

# Hot Weather Policy

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**BRITISH SCHOOL**  
MUSCAT

## Introduction

At British School Muscat (BSM) we aim to provide a safe environment for all our pupils and recognise our duty of care by aiming to minimise the risk of illness caused by hot weather (typically between April to June and September to October).

## POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

This policy sets out the framework to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff during periods of hot weather, in order to prevent dehydration and heat exhaustion and has been written with reference to the Canadian Public Health, Hot Weather Guidelines and the Canadian National Athletic Trainers Association.

As a general principle all staff should promote the following acronym with all pupils:

**S**eek the shade

**H**ats on heads

**A**ct slowly

**D**rink plenty and often

**E**njoy the shade

### Policy Aims

- To minimise the risk of overheating
- To minimise the risk of heat related illness
- To ensure a balance between the need to reduce exposure to heat and the need for physical activity
- To ensure all pupils have a break from the classroom environment in order to maximise their readiness for learning.

### Terminology

- **Pupils** will be used when referring to the whole school issues
- **Children** will be used where issues relate directly to the primary school
- **Students** will be used where issues relate directly to the senior school

## GUIDELINES ON HOT WEATHER PROCEDURES

These guidelines refer to pupils using the main hall and the sports hall during particularly hot weather. In the event that these facilities are being used, alternative indoor provision will be made available.

The procedures are based on a system of green, amber and red stages that relate directly to a humidex chart included in the above guidance. The humidex reading relates to the combined effect of heat and humidity.

The nurse will communicate the humidex levels via email to staff prior to break times. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the health and safety of pupils whilst at school and use their discretion with regards to the use of equipment and levels of activity based on the information provided.

## Green Stage (This is the default procedure)

### Arrangements for break times in primary and senior school

All of the pupils have break times as normal which ensure a dedicated time to eat / drink and an opportunity for exercise.

Teachers will remind children / students to drink at regular intervals and that water bottles are re-filled from the water fountains around the school site.

All pupils and staff must wear a hat if exposed to direct sunlight. No hat no play.

Duties remain the same throughout the school at this stage.

## Amber stage

### Arrangements for primary school:

#### Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

- The arrangements will remain as normal, however, children should be engaged in low level physical activity only, staff should use their discretion with regards to the equipment used and ensure the children drink at regular intervals.

#### Key Stage 2

- Children will go out to eat as usual but are only allowed in shaded areas.
- Children should not use the AWP at amber stage.
- Designated indoor facilities should be used for physical activity.
- Staff will remind children to drink at regular intervals and to re-fill their water bottles from the water fountains around the school site.
- No changes to the duty rotes are required.

### Arrangements for senior school:

- Students will go out to break as normal.
- Students will be encouraged to use the shaded areas available.
- No strenuous exercise is allowed.
- Students should not use the AWP at amber stage.

## Red Stage

### Arrangements for primary school:

#### Foundation Stage

- Children will use the outdoor play area as usual
- The length of the outdoor activities may be shortened – staff will use their discretion
- Children will have water available outside and all have an opportunity for regular drinks.
- Staff will monitor the heat of equipment such as the slide and use their discretion to restrict equipment deemed unsuitable.
- Bikes should not be put out during red stage.

#### Key Stage 1

The pastoral team will send email notification to all staff of designated shaded / air conditioned areas available for use and the specific procedures to follow during red stage.

- Children will remain indoors to eat.
- Children will be supervised by their class teacher or inclusion assistant whilst indoors.

## **Key Stage 2**

The pastoral team will send email notification to all staff of designated shaded / air conditioned areas available for use and the specific procedures to follow during red stage.

- Teachers on duty must ensure the designated area used is left tidy.

## **Arrangements for senior school**

- Students have break as usual, however, if they choose to go outside they must remain in the shaded areas at all times.
- There will be designated rooms available for students who wish to remain indoors: staff will be notified of these areas at the start of the term.
- The AWP is not to be used during red stage
- Students should refrain from any physical exertion.
- An additional teacher will be allocated the duty of supervising any additional areas used.

## **Exceptional Heat**

In exceptional circumstances i.e. if the humidex reading reaches a dangerous level, pupils and staff will remain indoors for both breaks. Staff will be notified of this via an email sent by the nurse prior to the first break.

## **Specific arrangements for PE during periods of hot weather**

The curriculum is timetabled for completion during the beginning of the month of May. This period marks the start of the hot weather. At this point of curriculum completion all students will be taught inside in designated areas.

Should the temperature and humidity increase to levels which are deemed unsafe for students (at 49% which is on the cusp of amber and red on the humidex chart), then lessons outside may end at an earlier date than that preferred for completion of the curriculum.

The PE department and school nurse will maintain a check of humidex levels, using an electronic humidity and temperature measure located near to the AWP. Staff will refer to this in conjunction with the humidex chart and use their professional judgment regarding outdoor activities

Should humidex levels reduce to a safe level then PE may take place outside. This decision will be taken following consultation with the school nurse and based on: time of year; completion of curriculum for assessment purposes; the professional judgment of the teacher in charge of the lesson.

## **PE policy (implemented throughout the year.)**

No pupils should be allowed to take part in outdoor activities without a hat.

Drink and rest stops can be taken at any point of the lesson providing it is not a period of direct instruction and teaching, unless the need is there.

A drink and rest break will be given at regular intervals for all primary children.

PE staff should monitor the condition of pupils and take appropriate action in order to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Should a pupil feel unwell then they can be sent immediately to the school nurse or rest for further periods as they feel the need to do so.

It may be necessary, under certain circumstances, for a pupil to remain where they are and the nurse called to assess their medical condition prior to the pupil being moved.

Students who are not taking a practical part in the lesson for any reason are to remain in the shade.

Pupils who produce a note from their parents wishing them not to take part in outdoor activities must have an accompanying medical certificate underlining the reason for non-participation outdoors. Should this not be produced then the matter will be passed to the school nurse.

## **Health and Safety**

Children who appear to have a low tolerance to heat resulting in heat related illness will be monitored carefully and a medical protocol put in place if deemed necessary by the school nurse.

The School Nurse monitors the numbers of heat related illnesses as part of a range of data produced on a monthly basis. This information is used to monitor existing policy and identify trends which may require further investigation or action.

Appendix 1

### **Humidex readings and the level of student activity during break-times**

The humidex index is an easily understood method of describing how very hot and humid weather feels to the average person.

The humidex combines the temperature and humidity into one number to reflect the perceived temperature. Because it takes into account the two most important factors that affect summer comfort, it can be a better measure of how uncomfortable the air feels than either temperature or humidity alone.

Range of humidex	Degree of comfort or discomfort
Less than 29	Little or no discomfort
30 to 39	Some discomfort
40 to 45	Intense discomfort; avoid exertion
Above 45	Dangerous
Above 54	Heat stroke imminent

The traffic light system is used to inform staff of the Humidex levels, thus the level of activity advisable during the various stages

- Green** (Range 30 – 39) outdoor activity causing minimal discomfort
- Amber** (Range 40 – 45) outdoor activity causes discomfort – avoid exertion
- Red** (Above 45) outdoor activity is not advisable.

