



**Explore Dream Discover Achieve**

**Looking after School Children  
During Heatwaves  
Policy**

July 2017

**This policy follows guidance from: Looking after Schoolchildren and those in Early Years settings during Heatwaves: Guidance for Teachers and Other Professionals**

High temperatures affect people of all age groups and climate change is likely to lead to an increase in heatwaves throughout the UK. Temperatures both outdoors and indoors may rise to such an extent that precautions to prevent children suffering from heat stress or heat exhaustion may need to be taken.

The Department of Health publication 'Heatwave - A guide to looking after yourself and others during hot weather' provides advice on what to do under such circumstances; the advice given here focuses specifically on children and is provided for school staff. It will also be of use to those involved in the provision of before or after-school childcare, clubs and to parents. This advice should be followed during periods of hot weather, but it is particularly important if a Level Amber or Red Heatwave Alert is announced. In the event of such an alert, health organisations and local authorities will be alerted by the Met Office

### **Outdoors**

- On very hot days (ie where temperatures are in excess of 30°C), children will not take part in vigorous physical activity.
  - Children playing outdoors will be encouraged to stay in the shade as much as possible.
  - Loose clothing should be worn to help children keep cool and caps or hats with wide brims should be worn to avoid sunburn.
  - Thin clothing or sun cream should be used to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes.
  - Children will be provided with plenty of cool water \*and encouraged to drink more than usual when conditions are hot.
- \*The temperature of water supplied from the cold tap is adequate for this purpose.

### **Indoors**

Measures to avoid classrooms and other teaching spaces becoming unnecessarily hot are as follows.

- Windows and other ventilation openings should be opened during the cool of early morning or preferably overnight to allow stored heat to escape from the building. It is important to check insurance conditions and the need for security if windows are to be left open overnight.
- Windows and other ventilation openings should not be closed, but their openings reduced when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors. This should help keep rooms cool whilst allowing adequate ventilation.
- Use indoor blinds, but do not let solar shading devices block ventilation openings or windows.
- Keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum during heatwaves.
- All electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers should be switched off when not in use and should not be left in 'standby mode'. Electrical equipment, when left on, or in 'standby' mode generates heat.

## **Maintaining children's health during hot weather conditions**

- Encourage children to eat normally.
- Encourage children to drink plenty of cool water\* on hot days.  
\*The temperature of water supplied from the cold tap is adequate for this purpose.

Other actions that can be taken include the following:

- If possible, rearrange school start and finish times to avoid teaching during very hot conditions.
- Use classrooms or other spaces which are less likely to overheat in preference to others, and adjust the layout of teaching spaces to avoid direct sunlight on children.
- Oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if necessary.

## **Which children are likely to be most affected by high temperatures?**

Children's susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those who are overweight or who are taking medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Children under four years of age are also at increased risk.

Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible to temperature extremes. The school nurse, community health practitioner, family health visitor or the child's specialist health professional may be able to advise on the particular needs of the individual child. School will provide for children's individual needs. Support staff should be made aware of the risks and how to manage them.

## **Actions to take if heat stress or heat exhaustion is suspected**

Staff should look out for signs of heat stress and heat exhaustion.

### **Heat stress**

Children suffering from heat stress will show general signs of discomfort (including those listed below for heat exhaustion). These signs will worsen with physical activity or if left untreated and can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

### **Heat exhaustion**

Signs of heat exhaustion include the following.

- Irritability
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Hot, red and dry skin.

## Heatstroke

Sweating is an essential means of cooling and once this stops a child is at serious risk of developing heatstroke. Heatstroke can develop if heat exhaustion or heat stress is left untreated, but it can also occur suddenly and without warning.

The following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken at once.

- Move the child to as cool a room as possible.
- Sponge the child with cool, (not cold) water and, if available, place cold packs around the neck and in the armpits.
- Place the child near a fan.

If a child shows signs of confusion, follow the steps above. If a child loses consciousness, place the child in the recovery position and follow the steps above. **In both cases, call 999 or 112 for emergency medical assistance.**

**If sensible precautions are taken children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions.**

## Parents/Carers Support

Parents/Carers will be asked to:

- Send into school cool water in a re-fillable drinks bottle.
- Protect their child from sunburn by applying sun cream before school. Staff can not apply it for them.
- Send in a cap or hat with wide brim for playtimes.
- Parents/Carers will be requested to give permission to allow their child to have their face, arms and legs sponged with cool water if heatstroke is suspected.

## APPENDIX

- Know the Symptoms
- Heat Exhaustion or Heat Stroke

## Equality Statement

At Stourport Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of **race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, and age** (for staff only). We will adhere to the legal definitions of these protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

We aim to develop and maintain a culture of inclusion and diversity, in which all those connected with the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

# KNOW THE SYMPTOMS



## Heat Exhaustion

VS

## Heat Stroke

Faint or dizzy

Throbbing headache

Excessive sweating

No sweating

Cool, clammy skin

Red, hot, dry skin

Nausea or vomiting

Nausea or vomiting

Rapid, weak pulse

Rapid, strong pulse

Muscle cramps

May lose consciousness

- Get to a cooler, air conditioned place
- Drink water if fully conscious
- Take a cool shower or use cold compresses
- rest!

- Call 911
- Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives (ice bath, cold towels, etc.)

# HEAT EXHAUSTION OR HEAT STROKE?



## HEAT EXHAUSTION SYMPTOMS

1. Faint or dizzy
2. Excessive sweating
3. Cool, pale, clammy skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, weak pulse
6. Muscle cramps

## HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Move to cooler location
2. Drink water
3. Take a cool shower or use cold compresses

## HEAT STROKE SYMPTOMS

1. Throbbing headache
2. No sweating
3. Body temp above 103°  
Red, hot, dry skin
4. Nausea, vomiting
5. Rapid, strong pulse
6. May lose consciousness

## HOW TO TREAT IT

1. Get emergency help
2. Keep cool until treated

