



Small School ♦ Strong Values ♦ Great Experiences

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BRI/SRU

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you are well.

As you will be aware, on Monday and Tuesday this week we will experience extremely high temperatures. The Met Office has issued the first ever Red Extreme heat warning, with temperatures likely in the high 30s C and in some places perhaps even reaching 40°C. Whilst Chesterfield itself currently sits just outside of the Red warning zone, temperatures will be exceptionally high and the actual zones of highest temperatures may vary from those forecast.

Last week, we made some adjustments to arrangements in school over those two days, including making both Monday and Tuesday non-uniform days, with pupils encouraged to wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Pupils have also been encouraged to bring refillable water bottles, wear sun cream and sun hats when directly exposed to sunlight. We have identified classrooms and office spaces that would not be suitable for use and have reorganized some activities on that basis. Whilst this will help, we are of course aware that many of our classrooms become uncomfortably hot in the kind of temperatures we typically experience.

Following a further assessment of risks to pupils and staff over the weekend, we have also made the following decisions:

- If parents/carers decide not to send their child to school because of health and safety concerns connected with the extreme temperatures, then that absence will be recorded as authorised due to exceptional circumstances.
- Depending on the number of pupils in school, we will look to use the most comfortable classrooms available. We will provide access to drinking water throughout the day (please bring refillable bottles) and use all means at our disposal to enable spaces in use to be well-ventilated.
- Pupils with some medical conditions will be at an increased risk from high temperatures, such as diabetes and epilepsy. Parents and carers of those pupils should take all measures possible to keep them safe in such conditions (please see advice at the end of this letter for guidance).
- There will be no outdoor activities, either through PE or during social times. During social times pupils must be either indoors or in shaded areas only.



- On Monday, we are currently planning for the school day to end at 12.45pm (i.e., the end of lesson 4). This will enable pupils and staff to leave school before the temperatures reach their peak, according to current forecasts.
- Subject to the catering team being able to support this, pupils will be able to order 'grab bags' after 12.45pm to either eat in the canteen or take home with them. Any pupils entitled to free school means who are not in school as authorized absent can also order grab bags for lunch, which will be available from 12.45pm – 1.15m in the canteen. Please contact us via text, email or phone by 10am tomorrow morning if you would like to order a grab bag.

To support our planning, and to support our attendance and safeguarding teams to manage things efficiently, please inform us as soon as possible if you are intending to keep your child at home on Monday due to the exceptionally high temperatures forecast.

The best way to do this is either by responding to the text message issued with 'Absent'. Alternatively, you can email: info@parkside.derbyshire.sch.uk or call us on 01246 273458.

In the email or phone call, please state:

1. The name of your child(ren)
2. Your name
3. The reason for absence

We will monitor conditions in school on Monday very carefully and communicate arrangements for Tuesday as early as possible. Please be aware that a decision may be made to close the school to some or all pupils if it is not safe to remain open.

Overleaf, I have provided some information on looking after children during heatwaves. Over the next two days, the extreme temperatures present a risk throughout the day, evening and night, so please consider the information provided.

With very best wishes



Ben Riggott
Headteacher

Taking care of children during heatwaves

Children's susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those under 4 years of age, who are overweight, or who are taking certain medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible.

Health risks from heat

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 ill-health 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 everyone responsible for looking after children 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

If anyone shows signs of the above conditions the following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

- Move the child to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
- 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.
- 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.

Source: 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?dm_i=2VPK,1APXU,8C7K3H,528DA,1