PULTENEY

# C 10 Hot / Extreme Weather Policy

## 1. Statement of Purpose

Pulteney Grammar School is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and supportive environment for its community.

The objectives of this Policy detail suggested measures to be undertaken by parents, staff and students in the event of extreme weather conditions.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff.

## 3. Junior School

- Classrooms are air conditioned during the summer months.
- In the Junior School K - 2, during extreme weather, at recess all class teachers are to supervise students in their classrooms. At lunch time, specific year levels are supervised in three designated areas, the Kurrajong Resource Centre, the Music room and the courtyard.
- In the Junior School Years 3 - 6 School, rostered yard duty staff and class teachers are to supervise students as they play indoors during extreme weather.
- Outdoor Elective activities scheduled for after 3.30 pm will be automatically cancelled when the temperature is forecast to reach 35 degrees or more on the Bureau of Meteorology website.

Midweek training and games will be cancelled for the day if the predicted temperature is 35 degrees or more at 8.30am on the Bureau of Meteorology website.

The Head of Sport will confirm the cancellation of mid-week training and games with staff, parents, students, coordinators and coaches.

## 4. Middle School and '*one ninety*'

- All Middle School and one ninety students are expected to attend school.
- All sports practices scheduled after 3.30pm may be cancelled by prior arrangement by the coordinators of the sports concerned through the Head of Sport. Such arrangements will be communicated to parents via text message. Those students who have not been picked up will be supervised at school until the time at which sports practice would normally finish.

- All students are expected to carry their own named water bottle to sport practices, physical education classes and matches. They are also expected to use sunscreen and to wear hats when outside.

- All students are also permitted to take their water bottles into classrooms.

- Homework will be modified at the discretion of the teachers.

Midweek training and games will be cancelled for the day if the predicted temperature is 36 degrees or more at 8.30am on the Bureau of Meteorology website.

*The Head of Sport will confirm the cancellation of mid-week training and games with staff, students, coordinators and coaches.*

- The Extreme Weather Policy on the School website outlines the hot weather blanket cancellation procedures for Senior Sport.

  http://www.pulteney.sa.edu.au/community/sports-and-activities/hot-weather-policy/

## 5. Physical Education Practical Lessons

During school hours, Physical Education staff will make decisions about which activities are appropriate for hot weather conditions.

On the days of extreme heat, teachers will check the Bureau of Meteorology website/app prior to the commencement of lessons and adhere to the following:

- Under 32 degrees practical lessons go ahead
- 32 to 35.9 degrees lessons are modified as per teacher's discretion
- 36 degrees and above – lessons moved into the gym or classroom (theory).

## 6. Sport – Saturday Games

All Junior and Senior School Sport, except for rowing, will be cancelled if Saturdays temperature is predicted to be 38 degrees or above via the Bureau of Meteorology on the Friday before at 9am.

**Rowing**

- Due to the location and timing of rowing events, the Head of Sport in conjunction with the Head of Rowing and in consultation with Rowing SA will determine student participation in rowing regatta's when the temperature is predicated to be 38 degrees or above.
- The Head of Rowing will notify parents of any change to student participation prior to the event.

## OTHER CANCELLATIONS DUE TO HOT WEATHER

The School may elect to cancel fixtures where the forecast temperatures are lower levels than those stated above where local conditions are more severe and poses an increased risk for student participation.

## CANCELLATIONS DUE TO OTHER WEATHER CONDITIONS

It is recognised that extreme weather conditions (hail, lightning, rain etc) could impact upon proceeding with games.

Fixtures may be cancelled by either participating school if deemed necessary.

**Lightning/Thunderstorms**

Due to the inability to accurately forecast electrical storms and the likelihood of very localised weather patterns it is not possible or practical to create a policy that can be applied to all venues on any particular day. However, the following guidelines should be considered and followed;

**Guidelines**

- In the event of thunderstorm/lightning where player/officials/spectator welfare is deemed unsafe by either team coach (or referee) play should be suspended.
- If the weather forecast is for possible thunderstorms/lightning remain vigilant for approaching storms and/or changing or rapidly deteriorating conditions.
- If you see lightning practice is suspended.
- Hearing thunder means that lightning is likely to be within striking range.
- If conditions improve, remember the 30 – 30 rule and wait 30 minutes, games may recommence. Count the time from seeing lightning to when accompanying thunder clap is heard, if less than 30 seconds (storm is less than 10 kms away) go immediately to a safer place. Wait 30 minutes after the last thunder clap before continuing play in an open area. This may require some modification to duration of game.

