



Hot Weather and Heatwave Policy

Rationale

The global and UK climate is changing, with weather extremes becoming more frequent. UK infrastructure is designed primarily around low to moderate temperatures. With the increased risk of higher temperatures and prolonged periods of hot weather, it is important to consider the effects of hot weather and heatwaves on the safety and wellbeing of the children and adults within the setting and to identify and take all reasonable and practicable steps to reduce the impact of such weather on the setting.

Procedure

1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Hot Weather and Heatwave Risk Assessment. Current and subsequent periods of excessive heat, changes to legislation and official guidance will inform the updating of the Risk Assessment, which will be reviewed regularly.
2. I will remain subscribed to the Met Office and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Weather Health Alerts.
3. I will regularly check the Met Office ultraviolet (UV) level and temperature forecasts, at a minimum of once a day and more frequently during periods of Weather Health Alerts.
4. I will renew my Sun Safe Nurseries accreditation annually and will implement, at a minimum, the guidance given within it.
5. I will take all relevant, reasonable and practicable steps before and during Hot Weather Alerts and Met Office Heat Health Warnings (Yellow, Amber and Red) to mitigate the effects of the hot weather on the children and adults within the setting.
6. Decisions on action to take will be based upon the type of Hot Weather Alert, Heat Health Warning (Yellow, Amber and Red), the humidity levels which affect heat tolerance, the rate at which the temperatures increase from the baseline average to the predicted excessive temperatures and the duration of the spell of excessive heat.

Hot weather protocols

Babies and young children do not sweat as much as adults, making it harder for their bodies to cool down. They are unable to regulate their body temperature during periods of extreme heat as effectively as adults. Dehydration, heat stress and overheating can be dangerous to babies and young children, who may become poorly very quickly, potentially progressing to heatstroke, which is a medical emergency and can be fatal.

During the summer months, the temperature and UV levels will be monitored daily and appropriate actions taken. These include, but are not limited to:

- adapting our activities to make use of shade and water play
- planning the places we visit, avoiding open spaces and favouring naturally cooler, shaded places such as woodland
- the times of day that we are active outside, making the most of the cooler hours in the morning
- wearing appropriate clothing – loose, light-coloured fabrics that protect the shoulders and layers that can be put on and taken off as needed
- providing all of our children with brimmed legionnaires-style hats that protect both the eyes and the back of the neck
- providing protective sun creams and sprays that we apply regularly throughout the day (for babies and children over six months)
- using UV-reactive patches to identify if our sun cream or spray needs to be reapplied early

Heat Warnings

I take further actions when the Met Office issues a warning for extreme heat, including:

- shading as much of the garden as possible
- restricting our activities to shaded areas
- incorporating water into our play
- using our UV rash vests and/or lightweight cotton-linen hooded tops for added protection
- suspending our usual rules requiring long trousers
- moving play indoors once the garden temperature reaches 30°C (or before) to prevent heat stress

Within the house, we follow the advice given to open windows during the night to let the cooler air in, and shut or restrict them once it is hotter outside than in. In the rooms

on the sunniest side of the house, our curtains remain drawn throughout the day. We use a dehumidifier and fans in our main indoor play area, always have water available for the children to drink, and monitor the room temperature through our Hive thermostat located in the play area.

Safer sleep during hot weather

I follow the Lullaby Trust guidelines regarding safer sleep during hot weather. We strive to keep the room where the children sleep as cool as possible, closing the curtains at sleep time and throughout the afternoon, once the sun has moved round to the front.

The recommended room temperature babies to sleep in is between 16°C and 20°C for babies under 12 months of age. We acknowledge the increased risk of SIDS as the ambient room temperature rises above this, with the risk at or above 29°C being associated with a 2.78 times increase compared to a temperature of 20°C.

The risk of heat stress and dehydration during sleep increases for babies and young children during periods of excessive ambient room temperature. All children and babies are closely monitored during sleep in periods of excessive heat.

We remove layers of clothing as required, have a variety of togs of sleeping bags for our youngest, and will add or remove cellular blankets as required for those over 12 months. Fans circulate the air in the room without being directed at the children and a dehumidifier reduces the moisture content of the air within the room.

School runs

Morning and afternoon school runs are expected to take place within the setting until July 2026. We travel on foot, with non-walking children shaded in a pushchair and capable walkers alongside.

We take every precaution to keep the children cool during hot weather. We bring drinking water with us, wear our sun hats and sun cream/spray, leave a few minutes early so we do not need to rush, and shade the pushchair as much as possible with the hood and additional sunshades/parasols. We take the most shaded route to and from school, acknowledging that in the afternoon even the most shaded route provides

very little relief from the direct sun. We give everyone a cooling snack that includes moisture-rich foods once we return to the setting.

Where the temperature at the time of the afternoon school run is, or is forecast to be, 30°C or above or is 27 degrees or above with high humidity levels, parents of children most vulnerable to the excessive heat may be asked to collect their child before the afternoon school run is due to start. This includes:

- children who would be expected to walk on the school run
- babies under 6 months of age
- babies under 12 months of age with an increased risk of SIDS
- children and babies with a medical condition that puts them at increased risk from excessive temperatures)

Additionally, parents of all children may be asked to collect their child before the afternoon school run if I determine the health of adults taking the children on the afternoon school run may be at risk from heat-related illness as a result of taking them on the afternoon school run.

Setting closures

Every relevant, reasonable and practicable step will be taken to make and keep the setting as cool and comfortable as possible during periods of hot weather and heatwaves. Keeping the setting open and safe will be my priority during this time.

From time to time, I may determine that it is not possible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and/or adults within the setting due to the excessive heat. In the unlikely event that my hot weather and heatwave risk assessment determines there is a high risk to the health and wellbeing of children and/or adults I may, based upon my risk assessment, determine that the setting needs to:

- amend its opening times to make better use of the cooler hours of the day
- close earlier than usual
- close for a full day

I acknowledge the impact on families where I am unable to provide childcare at short notice. Any decision made regarding closure or early collection will be communicated

to families at the earliest opportunity. Families will be invited to refresh themselves with my Hot Weather and Heatwave policy and risk assessment at the start of each summer so that they can understand the criteria which inform my decisions and can consider contingency plans in the rare event of disruption.

Where I decide to close the setting earlier than my usual finish time for the health and wellbeing of the children and/or adults, based upon my risk assessment, no alternative hours of care will be provided.

Where you choose to keep your child off for the full day due to the hot weather or heatwave, and I close the setting earlier than my usual finish time on that day, I may offer an alternative day's care at a mutually convenient time.

Where I decide to close the setting for the full day, no alternative hours of care will be provided.

Conclusion

The health, safety and wellbeing of all the children and adults in my setting is at the heart of everything I do. I take pride in the measures I take to make my setting as heat resilient as possible, and to keep the children and adults as happy and comfortable as possible within the adaptations I make.

Working in partnership with parents, carers and families, we can reduce the risk of hot weather and heatwaves to everyone at the setting.

Signature: Meg Hearne

Date: 05 July 2026