



# Helmet Policy

Reviewed August 2024

This Helmet Policy applies to Wellington Figure Skating Club members and Learn to Skate Wellington students.

In this document "WFSC" refers to Wellington Figure Skating Club Incorporated and Learn to Skate Wellington.

## Objective

Skating is a risky sport with high potential for falls and head injuries. This policy was implemented for the safety and wellbeing of skaters while participating in ice skating lessons or club activities.

## Compulsory Helmet Use

The following **MUST** wear helmets during lessons, figure skating sessions and club social events:

- children under the age of 6,
- skaters at Beginner, Elementary or Basic level,
- any person returning to skating following a recent concussion (see *Returning to skating following a concussion* below for further details). Advanced level and above figure skaters may wear a protective headband/halo that is specified for use in ice skating instead of a helmet, if approved by their managing medical professional.

## Recommended Helmet Use

The wearing of helmets or protective headbands for all other skaters remains discretionary, but is highly recommended.

## Types of Head Protection

The following head protection may be worn on the ice:

- ice hockey helmets,
- skate helmets,
- ski/snowboard helmets (with ear padding removed),
- bicycle helmets,
- protective headbands that are specified for use in ice skating may be used by skaters at novice level and above, but are not sufficient protection for children under the age of 6, or those at beginner, elementary or basic level.

## Helmet Safety

- If a helmet or other head protection is damaged or involved in any kind of impact, you should stop using it immediately, and get advice from the manufacturer or shop you purchased it from as to whether it is safe to continue using it. Hire helmets should be returned to Daytona staff and details provided on the impact, damage to the helmet and any injuries sustained.
- Helmets should fit snugly and be fastened correctly with the straps adjusted for the user (there should be no significant movement of the helmet when the user shakes their head). Parents should ensure their child's helmet is fitted correctly.
- Before wearing a hire helmet you should always inspect it for damage to the shell, interior or straps that could result in malfunction in an impact. If in doubt ask staff for a replacement.
- If you bring your own head protection, you are responsible for checking its safety rating, condition and fit. See Appendix 2 for more information on Safety Ratings.
- WFSC reserves the right to refuse to allow persons to use helmets or other head protection that they deem unfit for use.

## **Returning to skating following a concussion**

- Following clearance from a qualified medical practitioner, the skater should commence a Graduated Return To Skate Programme (see Appendix 1).
- Head protection must be worn until the skater returns to pre-injury level. This rule is in place due to the risk of life threatening injuries in the event that a second head injury occurs before recovery has been completed.
- If concussion symptoms return at any stage of the skater's return to training/competing, the skater must inform the managing medical professional of their symptoms and rest a minimum of 24 hours before resuming the level of activity where symptoms recurred.
- It is the responsibility of the skater to inform WFSC if they have sustained a recent concussion, whether on the ice or elsewhere, and to adhere to the helmet policy until cleared to resume normal training.
- Failure to disclose a recent head injury to avoid wearing a helmet during WFSC lessons or figure skating sessions will be considered a serious violation of the rules of WFSC.

## **Public Sessions**

Skaters should familiarise themselves with any applicable rink policies regarding the use of helmets during public sessions.

## **Disclaimer**

- Head protection, when sized and fitted properly, can reduce the risk of injury to those parts of the head that are covered by the head protection, however it cannot protect the user against all foreseeable impacts or injuries.
- Whilst WFSC recommends using head protection that has been specifically developed for ice skating, we cannot guarantee that it will provide better protection than other forms of head protection.
- WFSC cannot be responsible for the condition and use of helmets hired out by the rink.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically, however it may be subject to change to comply with legislation or changes to policy made by Daytona Adventure Park.

