



GATEWAY Academy



Sun Safety Policy

Approved by:	Claire Cleary and Lisa Breslin
Last reviewed on:	October 2026
Next review due by:	October 2028

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Gateway Academy is committed to ensuring that pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors can participate safely in education, play and outdoor activities while reducing the risks of ultraviolet (UV) exposure, sunburn, dehydration, overheating and heat-related illness. The Academy will take proportionate, risk-assessed steps to protect health while maintaining attendance, learning and access to outdoor provision wherever it is safe to do so.

This policy applies throughout the Academy, including Nursery, Reception, all playgrounds and gardens, PE, educational visits, wraparound activities where operated by the Academy, and school-organised events. It covers routine sunny weather and periods of exceptional heat.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

The Academy will have regard to the following, as applicable:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- Equality Act 2010, including duties concerning disability, reasonable adjustments and non-discrimination.
- School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 as relevant to maintained schools, and the applicable academy premises requirements, including the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), where reporting criteria are met.
- Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026.
- DfE health and safety responsibilities and duties for schools; DfE supporting pupils with medical conditions guidance.
- UKHSA guidance on looking after children in schools and early years settings before and during hot weather (updated 8 July 2026), the UKHSA/Met Office Heat-Health Alert system and the Adverse Weather and Health Plan.
- NHS guidance on sunscreen and sun safety and HSE guidance on workplace temperature and heat stress.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Emergency Plan and Business Continuity Plan
- Relevant risk assessments

RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
Governing Board	As employer, retain overall accountability for health and safety, appropriate oversight, resources and scrutiny of significant risks.
CoHeadteachers	Lead implementation; approve proportional adaptations; ensure risk assessments, staff instruction and incident escalation; notify families where needed; report significant matters to trustees.
Premises Manager / designated site staff	Monitor site conditions and high-risk rooms; identify overheating, ventilation and shade issues; maintain records of checks and completed actions; escalate hazards promptly.
EYFS Leader and phase leaders	Check practical arrangements within their areas, particularly for children under five, SEND and pupils needing adult help with hydration or protection.
Teachers, support staff and supervisors	Implement controls; encourage drinking and shade; supervise sun protection; recognise signs of illness; report concerns immediately; follow first-aid procedures.
Educational Visits Leader and visit leaders	Ensure that expected heat, UV exposure, water access, travel and activity intensity are addressed in visit planning and dynamic assessments.
Parents/carers	Provide suitable clothing, hat and sunscreen where possible; notify school of relevant medical, allergy or sensitivity information and consent decisions.
Pupils	Use shade, hats and water as appropriate to age and understanding; tell an adult when feeling unwell.

PLANNING, MONITORING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- The designated senior leader will check weather forecasts, UV levels and UKHSA/Met Office Heat-Health Alerts during periods of concern. Alerts are risk information, not automatic closure instructions.
- The CoHeadteachers will ensure a proportionate extreme weather risk assessment is maintained and reviewed before periods of high heat, when alerts change, after incidents and when building arrangements change.
- Site checks will consider individual classrooms, upper floors, halls, sun-facing rooms, outdoor spaces, playgrounds and EYFS areas. Staff must report rooms that become uncomfortably hot.

- Temperature readings will be recorded in identified rooms when heat is a concern, alongside other conditions such as direct solar gain, ventilation, humidity, occupancy and activity. Temperature alone is not a complete indicator of risk.
- Controls and any decisions affecting the school day will be communicated promptly to the relevant staff, families and, where appropriate, governors.

ROUTINE SUN PROTECTION AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Use shade as much as reasonably practicable, especially when sunlight and UV levels are strongest (commonly 11am–3pm in the UK during summer). Adapt play or outdoor provision rather than relying on a rigid timetable.

Encourage wide-brimmed hats or legionnaire-style hats, appropriate light and loose clothing that covers shoulders, and suitable footwear. Modify uniform expectations during hot conditions.

Staff will encourage pupils to remain in shaded areas, including during play and lunch, and ensure adequate supervision across all zones.

Plan PE, sports days, outdoor learning and enrichment to avoid vigorous exertion during very hot conditions; use cooler times, rest breaks, indoor alternatives or postponement where necessary.

Adults model safe behaviours and teach age-appropriate sun safety within PSHE, science, EYFS experiences and routine reminders.

The Academy will review the availability and suitability of permanent and temporary shade, taking account of safe installation, visibility and supervision.

