



MOSSGATE DAY NURSERY

Hot Weather Policy

Children can be at risk from hot weather because of their physiology, behaviours and activity levels. Children potentially at greater risk include those aged under 4 years, with health conditions or taking certain medications.

Where a child has complex health conditions or clinical vulnerability, advice should be sought from their clinical team and shared with relevant staff.

Health risks from heat

Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. The most common risk from heat is dehydration (not having enough water in the body) and sunburn. If sensible precautions are taken, children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions. However, all staff 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.

For children and young people who use nappies, dark urine or dry nappies may indicate dehydration and the need for more fluids.

Heat exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion vary but include one or more of the following:

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- excessive sweating and pale, clammy skin

To cool a child suffering from heat exhaustion:

- move the child to a cool area and encourage them to drink cool water
- cool the child as rapidly as possible, for example, by sponging or spraying the child with cool water and placing cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrapping the child in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan

If you are concerned about symptoms, or they are worsening, seek medical advice by contacting NHS 111.

Heatstroke

Heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke when the body is unable to cool itself down.

Heatstroke is a medical emergency and can be fatal.

Symptoms of heatstroke may include:

- confusion or lack of co-ordination
- seizures (fits)
- loss of consciousness
- high body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F)
- red, hot skin that can be sweaty or dry
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- diarrhea

If heatstroke is suspected, call 999 and then cool the child down whilst awaiting medical assistance.

If a child loses consciousness, or has a fit:

1. Place the child in the recovery position.
2. Call 999 immediately and follow their instructions.

Protecting children outdoors

- We are signed up to receive Weather-Health Alerts from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Met Office.
- Children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days.
- Children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sunhats with wide brims to avoid sunburn.
- Encourage children outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Apply sunblock or broad-band sunscreens with high sun protection factors (of at least SPF 30 and ultraviolet A (UVA) rating of 4 or more stars) to protect skin. We use SPF 50+ with a UV rating of 5 stars.
- Sun cream should be applied generously and reapplied every 2 hours.
- Provide and encourage children to drink plenty of water and encourage them to drink more than usual in hot weather.

Protecting children indoors

During periods of high temperature:

- if it is safe and appropriate, open windows early in the morning to allow stored heat to escape from the building
- if possible, close windows during the day when it is hotter outside than inside whilst considering the need to maintain adequate ventilation and air quality
- switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers when not in use – do not leave equipment in ‘standby mode’ as this generates heat
- if possible, use classrooms or other spaces which are less likely to overheat, and adjust the layout of teaching spaces to avoid direct sunlight on children
- use oscillating mechanical fans to increase air movement if temperatures are below 35°C (above this temperature they may be counterproductive)
- encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of water