concussion
when in doubt, sit it out!

To be completed by the child's physician.

Date: [   ]

Re: Return to school letter after a concussion

Dear [   ]

[   ] (name of child) was diagnosed with a concussion
that occurred on [   ] (date)

It can take up to several weeks for the brain to heal after a brain injury so I would like to take this opportunity to let you know what to expect over the next few weeks during recovery. It is not uncommon to experience headaches and difficulties with attention, concentration and memory during this time. Recovery from a brain injury is an individual process so there may be significant variation in symptom presentation and duration in those affected.

The symptoms experienced by the student may affect academic performance. Heavy concentration, memorisation, studying, etc. can actually cause symptoms and prolong recovery. The goal is to keep cognitive activity below the level that triggers symptoms. Cognitive demand should be gradually increased until the student can fully participate in study symptom free. The student should not return to sports or physical education until able to perform normal school work without symptoms.

It is important to ask about symptoms during or after class to ensure the student is being appropriately accommodated. Full or partial days missed as part of the recovery process should be medically excused.

Common symptoms	Helpful accommodations
• decreased short term memory • decreased attention span • slower processing speed • irritability • fatigue • severe headaches • photo/audio sensitivity	• Light school work • Provide hard copies of notes and other course content • Rest periods during the day as needed • No tests or major assignments • Provide extra time for work to be handed in • Limit stimulation to avoid increase in symptoms e.g., computer work, loud noises, school assemblies

Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.
Please visit www.sitoutconcussion.org.au where you will find information sheets and tools to help with a safe return to school.

Physician's Name: [   ]

Phone number: [   ]

chism
the children's hospital at Westmead
Institute of Sports Medicine

kids health
the children's hospital at Westmead
Child Health Promotion Unit

The Sydney children's Hospitals Network
care, advocacy, research, education

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