



### Heatwave - risk assessment, July 2022

During this period of very hot weather, Holly Hill are already taking actions to protect children and staff. We are experiencing a level 3 heatwave alert and the Met Office has issued an **Red Extreme Heat Warning (Medium Likelihood of High Impacts)**, a rare warning about extreme heat on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July to cover the potential impacts from the high temperatures including a danger to life. These could include **health impacts** on the most vulnerable in our society including those with pre-existing medical conditions, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, but it can also lead to heatstroke and heat exhaustion even on those who are normally fit and healthy.

Following DfE guidance. Holly Hill have already taken the following actions:

- Message sent to all parents 16<sup>th</sup> July to advise children to come in PE kit, suns cream and hats.
- Windows open at 6-8am to allow stored heat to escape from the building and cooler air to come in.
- Children will not take part in vigorous physical activity
- Outdoor play will be limited to the morning and ensure stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Children will have access to plenty of water and be encouraged to drink more than usual
- Staff are encouraged to wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and encouraged to drink more water than usual
- Frozen no sugar Ice Lolly will be provided to all children in the afternoon
- Blinds to be closed to ensure heat kept out.

Any parent who has concerns, please speak to the Head of School

## Health risks from heat for school to be aware of

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 illhealth 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.

## *Red warning of extreme heat*

Regions and local authorities affected:

East Midlands, East of England, London & South East England, North West England, South West England, West Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside

An exceptional hot spell on Monday and Tuesday leading to widespread impacts on people and infrastructure.

What to expect

Population-wide adverse health effects experienced, not limited to those most vulnerable to extreme heat, leading to serious illness or danger to life. Government advice is that 999 services should be used in emergencies only; seek advice from 111 if you need non-emergency health advice. Substantial changes in working practices and daily routines will be required. High risk of failure of heat-sensitive systems and equipment, potentially leading to localised loss of power and other essential services, such as water or mobile phone services. Significantly more people visiting coastal areas, lakes and rivers, leading to an increased risk of water safety incidents. Delays on roads and road closures, along with delays and cancellations to rail and air travel, with significant welfare issues for those who experience even moderate delays

### **Government guidance about actions in response to a heatwave:**

- [Heatwave Plan for England: Protecting health and reducing harm from severe heat and heatwaves \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/644444/heatwave-plan-for-england-2022.pdf)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-during-heatwaves-for-teachers-and-professionals>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/heat-health-advice-issued-for-all-regions-of-england>

### **General key public health messages**

- Stay out of the heat
  - keep out of the sun between 11am and 3pm
  - if you have to go out in the heat, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat and light scarf - avoid extreme physical exertion
  - wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes
- Cool yourself down
  - have plenty of cold drinks, and avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks
  - eat cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high-water content
  - take a cool shower, bath or body wash
  - sprinkle water over the skin or clothing, or keep a damp cloth on the back of your neck

- Keep your environment cool
  - keeping your living space cool is especially important for infants, the elderly or those with chronic health conditions or who can't look after themselves
  - keep windows that are exposed to the sun closed during the day
  - turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment – they generate heat

Be alert and call a doctor if someone is unwell or further help is needed If someone has a health problem