



Victory Heights Primary School
City of Arabia
**Outdoor Play (Hot Weather)
Policy**

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Responsible SLT: Principal

Introduction	3
Purpose	3
Equal Opportunities Statement	3
Monitoring Temperature	4
Heat Index	4
Official Source of Weather Information	4
Responsibilities Concerning Outdoor Play	5
School's Obligation	5
Parents/Guardians	5
Facilities Manager	5
School Doctor	5
Teachers	5
Procedure	7
Temperature Monitoring	7
Red Break / Cancellation of outdoor activities	7
Other Weather Conditions	8
Definitions	9
Continuous Education, Safety, And Awareness	10
Yearly Staff Training	10
Yearly Sun and Heat Exposure Education for Students and Parents	10
Daily Protective Measures for Students	10
Daily Hydration Guidelines for Students	10
Yearly Policy Implementation in Outdoor Planning & Infrastructure	10
Weather Monitoring and Updates	10
Appendix 1	12
Heat Index Chart	12

Introduction

In the distinctive climate of Dubai, where temperatures can reach extreme highs, it becomes essential to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students during outdoor activities. At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia, we are committed to providing enriching and safe experiences for all our students, both within the classroom and outside of it.

Understanding the unique challenges posed by our local climate, this Outdoor Play (Hot Weather) Policy has been meticulously crafted. Its primary aim is to ensure that our students can partake in outdoor activities while being shielded from the potential adverse effects of the intense heat.

Purpose

This policy sets forth guidelines pertaining to outdoor play during hot weather conditions, establishing parameters based on temperature and humidity levels. It offers directives on hydration, shade provisions, duration of outdoor activities, and early detection of heat-related issues.

By adhering to this policy, we aspire to strike a balance between the undeniable benefits of outdoor play and the paramount importance of our students' health and safety. We urge all staff, parents, and guardians to familiarise themselves with this policy and collaborate with us in its effective implementation.

The Outdoor Play (Hot Weather) policy will assist staff in making decisions about what is appropriate and safe for students when conducting outdoor activities or partaking in any recreational time involving outdoor play throughout the year.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring that all children, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion, or belief, have equitable access to safe and enjoyable outdoor play. The principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to meet the individual needs of each child, with necessary accommodations made to ensure safety and comfort during hot weather. We aim to foster a culture of tolerance, equality, and mutual respect while promoting inclusivity and wellbeing in all outdoor activities.

Monitoring Temperature

Heat Index

The phrase 'It's not the heat, it's the humidity' is partially accurate and commonly heard during summer, though in reality, it encompasses both elements. The heat index, or apparent temperature, represents the temperature as perceived by the human body, taking into account the combined effects of air temperature and relative humidity. This is crucial for maintaining bodily comfort.

When our bodies overheat, we start to sweat as a means of cooling down. However, for this cooling process to be effective, the sweat must evaporate. Evaporation is a natural cooling mechanism that helps to lower the body's temperature. When there is a high level of atmospheric moisture, or relative humidity, the body's ability to cool itself through evaporation is hindered, making us feel warmer.

Conversely, a decrease in relative humidity results in an increased rate of perspiration and evaporation, leading the body to feel cooler, even in arid conditions. Thus, there exists a direct correlation between air temperature, relative humidity, and the heat index. As both the air temperature and relative humidity rise or fall, the heat index follows suit, increasing or decreasing accordingly

Official Source of Weather Information

The temperature should be taken from weather.com as the official source. Weather.com refers to the heat index temperature as 'Feels like'.

<https://weather.com/weather/today/1/AEXX0004:1:AE>

Responsibilities Concerning Outdoor Play

School's Obligation

The school's obligation is to mitigate the risk of heat-related ailments, ensuring the safety and well-being of staff, students, volunteers, and contractors during play-time and other outdoor activities. This is achieved through comprehensive measures and guidelines, as outlined in this policy, to prevent instances of illness, injury, or fatalities attributable to extreme temperatures.

Parents/Guardians

Parents should ensure that their children have adequate sun protection. This includes packing a hat for their child on a daily basis, as well as applying sunscreen, should they wish.