# Appendix 1: Graduated Return To Skate Programme after a Concussion

Day 0 = Day of the injury/concussion

## STAGE 1 - Day 1 to 2

### Relative rest for 24-48 hours

- light activities of daily living that do not provoke symptoms
- Minimize screen time
- Gentle exercise (i.e. walking around the house)

## STAGE 2 - Minimum of 24 hours between stages before progressing

### Gradually increase daily activities:

- Activities away from school/work (introduce TV, increase reading, games etc)
- Exercise – light physical activity (e.g. short walks outside)

## STAGE 3 - Day 2 - 13 (Symptoms should be progressively improving)

### Increase tolerance for mental & exercise activities

- Increase study/work-related activities with rest periods
- Increase intensity of exercise guided by symptoms:
  - **Off Ice** - Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity 70% of maximum predicted heart rate. No resistance (weights) training.

## STAGE 4 - If symptoms worsen, drop back a stage.

### Return to work/study & sport training:

- Part time return to work/education
- Start **Off Ice** training activity without risk of head impact:
  - Begin with a warm up (stretching/flexibility) for 5-10 minutes Increase intensity and duration of cardio workout to 20-30 minutes.
  - Begin figure skating specific skill work but NO JUMPS OR SPINS: static balance, solo dance skills walk through.

## STAGE 5 - Earliest day 14

### Return to normal work/study & skate training

- Completion of Stages 1-4, **AND**
- Fully reintegrated into work or school, **AND**
- **Symptom free**
- **And ≥ Day 14 post-injury** → reintegration into skate-specific training can occur following Steps 1 to 2.

**Note: Wearing a helmet or other authorised head protection is compulsory in Steps 1 and 2 below.**

*If any symptoms return at any time, stop working out. Rest until you are symptom-free for 24 hours, then return to the previous step.*

**Step 1** Low risk **ON THE ICE**. NO CONTACT, preferably under parental or coach supervision.  
Increase duration of session up to 60 minutes.  
Begin resistance training including neck and core strengthening exercises.  
Begin practicing jumps **off ice**.  
Begin on-ice training: stroking, footwork, skating skills, forward/backward skating.  
Begin solo/skating skills/dance run through without music.  
Begin skating with a partner for dance and pairs.

**Step 2** Higher risk figure skating, preferably under parental or coach supervision.  
Resume pre-injury duration of practice.  
Gradually increase skill work: Start with easy spins and beginner level jumps, on ice. Do not attempt any jumps or skills which you were unable to perform prior to the concussion.  
Solo run through with or without partner, with music.

## STAGE 6 - Earliest Day 21

### Return to skate training/competition

- Completion of Stage 5 **AND**
- **Symptom free during sports training**
- **AND ≥ Day 21 post-injury**
- **AND** the skater has received medical clearance from a qualified medical professional (from a general practice or primary care team)

## Appendix 2 - Head Protection Safety Ratings

You should check any head protection to ensure it complies with relevant safety ratings and is within any expiry date listed for use.

If protective headwear has a CE rating, it has been tested for effectiveness in preventing head injuries. The testing covers a wide range of safety aspects, including materials used, manufacturing processes, and overall design. CE Level 2 is the higher level of protection in terms of impact absorption.

The following links are provided to assist skaters with information on safety ratings. WFSC does not endorse any of the products listed.

- Bicycle helmets in New Zealand should comply with Standard AS/NZS 2063.
- Ice Hockey helmets should have a CE marking representing certification from the Hockey Equipment Certification Council ([HECC](#)), the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), and the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO).
- [Virginia Tech Helmet Ratings](#) provides independent ratings on helmets and other forms of head protection.
  - [Ice Hockey](#) helmets
  - [Snow sport](#) helmets
  - [Headbands/Halos](#)
- Whilst headbands are a popular alternative for figure skaters, they offer less coverage than a helmet and this should be taken into account when deciding what head protection you will wear.

The following are headbands we are aware of that have undergone testing and have stated they are suitable for ice skating:

- [ForceField Ultra](#) - CE II, ASTM F2439, 3 STAR Virginia Tech Helmet Rating
- [Ice Halo](#) - Hockey Helmet Standard (CSA Z262.1-09 (April 2009) Annex A, Impact Drop Testing).
- [Unequal Halo 3](#) - ASTM standard F2439-11, 4 STAR Virginia Tech Helmet Rating
- [Rezon Halos](#) - CE II, 5 STAR Virginia Tech Helmet Rating.