Advice for schools and other settings during a heatwave

Keeping classrooms cool in a heatwave:

- Focus on preventing temperatures from rising in the first place
- Cool the building overnight where this can be done safely
- Open windows and doors when the outdoor air is cooler; close them when it is hotter outside, while maintaining adequate ventilation and airflow. It is recommended that doors and windows are opened first thing in the morning (and ideally overnight if security allows)
- Close blinds on sun-facing windows during the day
- Use fans or portable air conditioning units
- Turn off electrical equipment/lights when not in use
- Cool skin with cool water or ice packs wrapped in cloth

Changes to the school day:

- Remember that for many students their home environment may be more difficult to keep cool
- Avoid closing the school unexpectedly. Plan ahead.
- Reduce vigorous physical activity, particularly between 11am and 3pm
- Consider moving temporarily to alternative timings, with an earlier start and an earlier finish. Any changes should be risk-assessed and communicated well.
- Consider temporarily moving to meals that do not require the use of school ovens

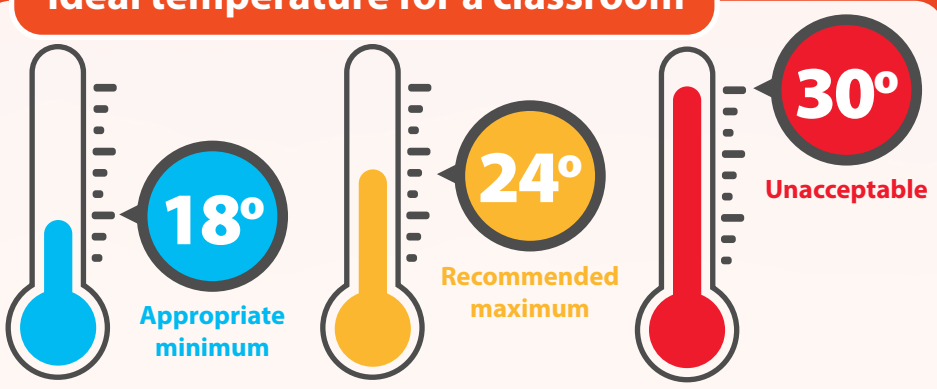
Additional:

- Complete a heatwave risk assessment
- Modify uniform expectations so that students are able to wear loose, lightweight clothing
- Allow students to use personal fans, or provide them
- Consider the timings of special events such as sports day and residential trips
- Ensure all students drink water regularly. Remember that some students may not always feel thirsty or be able to communicate a need for water. Children under 5 and those with medical conditions or taking certain medicines are particularly vulnerable.
- Consider larger-scale building modifications such as insulation, air conditioning, additional shade, ventilation, solar control, and other ways of keeping buildings from absorbing too much heat. A professional overheating assessment is recommended.

Useful links:

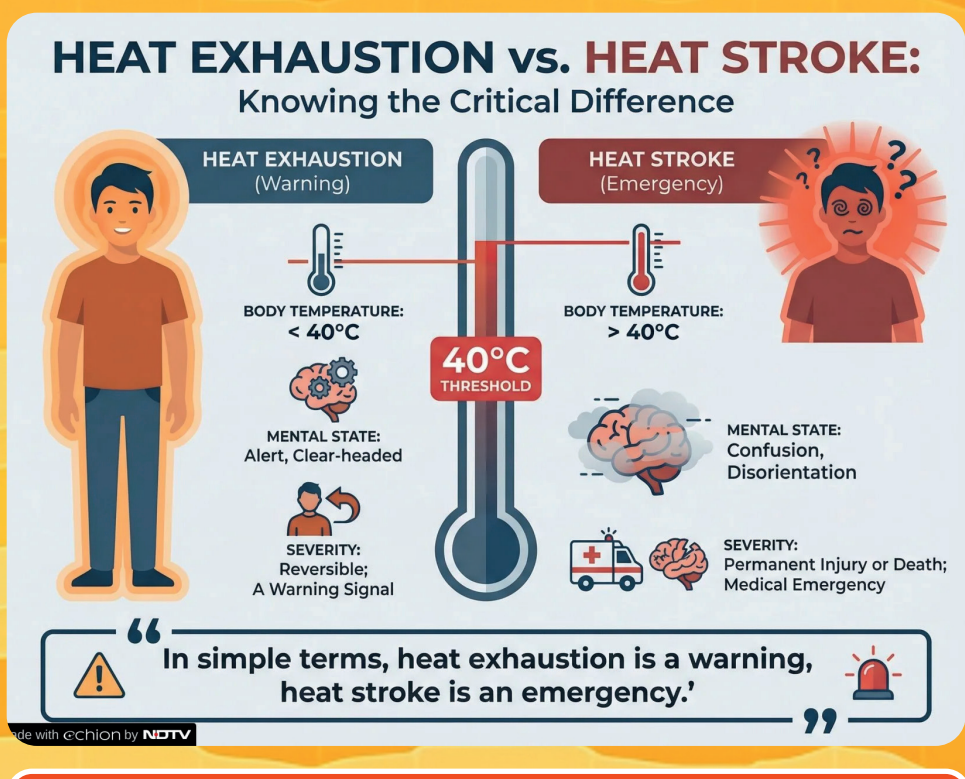
- Hot weather and heatwaves: guidance for schools and other education settings – The Education Hub
- Supporting vulnerable people – GOV.UK
- Heat-Health Alerting system – GOV.UK
- Heat exhaustion and heatstroke – NHS

Ideal temperature for a classroom



Keeping the playground cool in a heatwave:

- Provide plenty of shade
- Keep toys and resources in the shade
- Offer water play or cooling activities
- Ensure students wear wide-brimmed hats and loose, lightweight clothing, and use sunscreen
- Provide indoor options
- Consider changes to timings, avoiding the hottest parts of the day
- Grass is cooler than tarmac. Make use of shaded grass rather than exposed hard surfaces where possible.



HEAT EXHAUSTION: move the person somewhere cool, cool their skin and give fluids. Call NHS 111 for advice. Call 999 if they remain unwell after 30 minutes or show signs of heatstroke.

HEATSTROKE is a medical emergency. Call 999.

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