**Heavy rain/Hail/Wind Gusts**

Heavy rain or hail is unlikely to present as a significant personal injury risk to participants. However, heavy rain or hail may leave a playing surface dangerous and therefore unplayable.

As is the case with lightning/thunderstorms it is not possible to have in place a policy that can be applied to all venues on a particular day. The following guidelines should be followed:

**Recommendations and Guidelines**

- In the event of heavy rain or hail, if the conditions such as the safety of the playing surface or player welfare are deemed unsafe by either team coach (or referee) then play should initially be suspended.

- If the conditions improve i.e. rain stops or eases to what is considered a safe level by coaches/referees and the playing surface can be cleared or has drained sufficiently to enable play to re-commence, games should then be completed.

- This may also require a modification of existing rules regarding the duration of the game.

**Working in Hot Conditions**

Heat stress and heat related illnesses are serious and preventable. When working in hot conditions, it is important that staff adhere to the guidelines as outlined by SafeWork SA to prevent heat illness and consider the health and safety risks arising from working in hot conditions. Please refer to the SafeWork SA Working in Hot Conditions guidelines included below.

## 7. Responsibilities

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|---|---|
| Principal and/or Deputy Principal | Ensure staff, student and parents' awareness of Hot/Extreme Weather Policy. |
| Heads of Sub schools | Ensure staff, student and parents' awareness of Hot/Extreme Weather Policy. Ensure implementation of Hot/Extreme Weather Policy. |
| Teaching and non-teaching staff | Maintain vigilance with respect to the Hot/Extreme Weather Policy. |
| Students | Are responsible for adhering to the policy for their own health and wellbeing. |

## 8. Version Control

| Version | Date Released | Approved By | Amendment |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | March 2003 | Principal | Reviewed and updated |
| 2 | April 2010 | Principal | Reviewed and updated |
| 3 | November 2015 | Executive | Reviewed |
| 4 | April 2016 | Executive | Hot weather Policy combined with new policy for extreme weather. |
| 5 | May 2017 | Executive | Reviewed and updated |
| 6 | May 2021 | Executive | Reviewed and updated |

PULTENEY

# Working in Hot Conditions

Managing work health and safety risks

**Heat stress and heat-related illnesses are serious and preventable. More than just 'feeling off', they can cause serious health issues, and in the case of heat stroke, can be fatal.**

This fact sheet provides practical advice for preventing heat illness and the health and safety risks arising from working in hot conditions. Typical workplaces may be outdoors, inside where it's hot, or where the work itself generates heat. Following are actions and measures to prevent of minimise the likelihood of heat illness.

## Heat illness

Heat stress can be caused by physical exertion outdoors in hot weather or working in hot, cramped work areas that have inadequate ventilation.

Heat illness occurs when the body cannot sufficiently cool itself. You absorb more heat from your environment than you can get rid of through perspiration or other cooling mechanisms. Factors that contribute to this include:

- amount of air movement
- clothing
- humidity
- physical activity (metabolic heat load)
- radiant temperature of surroundings
- temperature.

Heat illness covers a range of medical conditions that can arise when the body is unable to properly cope with working in heat. These conditions include:

- fainting
- heat cramps
- heat exhaustion
- heat fatigue
- heat stroke (a life threatening conditions that requires immediate first aid and medical attention)
- rashes (also called prickly heat)
- worsening of pre-existing illnesses and conditions.

Signs and symptoms of heat illness include headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, thirst, cramps and heavy sweating. Clumsiness, collapse and convulsions may also be experienced as a result of heat illness. Tellingly, skin can become cold and clammy, despite the heat.

Workers with these signs or symptoms need to seek immediate medical attention.

Work health and safety laws require working environments to be free of risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes illness from working in heat.

## Assessing the risk

There are several factors that need to be considered when determining if there is a risk of heat-related illness to workers and ways to protect them.

When identifying heat hazards and controlling these risks, workers likely to be exposed to heat as well as any relevant Health and Safety Representatives, must be consulted.

