



Fosse Multi Academy Trust

Heatwave Policy

Version Control

Date	Version	Amendments/Comments	Reviewer/s
April 2025	V1		LO

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1 Guidance background

This policy document is based on the government guidance [Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals \(2023\)](#). It also forms part of the trust schools Climate Action Plan.

2 Definition of a heatwave

The heatwave threshold is met when a school experiences a period of at least **three consecutive days** with daily maximum temperatures meeting or exceeding the heatwave temperature threshold.

The heatwave temperature threshold is 27 degrees centigrade

3 Risks from heat

Heat stress

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

As some of our students have sensory issues and find regulating their body temperatures difficult, staff will ensure that those students are supported and encouraged to remove unnecessary clothing e.g., coats, during excess heat.

Heat exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion vary but include one or more of the following:

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- excessive sweating and pale, clammy skin
- confusion

Heatstroke

When the body is exposed to very high temperatures, the mechanism that controls body temperature may stop working. Heatstroke can develop if heat stress or heat exhaustion is left untreated, but it can also occur suddenly and without warning. Symptoms of heat stroke may include:

- high body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F) is a major sign of heatstroke
- red, hot skin and sweating that then suddenly stops
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- confusion/lack of coordination
- fits

- loss of consciousness

4 Actions to protect people suffering from heat illness

In the event of a student or staff member suffering from heat illness, the following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

- Move the person to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
- Cool the person as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods you can. For example, sponge or spray them with cool (25 to 30°C) water – if available,
- Place cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrap them in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan.
- Dial 999 to request an ambulance if the person doesn't respond to the above treatment within 30 minutes.

If a person loses consciousness, or has a fit, place them in the recovery position, call 999 immediately and follow the steps above until medical assistance arrives.

5 Protecting children outdoors

During periods of high temperature, the school takes appropriate account of the following principles:

- Communication from school to home will remind parents to ensure children wear appropriate clothing, come into school with sun cream already applied and to ensure children have a full water bottle.
- Children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are more than 30°C
- Encourage children playing outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible
- Children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sun hats with wide brims to avoid sunburn
- Use sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection) to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes
- Provide children with plenty of water (such as water from a cold tap or water dispenser) and encourage them to drink more than usual when conditions are hot

6 Protecting children indoors

During periods of high temperature, the school considers the following steps:

- Communication from school to home will remind parents to ensure children wear appropriate clothing, come into school with sun cream already applied and to ensure children have a full water bottle.
- Open windows as early as possible in the morning before children arrive, 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
- Assess whether it is better to close windows when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep the heat out while allowing adequate ventilation
- Use outdoor sun awnings if available, or close indoor blinds or curtains, but do not let them block window ventilation
- Keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum

- Switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers when not in use – equipment should not be left in ‘standby mode’ as this generates heat
- If possible, use those classrooms or other spaces which are less likely to overheat, and adjust the layout of teaching spaces to avoid direct sunlight on children. This is particularly relevant for certain classrooms in the main house where alternative teaching spaces may be sourced and used. Staff to plan ahead and liaise with SLT.
- Oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C – at temperatures above 35°C fans may not prevent heat-related illness and may worsen dehydration
- If necessary, consider rearranging school start, finish, and play times to avoid teaching during very hot conditions
- Encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of cool water

7 Protecting staff

We take the well-being of our staff very seriously. The school may therefore:

- Encourage staff to dress less formally but still modestly.
- Encourage staff to leave the building as soon as practicable at the end of the open school day
- Reorganise planned on site after school events Consider use of rooms which are less susceptible to higher temperatures
- Allow additional drink and comfort breaks
- Provide toiletries in staff washrooms

Staff with known health conditions should make their line manager aware of the impact of sustained heat.

8 Major events

If the school is holding a major event involving significant numbers of people during a heatwave, the guidance [Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings May 2023](#) will be followed.

The major points covered by the guidance [Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings May 2023](#) are:

- Identifying hot weather as a potential risk in event risk assessments and ensuring plans are in place to reduce the impact of hot weather
- Providing adequate drinking water throughout the event in line with potable water and food hygiene plans
- Having a plan in place to increase shaded areas
- Planning activities at times of the day when it is cooler such as the morning or evening and advising attendees to stay out of the sun at the hottest time of the day between 11am and 3pm and use shaded areas.
- Ensuring good public communications on how to reduce the risk associated with hot weather during the event and ensuring plans are in place to make changes to the event should there be extremely hot weather forecast

9 Fires

Because of the increased risk of conflagration, in the run-up towards, during and for an appropriate period after a heatwave:

- students are taught about the dangers of fires
- no staff member involved in Learning Outside the Classroom (eg Forest School) permits any fire-utilising activities or activities that may indirectly be incendiary.