



# One minute guide to...

## WHAT TO DO DURING A HEATWAVE

### Why is it important to be aware?

We all look forward to hot weather, but when it is too hot there may be health risks, so it is important to know how to make sure it doesn't harm you or anyone you know.

The main risks posed by a heatwave are dehydration (not drinking enough); overheating (increasing symptoms if individuals have problems with their breathing or heart); heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

### What to do at your school/nursery - indoors?

- OPEN windows as early as possible in the morning before children arrive but CLOSE windows when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep the heat out while allowing adequate ventilation
- Close blinds / curtains, but do not let them block window ventilation
- All electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers should be switched off when not in use and 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
- Oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C. Above 35°C fans may not prevent heat-related illness and may worsen dehydration

### What to do - outdoors?

- On very hot days (i.e. if over 30°C) children should not take part in vigorous physical activity
- children playing outdoors should be encouraged to stay in the shade as much as possible
- loose, light coloured, thin clothing should be worn to help children keep cool and sunhats with wide brims should be worn to avoid sunburn alongside sunscreen (Factor 15 or above)
- children must be encouraged to drink more than usual when conditions are hot

#### Specifically for Sports Days:

- 1) Ensuring all children can sit in the shade when not competing
- 2) Wear hats and sun lotion
- 3) If the sports day was due to include any long running races, consider leaving these out
- 4) Structure your sports day so children get breaks between competing and can sit in the shade / be encouraged to drink.
- 5) Any children, staff and spectators should have access to shade and cold drinks
- 6) If any children report feeling unwell, move them to a cooler space – use fans and wet cloths / towels to help cool them down

### Further Information:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beat-the-heat-hot-weather-advice/beat-the-heat-staying-safe-in-hot-weather>
2. [Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
3. NHS advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/>

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