

# Froebel House School

## Heat Exhaustion / Heatstroke Policy

### Heat Exhaustion / Heatstroke

During very hot weather, especially where a heatwave has been announced by the Met Office, pupils' health should be carefully monitored. This includes checking for the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

Some pupils, particularly those who have complex health conditions, are taking certain medications or are very young, may be particularly vulnerable to hot conditions. This is especially true if they do not drink enough water and do not stay out of the sun.

### Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is caused by a loss of body fluids and salts after exposure to heat for too long. It is often seen as a first stage of heatstroke.

The symptoms, which can appear very rapidly, include:

- very hot skin that feels 'flushed'
- heavy sweating
- dizziness
- fatigue
- nausea
- vomiting
- a rapid heartbeat (tachycardia)
- confusion
- urinating less often than usual
- unusually dark urine

Anyone exhibiting symptoms should be moved promptly to somewhere cool and given fluids (preferably water) to drink. If they have existing health conditions, such as diabetes or a kidney or heart condition, emergency first aid or medical advice should be sought immediately.

If they do not improve within half an hour, an ambulance should be called.

### Heatstroke

Heatstroke is a potentially fatal condition and should always be treated as a medical emergency. If it is suspected that someone has heatstroke, 999 should be called immediately and an ambulance requested.

The symptoms include:

- a high temperature (40°C/104°F or above)
- heavy sweating that suddenly stops (the skin becoming dry is a warning sign that the body has become overheated and dehydrated)
- a rapid heartbeat
- rapid breathing (hyperventilation)
- muscle cramps
- nervous system impairment, such as confusion, lack of co-ordination, fits, headache, vertigo, restlessness or anxiety, problems understanding or speaking, hallucinations and loss of consciousness.

While waiting for the ambulance:

- if possible, move the person somewhere cool, preferably into the shade or a room with air conditioning or a fan
- cool them down by sprinkling them with cool water, wrapping them in a damp sheet, or placing damp flannels on them and using a fan to create an air current
- encourage them to drink water, if they are conscious
- gently massage their skin to encourage circulation
- if they are conscious and vomiting, move them into the recovery position by turning them on their side and ensuring their airway is clear.

They should never be:

- given aspirin or paracetamol
- immersed fully in cool water (this could increase their blood pressure dangerously so emergency medical assistance should be waited for).

### Prevention

- Advise pupils to stay out of the sun on very hot days.
- Include sun protection in the curriculum.
- Encourage the use of hats, long-sleeved shirts and sunscreen.
- Keep rooms cool by drawing blinds
- Avoid the hottest weather when arranging sports days and outdoor PE lessons and postpone these events during heatwave conditions.