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### EXTREME HOT WEATHER RISK ASSESSMENTS

<b>Action</b>	URGENT	✓	<b>Function</b>	Information	✓
	IMPORTANT			Guidance	✓
				Consultation	
	DISTRIBUTE TO STAFF	✓		Data Collection	
	DISTRIBUTE TO GOVS	✓		Bidding opportunity	
	DISTRIBUTE TO PARENTS	✓		Courses	
	REPLY BY			Other	
Contact Name	Mrs Helen Brooks				

#### Summary :

This guidance will assist school in reviewing health and safety arrangements for protecting staff, pupils and visitors during extreme hot weather

The Met Office has implemented their Heat Health Watch, and as part of the Councils Heatwave Plan (June 2018). Schools and Early Years settings are advised to take appropriate precautions during the summer period and attached is a Risk Assessment to assist.

Excessive exposure to heat can cause dehydration and heat exhaustion. It can also lead to loss of concentration and tiredness contributing to poor learning and an increased risk of accidents.

Health and safety regulations require employers to undertake risk assessment wherever there is a significant risk of harm to their employees and others e.g. prolonged exposure to heat such as the sun. Therefore, in carrying out a risk assessment, staff should adopt the following steps below:

Five steps to risk assessment (see checklist proforma attached Appendix 1).

1. Identify the hazards (anything that can cause harm)
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

Temperatures requirements are covered by the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and provide information on a minimum temperature of **16 degrees Celsius** for sedentary work – **or 13 degrees Celsius** for physical activities.

**There is no legal upper temperature limit**, even though some groups have suggested a maximum temperature of 30°C. It is therefore essential that the employer determines what reasonable comfort for their specific workplace.

Although there is no maximum working temperature there is a requirement that temperature inside buildings shall be reasonable in accordance to the needs of the staff and service users etc.

There are many practical precautionary measures that can be introduced as part of a risk assessment to improve the working environment during spells of hot weather.

**Please complete the RISK ASSESSMENT attached. If answers to all of the questions are 'yes', then you will have successfully completed a 'suitable & sufficient' risk assessment. The risk assessment covers Key Areas such as:**

- 1. General arrangements for identifying staff/pupils with special needs**
- 2. Outdoors Activities**
- 3. Indoors Activities**
- 4. Emergency Action if heat stress or heat exhaustion is suspected**

#### **Hot Weather Risk Assessment Checklist**

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION		Yes	No
<b>General</b>			
1.	Are Senior Managers taking note of warning alerts for serious weather conditions/ heat wave warnings and acting on them?	✓	
2.	Are thermometers on display within classrooms to record the temperature?		✓
3.	Senior Managers have considered the needs of pupils and staff that may be at greater risk e.g. young pupils and new or expectant staff?	✓	
4.	Has the effects hot weather / heat wave conditions been incorporated into the risk assessments plans of activities such as educational visits and work experience placements?	✓	
5.	Has Senior Managers taken the opportunity to promote hot weather conditions in a positive way to discuss staying healthy and safe in the sun, general health issues, building design, climate change etc., with the pupils?	✓	
<b>Outdoors Areas</b>			
7.	Have considerations been made to postpone physical activities such as sports days, PE lessons and other strenuous activities where temperature is above 30°C?	✓	
8.	Are children being encouraged to stay in the shade?	✓	
9.	Has the clothing policy been adopted to reflect the hot weather conditions and to avoid sunburn and encourage the use of sun hats?	✓	

10.	Has parents been alerted of the need to provide sun cream with a high Sunblock factor to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes?	✓	
11.	Are children encouraged to drink more than usual when conditions are hot and do children have reasonable access to drinking water?	✓	
<b>Indoor Areas</b>			
12.	Is the temperature below 30°C?		✓
13.	Are windows and other ventilation openings in good working order so that adequate ventilation can be provided e.g opened early before pupils arrive on site?	✓	
14.	Are adequate indoor blinds provided to reflect heat form the sun? (do not let solar shading devices block ventilation openings or windows).	✓	

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION		Yes	No
15.	Are steps taken to reduce or curtail activities that may generate heat e.g. use of ovens, Science/D&T practical lessons that use heat sources, ICT Suites etc?	✓	
16.	Has appropriate changes been made to the school lunch menu to prevent catering staff from heat exhaustion? (Seek advice from your cook/catering provider).		✓
17.	Has steps been taken to keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum during heat waves?	✓	
18.	Have 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?	✓	
19.	Are teachers able to adjust their 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?	✓	
20.	Has the use of oscillating mechanical fans or air conditioning units been provided to increase air movement and cool the environment where necessary? (avoid <b>trailing lead</b> which can cause trip hazards).		✓
<b>Emergency Actions</b>			

21.	<p>Are teachers aware of the signs of heat stress and heat exhaustion e.g. Irritability? Children suffering from heat stress will show general signs of discomfort (including those listed below for heat exhaustion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Hot, red and dry skin.</li> </ul> <p>These signs will worsen with physical activity or if left untreated and can lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.</p>	✓	
22.	<p>Are employees aware of the steps that should be taken to reduce body temperature in the event of heat exhaustion or heat stroke? e.g. to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move the child to as cool a room as possible.</li> <li>• Place the child near a fan.</li> <li>• Where available, place cold packs around the neck and in the armpits.</li> </ul>	✓	
<b>AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
23.	<p>Are employees aware of emergency first-aid measure or when to call for an ambulance?</p>	✓	

<p>24. Any further comments, observations or actions taken (add below)</p> <p>Outdoors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On very hot days (that is, where temperatures are in excess of 30°C) children should not take part in vigorous physical activity.</li> <li>• Children playing outdoors should be encouraged to stay in the shade as much as possible. Staff may utilise the woodland garden with individual classes.</li> <li>• Loose, light-coloured clothing should be worn to help children keep cool and hats of a closed construction with wide brims should be worn to avoid sunburn.</li> <li>• Thin clothing or sun cream should be used to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes.</li> <li>• Children must 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.</li> </ul> <p>Indoors:</p> <p>Windows and other ventilation openings should be opened during the cool of early morning or to allow stored heat to escape from the building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Use outdoor sun awnings if available, or indoor blinds, but do not let solar shading devices block ventilation openings or windows.</li> <li>• Keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum during heatwaves.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Children likely to be most affected by high temperatures</u></b></p>		
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Children's susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those under 4 years of age, who are overweight, or who are taking certain medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible to high temperatures. 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. Support staff should be made aware of the risks and how to manage them. Further information about supporting children with medical condition can be found at the Department for Education website.

### **Health risks from heat**

Children cannot control their body temperature as efficiently as adults during hot weather because they do not sweat as much and so can be at risk of ill-health from heat. Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. The main risk from heat is dehydration (not having enough water in the body). If sensible precautions are taken children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions, however, teachers, assistants, school nurses and all child carers should look out for signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

### **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 heatstroke.

### **Heat exhaustion**

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

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- hot, red and dry 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 heatstroke 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 co-ordination
- fits
- loss of consciousness

### **Actions to protect children suffering from heat illness**

The following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

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

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

For further information on reducing temperatures within school buildings and grounds see UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) [Heatwave Plan for England](#).