

St David's College

— Est. 1965 —

CONTACT SPORTS POLICY

93. Contact Sports Policy

Date	Review Date	Monitoring	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
10/04/2025	10/04/2027	2years	Dan Lycett	

St David's College Contact Sports Safety Policy

1. Introduction

At St David's College, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students participating in contact sports including sports with physical interaction. This policy outlines the safety protocols and risk management measures that must be adhered to by staff, students, and coaches during all contact sports activities, including but not limited to rugby, hockey and football.

2. General Safety Principles

- All contact sports must be supervised by a qualified member of the PE department or a designated coach.
- Students must wear appropriate protective gear for each sport.
- Coaches and PE staff must conduct a pre-session safety check, ensuring that the playing area and equipment are safe for use.
- All staff must be familiar with the school's emergency procedures and have access to first aid equipment at all times. A medical bag must be collected from the Medical Centre and returned as soon as possible after the event.
- Any student with an injury or medical condition that may impact their participation must be assessed by the medical centre before returning to play.
- If a student sustains an injury during a session the PE department should contact the medical centre to inform them of the injury and escort student to the medical centre or arrange for them to be collected. The medical centre must follow up with a call to the parent or guardian to provide an update and ensure appropriate aftercare is in place. The PE staff member taking the session must be available for a follow up call if parent requests this (this is best practice).

3. Rugby-Specific Safety Measures

Mandatory Mouthguard Policy:

- All students in Years 5-11 must wear a mouthguard during all contact rugby training sessions and matches.

- Students in Years 12-13 are strongly encouraged to wear mouthguards at all times while playing rugby. ○ The coach or PE staff member in charge must ensure that all players are wearing a mouthguard before allowing them to participate in a game or training session.
- Any student without a mouthguard will not be permitted to take part in the session. ○ Houseparent's must ensure that boarding students have packed their mouthguards, taking on a role similar to that of a parent in overseeing student preparedness.

Tackling & Technique Training:

- Tackling and other high-risk activities must be taught in a controlled environment with a focus on technique and player safety.
- All contact drills must be age-appropriate and follow the latest guidelines from the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) and Sport Wales.

Head Injury & Concussion Protocol: ○ Any student suspected of sustaining a head injury must be immediately removed from play and assessed by the medical staff or, in their absence, the supervising PE staff member. If in doubt, staff should err on the side of caution and not allow the student to return to play.

- The school will follow the WRU's concussion guidelines, including the 'Recognise and Remove' policy. https://community.wru.wales/governance/medical/concussion/
- Students diagnosed with a concussion must follow a graduated return-to-play protocol and obtain medical clearance before resuming participation.

4. Role of PE Staff & Coaches

- All PE staff and coaches must be trained in basic first aid and concussion awareness. At least one first aid-trained staff member must be present at all contact sports sessions.
- It is the responsibility of the coach or supervising staff member to check that students have the appropriate protective equipment before each session.
- Any safety concerns or incidents must be reported immediately to the Head of PE and recorded on an accident form as soon as possible. This should be sent to the medical centre as well as the parent/houseparent. This is especially important for after-hours games to ensure that caregivers are informed of any injuries that may require attention when the medical centre is not an option.
- Coaches and PE staff must stay up to date with national governing body guidelines and ensure that training sessions and matches comply with best practices for player welfare. For best practice, a training log is to be maintained by the PE department.

- PE staff are responsible for ensuring that they have a first aid bag for all sports sessions and that it is returned after the game. PE Staff need to keep a log of anything that has been taken out of the bag- They must contact parents/houseparent's and Medical Centre if they have needed any medication from the bag.

5. Parental & Student Responsibility

- Parents must ensure that students have the necessary protective equipment, including mouthguards, before attending lessons, training or matches.
- Houseparent's must ensure that boarding students have packed their mouthguards, taking on a role similar to that of a parent in overseeing student preparedness.
- Students are expected to take personal responsibility for their safety by wearing protective gear and reporting any injuries to staff immediately. It is their responsibility to keep the protective equipment on throughout the game or training session.

6. Review & Compliance

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the PE department and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure it remains aligned with best practice and national safety guidelines.
- Any failure to comply with these safety protocols may result in more formal action for students and staff as deemed appropriate.

Equality

Under the Equality Act 2010, St. David's has a duty not to discriminate against any of the protected characteristics. Due regard has been given to equality law when developing and implementing St David's policies, practices and day-to-day activities. St David's will continually monitor the way this policy operates to ensure it does not unlawfully discriminate, permit harassment or victimisation, or limit equality of opportunity. St David's is committed to always meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.