Facilities Manager

The Facilities Manager oversees the accessibility, periodic review, and dissemination of this policy to all pertinent parties.

School Doctor

The School Doctor plays a pivotal role in overseeing the health and safety of students and staff, particularly in relation to temperature-related concerns. One of the primary responsibilities includes vigilantly monitoring the temperature levels and promptly communicating any instances of a red-break declaration through the Slack platform, **#redbreak** only, ensuring all relevant parties are immediately informed and can take necessary actions.

In addition to temperature monitoring, the School Doctor is tasked with the crucial duty of identifying and addressing heat-related symptoms exhibited by any individual visiting the school clinic. This involves conducting thorough assessments, providing timely and appropriate medical interventions, and implementing preventive measures to mitigate the risk of heat-related illnesses.

Furthermore, the School Doctor is expected to maintain a detailed record of all heat-related incidents, actively contribute to the school's heat-related health and safety strategies, and provide valuable input for the continuous improvement of policies and procedures. By fulfilling these responsibilities, the School Doctor ensures a safer and more responsive environment, particularly during instances of extreme temperatures.

Teachers

Vigilant Monitoring: Teachers must actively monitor weather conditions, particularly the temperature and humidity levels, to ensure that it is safe for students to participate in outdoor activities. The first step is to ensure that the **#redbreak** channel on Slack is monitored for up-to-date advice from the school doctor.

Implementation of Policies: Teachers are responsible for adhering to the school's policies and guidelines regarding play-time temperatures. This includes awareness of the predetermined different temperature ranges, including recognising symptoms and actions to safeguard the wellbeing of the students.

Heat Index Awareness: Teachers should be well-versed with the Heat Index recommendations provided by the school. They need to plan and adjust their lessons and outdoor activities in accordance with these guidelines to prevent heat-related illnesses.

Provision of Water and Shade: Ensure that students have access to plenty of water and shaded areas during outdoor activities, especially in hot weather, to keep them hydrated and cool.

Education and Awareness: Teachers should educate students about the importance of staying hydrated and recognizing signs of heat-related stress or illnesses. They should encourage students to speak up if they are feeling unwell due to the heat.

First Aid and Emergency Response: Be prepared to administer basic first aid in case of heat-related illnesses and know the procedures for seeking immediate medical attention if necessary.

Adaptation and Flexibility: Be willing to modify or cancel outdoor activities based on weather conditions to ensure student safety. This may involve moving activities indoors or rescheduling them for a cooler part of the day.

Regular Check-Ins: Conduct regular check-ins with students during hot weather to ensure they are not experiencing any adverse effects from the heat.

Collaboration with School Doctor: Maintain open communication with the school doctor or health personnel, reporting any signs of heat-related illnesses immediately and seeking their guidance when needed.

Record Keeping: Keep accurate records of any heat-related incidents or concerns, and report them to the schools Senior Leadership Team in a timely manner.

Procedure

Temperature Monitoring

The school doctor is responsible for monitoring the weather using weather.com and recording the 'Feels like' (Heat Index) temperature at 4 times throughout the school day, 7.30am, 9.30am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm. These temperatures should be recorded using Google Sheets.

The school doctor should post on Slack (#redbreak) if the heat index is at Level 3 (Orange Break) or higher (Red Break) - according to the table below.

Orange Break / Limited outdoor activities

Should the heat index reach Level 3, exposure to direct sun (including playtime and lunchtime should be limited to a maximum of 20 minutes. This should be notified on the #redbreak channel on Slack.

