

Bindoon Primary School
Extreme Weather Response Policy and Procedures
Created January 2024



Purpose

This policy serves as a guide to provide a safe and comfortable learning, work and recreation environment for students and staff at Bindoon Primary School.

Extreme Weather Definition

The term covers a broad range of scenarios from wet weather that may include rain, hail, wind, lightning and thunder. It also includes extremely hot weather and heatwaves. The Bureau of Meteorology defines heatwaves as a time when the minimum and maximum temperatures are much hotter than usual for three or more days at a location.

Rational

During extreme weather conditions, students, staff and the school community are at greater risk of health problems. Bindoon Primary School aims to create a safe and healthy learning and work environment during these times.

Procedures

The Principal, or delegated school leader, is responsible for making decisions on the schools' response and communicating this to staff, students and parents when appropriate.

Strategies for managing excessive heat or heatwave conditions:

- Use air conditioning in all learning and work areas.
- Outside lessons, such as Physical Education, are to be undertaken in the mornings or in shade areas or modified for inside the classes.
- Modify or suspend other outdoor activities during excessive heat.
- If students are outside, utilise shaded areas and provide less active and passive playground games.
- Access cooler areas of the school if air conditioning not operational.
- School lunch boxes are to be stored in classrooms.
- Facilitate and encourage students to drink plenty of water; Department of Health recommends that during hot weather, water at room temperature or slightly cool rather than very cold, is the best fluid to drink

- Ensure students with additional support needs are appropriately supervised, including the monitoring of their hydration.
- When announced, teachers are to supervise students in their classrooms during recess and lunch times. This can be done in conjunction with neighbouring classes, so that teachers can access a break. Admin and specialist teachers will also support.
- If weather permits, we will endeavour to give children time outside at recess, as lunchtime will probably be in classrooms.
- A message explaining action to be taken will be broadcast over the P.A. System immediately prior to the recess or lunch break.

Strategies for managing wet/stormy weather:

- Outside lessons, such as Physical Education, are to be taken in the undercover area or modified for inside classrooms.
- Modify or suspend other outdoor activities.
- If students are outside when wet weather occurs, move immediately to covered areas, excluding seeking shelter under trees.
- When students need to move between areas, stay under cover where possible.
- When announced, teachers are to supervise students in their classrooms during recess and lunch times. This can be done in conjunction with neighbouring classes, so that teachers can access a break. Admin and specialist teachers will also support. (See suggested activities)
- A message explaining action to be taken will be broadcast over the P.A. System immediately prior to the recess or lunch break.

Symptoms of heat related health conditions:

Extreme heat or heatwave is a period of unusual and uncomfortable hot weather that can negatively affect health. Children and young people are more susceptible to heat stress. For this reason, schools must be able to recognise and respond to heat related illness.

Some heat-related illnesses and common symptoms include:

- Deterioration in existing medical conditions.
- Heat stress – including dehydration, heat rash and heat cramps (muscle pains or spasms), dizziness and fainting.
- Heat exhaustion — warning signs may include paleness and sweating, rapid heart rate, muscle cramps headache, nausea and vomiting, dizziness or fainting.
- Heatstroke — the person may stagger, appear confused, have a fit, collapse and become unconscious. This is a medical emergency and requires urgent attention.

Stuck inside during recess or lunch?

Here are some activity ideas you could choose under direction from your teacher:

- Read a book
- Play a board or card game
- Free drawing time or colouring
- Finish off any work you need to complete
- Craft activities (e.g. origami, beading)
- Construction station (e.g. blocks)
- Class choice of movie/tv show (if you wish to watch)
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