INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Repeated breakage: **our policy**

What happens if braces keep breaking

Portadown Orthodontics, Heathwood House · www.portadownorthodontics.co.uk

PORTADOWN ORTHODONTICS

Fixed braces work best when they stay in one piece. A broken bracket or wire stops the teeth moving as planned. Most breakages are caused by hard, sticky or chewy food, or by habits such as biting pens or nails. We want every patient to finish treatment with a great result, so we follow a **clear, step-by-step approach** when breakages happen more than once. We explain this policy when you give consent for treatment.

Why **breakages matter**

- **Each failed bracket can add weeks to treatment.** Teeth stop moving correctly until it is fixed.
- **Appointments get used for repairs instead of progress.** Repairs are booked into short repair slots, so planned adjustments may have to wait until the next routine visit.
- **Repeated breakages can affect the final result** and mean more time off school for appointments.

Our **step-by-step approach**

Stage 1 First breakage	We repair the brace, go over the food rules again with you and your child, and give you **written food advice**.
Stage 2 Second breakage	We repair the brace and give a **verbal warning**, which is noted in the records. We send a **letter to the parent or carer** explaining that breakages make treatment take longer.
Stage 3 Third breakage	We send a **formal warning letter**. We ask a parent or carer to **sign, date and return** the slip to show they have read it.
Stage 4 Breakages continue	We invite the parent or carer and patient to a **review with our specialist orthodontist**. We will discuss whether it is best to **stop treatment early and remove the braces**, with a new referral when your child is ready to look after a brace.

We would much rather not reach Stage 4. A breakage that happens through a genuine accident (for example a sports injury) will be discussed with you, and you can always ask us for help or advice at any stage.

How you **can help**

- Avoid hard, sticky and chewy foods, and cut food such as apples and crusty bread into small pieces.
- Avoid biting nails, pens or pencils. Wear a mouthguard for contact sports.
- If something feels loose or broken, fill in the Broken brace form on our website (Contact us > Broken brace) so we can arrange a repair. If something is sharp and causing pain, call us.

Questions about this policy? **Ask your clinician during your appointment**.