

Hot Weather and Heatwave Risk Assessment



Date of Assessment: 30/06/2026

Assessed by: Meg Hearne

Benefits	Maintaining a safe environment within the setting in which children can play, eat and sleep and adults can work safely and comfortably.
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What is being assessed?	What hazards may be present?	Who would be affected?	What degree of injury could be reasonably expected?	What precautions have been put in place to reduce the risk of injury?	Likelihood after mitigations	Effect	Risk score
High outdoor temperatures during the day	Heat exhaustion, dehydration, sunburn	Children, Adults	Moderate to serious illness requiring medical attention	Outdoor play limited to cooler parts of the day. Children encouraged to drink water regularly. Additional snack of water-rich foods may be provided. Shade provided, water play. Monitor children closely for signs of overheating. No vigorous activity.	2	5	Medium/High
Exposure to direct sunlight	Sunburn, overheating, heatstroke	Children, Adults	Moderate to serious injury	Parents asked to apply sunscreen before attendance. Sunscreen reapplied in accordance with setting policy. Sun hats and UV rash vests/sunsuits provided by the setting to be used. Additional static and mobile shade set up outside. Activities set up to encourage play in shaded areas where possible. Outdoor play to be avoided when outdoor temperatures, either forecast or actual, reach 30 degrees or higher, and between 11am and 3pm in all other temperatures.	1	3	Low
Hot outdoor play equipment and surfaces	Burns, discomfort	Children	Minor to moderate injury	Equipment checked before use. Children prevented from using excessively hot equipment. Alternative activities provided. Equipment placed in shaded areas where possible.	1	3	Low
Physical activities during hot weather	Overheating, exhaustion	Children	Moderate illness	Strenuous activities reduced or postponed. Active play adapted to suit weather conditions. Regular rest periods provided. Activities restricted to house, garden or trips to cooler environments with only brief car journeys required.	1	4	Low/Medium
High outdoor temperatures during the afternoon school run	Heat exhaustion, dehydration, sunburn	Children, Adults	Serious illness requiring medical attention, death	Use extended sunshades and fans on the pushchair. Where outdoor temperatures are, or are forecast to be, 30 degrees or higher, or are 27 degrees or higher with high humidity at the time of the afternoon school run, consider early collection for:	3	5	High

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	SIDS	Babies under 12 months		- Children who would walk or use the buggy board on the school run - Babies under 6 months of age - Babies under 12 months of age who have an increased risk of SIDS - Babies or children with a health condition that may be exacerbated by excessive heat			
Insufficient fluid intake	Dehydration, headaches, dizziness, fatigue	Children, Adults	Moderate illness	Water available at all times. Regular drink breaks incorporated throughout the day. Staff actively encourage children to drink. Chopped fruit added to water dispensers. Water-rich foods served with all snacks and meals. Additional snack times may be planned in.	2	4	Low/Medium
Indoor temperatures becoming excessively high	Discomfort, fatigue, heat exhaustion, dehydration, heatstroke	Children, Adults	Serious illness	Indoor temperatures monitored throughout the day. Fans, ventilation, blinds and shaded areas used in accordance with guidance. Windows open overnight and in the morning until the outdoor temperature exceeds the indoor temperature. No vigorous activity. Switch off unnecessary electrical equipment. Activities adapted to reduce physical exertion. Parents contacted if children become unwell, or temperatures cannot be managed safely and no cooler areas are available to move to.	3	5	High
Sleeping and rest periods during extreme heat	Overheating while resting or sleeping Increased risk of SIDS	Children Babies under 12 months	Moderate to severe illness, death	Sleep areas monitored closely. Rooms ventilated where possible. Children checked regularly. Layers of clothing removed as required. Parents contacted if children become unwell or temperatures cannot be managed safely, especially for babies under 12 months old. Consider early collection for babies under 6 months of age, or under 12 months of age who have an increased risk of SIDS.	2	5	Medium/High
Staff supervision of children during heatwave conditions	Signs of heat-related illness not recognised promptly	Children	Serious illness if left untreated	Knowledge refresher on symptoms of dehydration, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Children monitored throughout the day. Emergency contacts readily available.	2	4	Low/Medium
Additional medical needs (e.g. asthma,	Increased vulnerability to heat-related illness	Children, Adults	Moderate to serious illness	Individual health care plans followed. Parents consulted where necessary. Additional monitoring provided. Medication readily accessible. Medication to be stored at an appropriate temperature, for example fridge, cool box	2	4	Low/Medium

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heart conditions, neurodivergence)				or similar depending on the temperature range requirements of the medication.			
Extreme heat affecting the safe operation of the setting	Heat exhaustion, dehydration, heatstroke, increased distress and fatigue Increased risk of SIDS	Children, Adults Babies under 12 months	Moderate to serious illness requiring medical attention, death	The setting owner will continually assess weather conditions, indoor temperatures and the wellbeing of children and adults throughout the day. Session times may be adjusted to avoid the hottest part of the day, outdoor activities may be reduced or cancelled, and parents may be asked to collect children early if temperatures become excessive and risks cannot be adequately managed. Where necessary, the setting may close fully or partially, following communication with families.	2	5	Medium/High

Risk Score Calculation Matrix

		Risk Assessment Matrix				
Likelihood ↑	5	Medium/High	Medium/High	High	High	High
	4	Low / Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High	High	High
	3	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High	High
	2	Low	Low	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Medium/High
	1	Low	Low	Low	Low / Medium	Medium/High
		1	2	3	4	5
		Effect →				

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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. For children and young people who use nappies, dark urine or dry nappies may indicate dehydration and the need for more fluids.

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

To cool a child suffering from heat exhaustion:

- move the child to a cool area and encourage them to drink cool water
- cool the child as rapidly as possible, for example, by sponging or spraying the child with cool water and placing cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrapping the child in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan

If you are concerned about symptoms, or they are worsening, seek medical advice by contacting NHS 111.

Heatstroke

Heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke when the body is unable to cool itself down. Heatstroke is a medical emergency and can be fatal.

Symptoms of heatstroke may include:

- confusion or lack of co-ordination
- seizures (fits)
- loss of consciousness
- high body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F)
- red, hot skin that can be sweaty or dry
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- diarrhoea

If heatstroke is suspected, call 999 and then cool the child down whilst awaiting medical assistance.

If a child loses consciousness, or has a fit:

1. Place the child in the recovery position.
2. Call 999 immediately and follow their instructions.