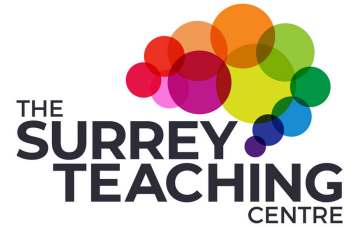


FATIGUE AFTER A BRAIN INJURY



Supporting in Primary School...

WHAT IS FATIGUE?

Fatigue is a persistent feeling of exhaustion, lack of energy, and weakness that is not relieved by rest or sleep. Fatigue is a common effect of Acquired Brain Injury. Everyday tasks may take more effort, and tiredness can continue long after the injury.



RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER A BRAIN INJURY...

For many children, a gradual phased re-integration to school following a brain injury will be appropriate, with considerations such as:



- planning to attend at optimal times of day when energy levels are highest
- start by attending for key lessons that are highly motivating
- ongoing monitoring of fatigue levels throughout the day, and providing rest breaks / fatigue management strategies in school (see below and next page)
- regular review of the re-integration plan

WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES...

Timetabling & Lesson Planning



- Avoid scheduling core subjects late in the day when fatigue is often worst.
- Build in 'recovery' sessions—calm, low-demand time after cognitively demanding lessons.
- Adapt teaching based on energy levels, not just academic ability. Provide flexibility in pace, volume, and method of delivery.
- Maximise opportunities for students to demonstrate and celebrate their knowledge and understanding by including them early in a teaching session.

Environment



- Reduce sensory overload: limit bright lights, background noise, and clutter.
- Provide access to a quiet, calm space for rest breaks.
- Seat the pupil away from distractions and near the teacher when needed.

Communication & Transitions



- Use clear, consistent routines to reduce mental effort.
- Prepare pupils in advance for any changes or transitions.
- Offer visual supports like Now/Next boards or task planners.

Strategies to support fatigue...

English: Reading & Writing

- Reduce written workload: Use scribing, speech-to-text tools, or allow verbal responses.
- Chunk tasks: Break reading or writing tasks into short, manageable segments.
- Use visual aids and story maps to support memory.
- Quiet reading corners for breaks with calming texts.
- Allow audiobooks or teacher-read texts to reduce cognitive load.
- Provide opportunities for repetition and over-learning.



Maths

- Short, focused sessions with breaks between tasks.
- Provide worked examples and maths scaffolds.
- Prioritise core concepts (e.g., number bonds, times tables) over extended practice.
- Use manipulatives and visual supports to reduce abstract thinking demands.



PE

- Monitor closely—fatigue may be physical as well as cognitive.
- Offer adapted activities or observation roles.
- Provide rest periods and opportunities for cool-down.
- Allow the pupil to opt out or complete low-exertion alternatives if needed.



Science, Humanities, RE



- Focus on big ideas and key vocabulary rather than covering all content.
- Use pre-learning and post-learning tools to reinforce key information.
- Offer alternative formats for recording learning (e.g., diagrams, oral reports, photo stories).
- Use visual timetables and lesson outlines to prepare the pupil for what's coming.



Art, Music, DT



- These subjects can be restorative but still cognitively or physically demanding.
- Provide extra time and choice in tasks.
- Minimise pressure on fine motor control if this contributes to fatigue.
- Incorporate quiet time post-activity to recover.