Red Break / Cancellation of outdoor activities

Should the heat index reach Level 4 or higher, outdoor activities (including playtime and lunchtime should be cancelled. This should be notified on the #redbreak channel on Slack. In these circumstances, time outside should be limited to no more than 5 minutes (that is practicable for children moving from building to building)

Level (1-4)	Symptoms	Actions	Communication
Level 1 Normal Practice Heat Index below 32	Little or no discomfort Fatigue possible with prolonged exposure and activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school shall provide adequate water supply. • Staff should recommend children to apply sun lotion before lessons, games and activities. • All students should be encouraged to wear hats for break, lunch, PE lessons. All children should be encouraged to bring water bottles to sports clubs and PE classes. • Mandatory regular water breaks for outdoor lessons. • Where possible spend rest periods and direct teaching moments in shade provided around facilities. • Students that wish to take a break should do so at any time • Staff to watch/monitor players carefully 	None
Level 2 Heat Alert Heat Index between 32-40	Some discomfort Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are possible in the lower range and likely in the upper range.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to be mindful of those children who present a higher risk of suffering from heat related illnesses and provide these students opportunities to take less-active parts in the lesson • Staff should brief children of possible heat illness and associated risk. • Children showing signs and symptoms of heat related illness should withdraw from the activity and be escorted to the school clinic 	Internal communication to staff as required throughout the year, reminding of procedures.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory regular water breaks and rest periods. • Suggestion is that lessons take place indoors/in shade as much as possible. During competitive and training matches, students should be rotated out on a regular basis 	
<p>Level 3 High Heat Alert</p> <p>Heat Index between 38-45</p>	<p>Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely if precautions are not taken.</p> <p>Heat stroke is probable with prolonged exposure</p>	<p><i>All previous actions</i>, additionally:</p> <p>All outdoor sports fixtures and high-exertion activities are cancelled.</p> <p>Orange Break:</p> <p>Outdoor time is permitted for a maximum of 40 minutes, but no more than 20 minutes may be spent in direct sun.</p> <p>Children must rotate between sun and shade, with the remaining time spent in shaded areas only.</p> <p>Staff must clearly brief students on the extreme risk of heat illness and monitor them closely.</p> <p>Outdoor activities involving minimal physical exertion should be heavily restricted, and only take place in shaded areas.</p> <p>Students showing signs or symptoms of heat-related illness (e.g. dizziness, headache, nausea, flushed skin) must be immediately withdrawn and escorted to the school clinic.</p> <p>Maximum allowable exposure to direct sun is 20 minutes.</p>	<p>Slack message sent to all staff regarding the temperature status - #redbreak</p> <p>Notice on Staff Daily Briefing board</p>
<p>Level 4 Extreme Heat Alert</p> <p>Heat Index >45</p>	<p>Dangerous; Heat stroke is imminent</p>	<p>No activities to take place outdoors.</p> <p>Red Break - no outdoor break/lunchtime</p>	<p>Slack message sent to all staff regarding the temperature status - #redbreak</p> <p>Notice on Staff Daily Briefing board</p>

Other Weather Conditions

On occasion, despite the heat index being lower than Level 3, outdoor activities may still be prohibited. This will be based upon the judgement of the school doctor based upon current weather/climatic conditions. This will include (but not limited to) exceptionally high humidity; sand storms; high-winds; extreme wet-weather conditions; and high levels of air pollution.

Definitions

Fainting: A temporary loss of consciousness and posture, resulting from inadequate blood flow to the brain. This can often be triggered by emotional distress or exposure to triggers in the environment.

Heat cramps: These are painful contractions of muscles, often occurring in the legs following intense physical activity. They can also manifest in the arms and abdominal muscles. Heat cramps are generally temporary and do not lead to lasting issues.

Heat Exhaustion: This condition occurs due to a substantial loss of water and electrolytes from the body, primarily through excessive sweating during heat exposure. It is characterised by symptoms such as dizziness, weakness, and nausea.

Heat stroke: A severe and potentially fatal condition that happens when the body's temperature regulation mechanisms fail, causing the internal body temperature to rise above 41°C (105.8°F). Immediate medical attention is crucial, as delayed treatment can lead to unconsciousness and even death.

Heat Index: Commonly referred to as the Heat Index, this term describes the perceived outdoor temperature, taking into account the humidity level in addition to the actual air temperature.

Ambient Humidity: This is a measure of the amount of moisture in the air, expressed as a percentage of the maximum moisture content that the air can hold at a specific temperature.