## Identifying the hazards

Air temperature alone cannot be used to determine whether there is a risk of heat illness. The key risk factors that need to be taken into account include:

- air movement or wind speed
- air temperature
- humidity, in the environment or workplace e.g. laundries, mines
- radiant heat, from the sun or other source e.g. furnaces, ovens
- workload (nature and duration of the work)
- physical fitness of the worker, including acclimatisation and any pre-existing conditions e.g. overweight, heart/circulatory diseases, skin diseases, use of certain medicines
- clothing, including protective e.g. overalls, coveralls, suits worn during chemical spraying.

## Controlling the risk

If there is a risk of heat illness at work, it must be controlled. Advice may be sought form a person competent in heat assessment who can provide recommendations about how the risk can be controlled.

Any assessment should include an appropriate heat stress index. A commonly recognised index is the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT). The WBGT takes into account air temperature, radiant heat, humidity and air movement. Adjustments are also made to take into account things such as physical workload, clothing and work organisation.

If a risk of heat illness is identified, control measures need to be put in place. Workers considered at risk due to factors such as pre-existing conditions should be assessed by a doctor. One method for minimising the risk of heat illness is to modify workloads and work times. This may include:

- arranging for more workers to do the job
- doing the work at a different location
- providing extra rest breaks in a cool area
- reducing time spent doing hot tasks e.g. job rotation
- rescheduling work so that heavy work and hot tasks are performed during the cooler part of the day
- using mechanical aids to reduce physical exertion
- wearing light clothing that still provides adequate protection.

Other measures for preventing heat illness to also be considered include:

- enabling workers to acclimatise
- keeping people away from hot processes
- providing cool drinking water near the work site – workers should be encouraged to stay hydrated by drinking a cup of water (about 200ml) every 15 to 20 minutes during hot weather
- providing first aid facilities and access to medical help
- providing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as reflective aprons and face shields for reducing exposure to radiant heat
- providing outdoor workers with protection against ultraviolet exposure e.g. wide brim hat, loose fitting/long-sleeved/collared (preferably cotton) shirt, long pants, sunglasses and sunscreen
- providing workers with information, instruction and training on how to recognise heat-related illness and appropriate first aid treatment
- providing adequate supervision of workers.

## Engineering controls

Engineering controls that could be considered include:

- increasing air movement using fans
- installing shade cloth to reduce radiant heat from the sun
- installing shields or barriers to reduce radiant heat from sources such as furnaces
- installing air conditioners or coolers to reduce air temperature and generate air movement
- insulating/enclosing hot processes by locating them in air conditioned control rooms
- locating hot processes away from people
- removing heated air or steam from hot processes using local exhaust ventilation.

If symptoms occur, workers need to rest in a cool, well-ventilated area and drink cool fluids. If symptoms do not improve quickly, or skin is very hot and dry to touch, seek urgent medical help. Plan ahead and ensure all necessary measure for preventing heat illness can be implemented when hot weather is predicted.

## Related health and safety problems

Apart from heat illness, not working conditions may cause or contribute to other health and safety problem, such as:

- burns from contact with hot surfaces or substances
- errors/mistakes due to heat fatigue
- loss of grip while handling tools, objects and controls due to sweaty hands
- not following safe work procedures or cutting corners due to fatigue and/or discomfort
- not using PPE due to discomfort
- slips, trips and falls due to fainting or fatigue.

## Heat discomfort

Heat discomfort is what many people feel when it is hot. It is not a medical condition like heat illness and therefore is not considered a risk to health.

People who work in office type environments and those who do very little physical work are unlikely to be at risk of suffering heat illness. What they experience as a result of higher temperature and increased humidity is likely to be heat discomfort.

Heat discomfort can generally be managed by:

- increasing air movement
- providing access to cool water
- providing air conditioning (if practical)
- wearing suitable light, loose fitting clothing.

Thermal comfort is subjective, but generally conditions that are considered to be comfortable for people working indoors and doing light work are:

- air temperature (dry bulb temperature) of 23 to 26 degrees C
- relative humidity of 30 to 60 per cent.

## Further information

*Code of Practice – Managing the Work Environment and Facilities.* Available at ***safework.sa.gov.au***

*Heat Stress Standard and Documentation Developed for Use in the Australian Environment* – Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists. Purchase at **aioh.org.au.**