

Heatwave Policy

June 2023

| | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Document title | | | Heatwave Policy |
| Author (name & role title) | | | Amy Thain – School Business Manager |
| Version number | | | V1 |
| Date approved | | | June 2023 |
| Review cycle | | | Three-yearly |
| Approved by | | | Senior Leadership Team |
| Date of review | | | June 2026 |
| Document history | | | |
| Version | Date | Author | Note of revisions |
| V1 | June 2023 | AT | New Document requested by Cavendish |

Heathermount School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core value of building confidence and preparing students for life.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Heathermount School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.
- A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)
- SchoolPro (data protection)
- Marsh Commercial (insurance)

Heathermount School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Heathermount School.

The policy documents of Heathermount School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Contents

| Section | Item | |
|----------|--|----------|
| 1 | Guidance background | 4 |
| 2 | Definition of a heatwave | 4 |
| 3 | Risks from heat | 4 |
| 4 | Actions to protect people suffering from heat illness | 5 |
| 5 | Protecting children outdoors | 5 |
| 6 | Protecting children indoors | 5 |
| 7 | Major events | 6 |
| 8 | Review of implementation | 6 |

1 Guidance background

This policy document is based on the government guidance [Looking after children and those in early years settings during heatwaves: for teachers and professionals \(2023\)](#).

2 Definition of a heatwave

The heatwave threshold is met when a school experiences a period of at least **three consecutive days** with **daily maximum temperatures meeting or exceeding the heatwave temperature threshold**.

The heatwave temperature threshold is:

- 28 degrees centigrade for schools in London and Cambridgeshire
- 27 degrees centigrade for all other schools

3 Risks from heat

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 heat stroke.

As some of our students have sensory issues and find regulating their body temperatures difficult, staff will ensure that those students are supported and encouraged to remove unnecessary clothing e.g., coats, during excess heat.

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
- 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 heat stroke 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 coordination
- fits

- loss of consciousness

4 Actions to protect people suffering from heat illness

In the event of a student or staff member suffering from heat illness, the following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

- Move the person to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
- Cool the person as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods you can. For example, sponge or spray them with cool (25 to 30°C) water – if available,
- Place cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrap them in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan.
- Dial 999 to request an ambulance if the person doesn't respond to the above treatment within 30 minutes.

If a person loses consciousness, or has a fit, place them in the recovery position, call 999 immediately and follow the steps above until medical assistance arrives.

5 Protecting children outdoors

During periods of high temperature, the school takes appropriate account of the following principles:

- Communication from school to home will remind parents to ensure children wear appropriate clothing, come into school with sun cream already applied and to ensure children have a full water bottle.
- Children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are more than 30°C
- Encourage children playing outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible
- Children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sun hats with wide brims to avoid sunburn
- Use sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection) to protect skin if children are playing or taking lessons outdoors for more than 20 minutes
- Provide children with plenty of water (such as water from a cold tap or water dispenser) and encourage them to drink more than usual when conditions are hot

6 Protecting children indoors

During periods of high temperature, the school considers the following steps:

- Communication from school to home will remind parents to ensure children wear appropriate clothing, come into school with sun cream already applied and to ensure children have a full water bottle.
- Open windows as early as possible in the morning before children arrive, or preferably overnight to allow stored heat to escape from the building – it is important to check insurance conditions and the need for security if windows are to be left open overnight
- Assess whether it is better to close windows when the outdoor air becomes warmer than the air indoors – this should help keep the heat out while allowing adequate ventilation
- Use outdoor sun awnings if available, or close indoor blinds or curtains, but do not let them block window ventilation
- Keep the use of electric lighting to a minimum

- Switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers when not in use – equipment 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. This is particularly relevant for certain classrooms in the main house where alternative teaching spaces may be sourced and used. Staff to plan ahead and liaise with SLT.
- Oscillating mechanical fans can be used to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C – at temperatures above 35°C fans may not prevent heat-related illness and may worsen dehydration
- If necessary, consider rearranging school start, finish, and play times to avoid teaching during very hot conditions
- Encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of cool water

7 Major events

If the school is holding a major event involving significant numbers of people during a heatwave, the guidance [Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings May 2023](#) will be followed.

The major points covered by the guidance [Hot weather advice: planning events and mass gatherings May 2023](#) are:

- Identifying hot weather as a potential risk in event risk assessments and ensuring plans are in place to reduce the impact of hot weather
- Providing adequate drinking water throughout the event in line with potable water and food hygiene plans
- Having a plan in place to increase shaded areas
- Planning activities at times of the day when it is cooler such as the morning or evening and advising attendees to stay out of the sun at the hottest time of the day between 11am and 3pm and use shaded areas.
- Ensuring good public communications on how to reduce the risk associated with hot weather during the event and ensuring plans are in place to make changes to the event should there be extremely hot weather forecast

8 Review of implementation

The implementation of this Policy is reviewed annually by the school’s Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and a report is made to the Governance Body.

The school may submit to Cavendish Education proposals for amendments to this Policy.