Continuous Education, Safety, And Awareness

Yearly Staff Training

- Distribute the Outdoor Play (Hot Weather) Policy during the induction week or at the start of the academic year.
- During staff orientation, emphasise the risks, signs, and symptoms of heat stroke and heat exhaustion.
- As part of the induction process, ensure that PE staff and management involved in heat-related decisions are First Aid certified.

Yearly Sun and Heat Exposure Education for Students and Parents

- Display the Sun Protection Guidelines prominently in classrooms and shared spaces to underline heat safety importance.
- Incorporate heat safety teachings into the PE curriculum.
- Display adequate signage around school to promote sun safety.
- Update parents on the school's heat management strategies through various school communication channels and the official website.

Daily Protective Measures for Students

- Hats are mandatory for children in outdoor spaces.
- Provide water fountains around the school to ensure children remain hydrated.
- Opt for school uniforms and PE kits suitable for warmer climates.
- Advocate for daily sunscreen application.

Daily Hydration Guidelines for Students

- Ensure children always have water bottles – in classrooms, during PE, extracurricular activities, and on field trips.
- Advise children to sip 100 to 250 ml of water every 20 minutes for consistent hydration.

Yearly Policy Implementation in Outdoor Planning & Infrastructure

- Prioritise and implement tree planting initiatives for shade.
- Incorporate shading solutions in ongoing and upcoming infrastructure projects.
- Schedule high-energy sports and competitions during cooler parts of the day or year.
- Utilise indoor areas extensively through the hotter months.
- Organise musical performances, class photo sessions, sports events, and trips in cooler periods.

Weather Monitoring and Updates

- Track temperature and humidity consistently at predetermined intervals.
- Issue alerts during significant temperature rises.
- Exhibit current temperature and humidity readings prominently.



Victory Heights Primary School City
of Arabia
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Appendices**

Appendix 1

Heat Index Chart

Air Temperature °C	21°	24°	26°	27°	28°	29°	30°	31°	32°	33°	34°	35°	36°	37°	38°	39°	40°	41°	42°	43°	44°	45°
Relative Humidity %	Heat Index = Apparent Temperature / What it Feels Like (°Celsius)																					
0%	19	22	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	36	37	38	39
10%	19	23	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
20%	20	23	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	42	44	46	47
30%	20	23	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	38	39	41	43	45	47	49	52	54
40%	20	24	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	39	41	43	46	48	51	54	57	60	63
45%	20	24	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	35	37	39	41	43	46	49	51	54	58	61	64	68
50%	20	24	26	27	28	30	31	33	34	36	38	41	43	46	49	52	55	58	62	65	69	73
55%	21	24	26	28	29	30	32	34	36	38	40	43	46	49	52	55	59	62	66	70	75	79
60%	21	24	27	28	29	31	33	35	37	40	42	45	48	51	55	59	63	67	71	76	81	
65%	21	24	27	28	30	32	34	36	39	41	44	48	51	55	59	63	67	72	77	82		
70%	21	24	27	29	31	33	35	38	40	44	47	50	54	58	63	67	72	77	82			
75%	21	24	28	29	31	34	36	39	42	46	49	53	58	62	67	72	77	83				
80%	21	25	28	30	32	35	38	41	44	48	52	57	61	66	71	77	83					
85%	21	25	28	30	33	36	39	43	47	51	55	60	65	70	76	82						
90%	22	25	28	31	34	37	41	45	49	54	58	64	69	75	81							
95%	22	25	28	32	35	39	43	47	52	57	62	68	74	80								
100%	22	25	28	33	36	40	44	49	54	60	66	72	78									

NOTE: To find the Heat Index it is necessary to correlate the temperature and humidity. (Example: for an outdoor temperature of 32°C and humidity of 60%, the HI is 48, which is in the orange/L3 category).

Monitoring and Compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly in line with the Policy Review Policy. Updates and changes will be documented in the Version Control Table to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

Version Control Table

Policy Title: Outdoor Play (Hot Weather) Policy

Policy Owner: Principal

Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	May 2025	PLT	Initial policy release (2025 re-write)	August 2026