priority in sending first aid emails is to alert you to your child's injury so that you can check it again when they return into your care and further assess if it needs any additional treatment. If it occurred as the result of a behaviour incident involving your child and/or other children, the adults in school will be following the school's behaviour policy. It would be normal for your child's teacher to decide if they need to talk to you about this. They may catch you when you collect, drop off the next day or they may call or email you about it.

## Below is an example of what might have happened, what we will put in a first aid email, and what the outcome might be:

**What happened?** Child A was unhappy because Child B would not play with them at lunchtime on the MUGA, Child A turned quickly to walk away and when they did, they accidentally tripped up Child B who had started moving in a different direction. Child B fell forward and grazed their left knee.

**what we will put in a first aid email?** Your child fell over on the MUGA and grazed their knee, no marks were visible at the time but a cold compress was used to soothe.

**Outcome?** By the next day a clear bruise and some minor swelling is showing on the knee. Over the next few days, the graze begins to scab and the bruising changes colour.