

15 July 2022

Dear Colleagues

Very Hot Weather – Monday and Tuesday Next Week

As you would expect we have been monitoring the forecast very carefully in preparation for next week. Exceptionally high temperatures continue to be anticipated and today the Met Office have issued a red extreme heat warning.

We note that the Department for Education have not advised schools to close but have recognised that individual school leaders are responsible for managing their own local circumstances.

Our steer is that the heat schools are expected to experience on Monday and Tuesday is exceptional and should be the main consideration around any decisions and activities on those days. Staff should be on high alert for signs of health exhaustion and heatstroke, and priority given to ensuring hydration.

We would strongly advise that Sports Days and planned trips should not go ahead, PE lessons should also not take place and extra curricula activities should ordinarily be curtailed. Children should not be allowed to play vigorously outside where they are not in shade. In line with national guidance, we expect all schools to make an informed decision based on their local circumstances having used all reasonable measures to mitigate the impact of the exceptional heat. This will include a risk assessment. Particular attention should be paid to whether the school can maintain a temperature below 35 degrees inside, as this is the level at which cooling with a fan may become ineffective, as per national guidance.

If having followed this risk assessment process a school leader concludes that they may not be able to keep their children and staff safe then we would accept that in these circumstances a school may decide that it cannot remain fully open and may need to consider other mitigations such as changes to the school day.

We are mindful that schools continue to have a responsibility for vulnerable children in their care and would observe that in the heatwave many more children are potentially vulnerable, so will seek to prioritise maintaining on-site provision for the vulnerable students alongside other pupils whose domestic circumstances mean that they will not be adequately supervised. As a reminder, full national guidance is available here: [Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-during-heatwaves)

Yours sincerely

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