

WEARING OF HELMETS FOR SHINTY IN SCHOOLS

This advice replaces Admin Circular 10/2008.

Highland Council, Highlife Highland, and the Camanachd Association, have issued this advice to minimise the risk to young people when playing shinty in a school curricular or out-of-hours setting.

INTRODUCTION

- The compulsory wearing of helmets for everyone aged under the age of 17 playing in competitive games of shinty is now incorporated within the laws of the game.
- Primary school children are encouraged to take up shinty and play 'first shinty' with plastic camans both within the school curriculum in the out of hours programme and community club sessions. These "first shinty" sticks are made of plastic with a rubber head and currently do not require helmets to be worn when practicing or playing games.
- Beyond the "first shinty" stage, both primary and secondary aged children use wooden camans when training, practicing and in matches. In training and practice situations teachers and coaches may adapt the rules of the game to allow for safe participation. An example of a condition or adaptation to reduce risk to a lower level is to establish and implement a rule that the stick should not be raised above waist height, thereby ensuring that the number of situations in which participants can be struck on the head is greatly reduced.

POLICY FOR THE WEARING OF HELMETS FOR SHINTY IN SCHOOLS

In line with the National Governing Body guidance, it is compulsory for any school aged person, male or female, when participating in any **competitive shinty competition or match** to wear a helmet that conforms to the Camanachd Association's regulations. Further information is available on www.shinty.com

- a helmet designed for protective purposes.
- The compulsory use of helmets for the game of 'first shinty', owing to its use of plastic sticks and soft balls is not required.
- The Camanachd Association approved helmet is the recommended standard which should apply to **all shinty matches and competitions** played under the auspices of the Highland Council's Care and Learning Service.

- A referee will be obliged to bar any child or young person of school age and not wearing an approved helmet from taking part in any **competitive shinty competition or match**.

FAQs

Should helmets be worn in games and competitive shinty matches?

The wearing of helmets is compulsory in competitive games and matches for all young people of primary & secondary school age on the grounds of safety and the nature of the competitive game.

Should helmets be worn in shinty training situations and practice?

In conditioned practice and games the teacher or coach can minimise the dangers to participants by adapting the rules of the game to make them safer such as by ruling out high stick play. It is common practice for P.E staff and coaches who lead sessions to condition games and practice so that they can be safe and inclusive. In these circumstances it can be left to staff discretion whether or not helmets should be worn, depending on the assessed risk. If a non-conditioned game is set up within training then it is advised that players use helmets.

Should shinty helmets be worn for the introductory game of first shinty?

'First shinty' uses plastic equipment with rubber heads which does not cause serious injury to participants, and is designed as an introductory game. As such helmets need not be worn for these sessions.

Are there any hygiene implications on the sharing of helmets?

Where shinty helmets are shared it would be possible to put into place cleaning procedures as with school strips to ensure that infection is not passed from one participant to another.

Further Questions

Any further questions on this advice should be directed to:

Highland Council – Ian Jackson, Education Officer (Resources) 07500 120 271
Andrew MacTaggart, Health and Safety Adviser, 01463 703099

Highlife Highland – Mags Duncan, Principal Sports Development Manager
07810528821 or 01463 663831

Camanachd Association – Ronald Ross, Ronald.Ross@shinty.com 01463 715931