SUNSCREEN – SUPPLY, CONSENT AND APPLICATION

- Parents/carers should apply suitable sunscreen before the school day, particularly for younger children. For sustained outdoor exposure, staff will ensure that further protection is considered; a morning application alone is not assumed sufficient.
- Recommended sunscreen is broad-spectrum, SPF 30 or higher, with at least four-star UVA protection (or equivalent recognised UVA indication). Follow product instructions generally, reapply approximately every two hours outdoors, and sooner after rubbing off, swimming or heavy sweating.
- The Academy will obtain and record written parental permission before staff assist with sunscreen application or use Academy-supplied sunscreen, except where a separate agreed care arrangement applies. Parents may provide a named product where allergies or sensitivities require it.
- Where developmentally appropriate, pupils will apply their own sunscreen under staff supervision. Adults may assist younger pupils or those needing support in accordance with consent, safeguarding boundaries and intimate-care arrangements where relevant.
- Adults should use hygienic methods, avoid sharing personal applicators where possible, supervise use near eyes, and follow hand hygiene. Products should be stored safely and checked for expiry.

- A child without sunscreen or whose parent has not consented must not be excluded automatically from learning; staff will implement alternative protection, including shade, clothing, adapted outdoor time and contacting parents where necessary. Any adverse reaction must be dealt with in line with first aid and allergy procedures and reported to parents/carers.

HYDRATION AND FOOD

- All pupils must have ready access to drinking water throughout the day, and additional opportunities to drink during hot weather, PE, outdoor provision and trips.
- Named water bottles are encouraged, but the absence of a bottle must never prevent access to drinking water. Staff must identify pupils requiring assistance or reminders.
- In EYFS, adults will offer drinks regularly and watch for signs of dehydration, including reduced or dark urine, dry nappies, lethargy or irritability.
- Children will be encouraged to eat normally. Staff should consider increased needs for breaks during hot conditions.
- Staff must have access to drinking water and reasonable opportunities to hydrate and cool down.

KEEPING INDOOR SPACES SAFE

- When safe and appropriate, open windows early to release stored heat; consider closing sun-facing windows when outdoor air is hotter than indoor air, while maintaining adequate ventilation and indoor air quality.
- Shade sunny windows with blinds or curtains and switch off non-essential electrical equipment when not in use.
- Move classes or activities to cooler rooms where feasible; consider room occupancy, direct sunlight and safe supervision.
- Fans may support cooling when appropriate and safe. UKHSA advises that fans may be counterproductive at temperatures of 35°C and above; use site-specific assessment.
- Do not compromise fire safety, window restrictors, site security, safeguarding, accessibility or essential ventilation when taking cooling measures.
- Medicines must be stored according to their individual product instructions and pharmacy advice; the Academy must check storage arrangements during heat rather than applying a single temperature limit to every medicine.

RESPONSE TO HEAT-HEALTH ALERTS

The following is Gateway Academy's proportionate operational response, subject to site-specific risk assessment. Yellow, amber and red are UKHSA alert levels and do not by themselves impose an automatic school-closure rule.

Status	Action
Normal / no alert	Implement routine sun safety measures and monitor local conditions.
Yellow Heat-Health Alert	Review arrangements for pupils and staff at greater risk; check water, shade and potentially hot rooms; brief relevant staff and adapt activity as necessary.
Amber Heat-Health Alert	Senior leader reviews risk assessment for all pupils and staff; increase drinking/cooling opportunities, relax uniform, adjust outdoor physical activity and timing, monitor rooms and vulnerabilities; communicate changes.
Red Heat-Health Alert	Urgent senior leadership review of whether the site can operate safely. Maximise risk controls, consider room and timetable changes, seek relevant advice as needed and activate emergency/business-continuity procedures if safe operation cannot be maintained.

The Academy will normally remain open where safe and viable. There is no general statutory maximum school classroom temperature. Decisions to restrict an activity, move teaching or exceptionally close part/all of the site will be based on evidence of actual risk, available controls, the needs of pupils and staff, and DfE guidance. Closure or alteration to attendance will be communicated through established Academy channels.

PUPILS AT INCREASED RISK, INCLUDING EYFS

- The Academy recognises that children under five and some pupils with disabilities, health conditions, communication needs or relevant medication may be more susceptible to heat. Individual vulnerability must not be assumed solely from appearance or body size.
- The SENCO, EYFS Leader and relevant staff will identify pupils requiring an individual plan or adapted risk assessment, involving parents and relevant healthcare professionals where appropriate.
- Care plans will specify hydration, shade, activity modifications, observation, medication arrangements, symptoms requiring action and contact arrangements.

- Children in Nursery and Reception, especially the youngest children and those needing help to communicate or drink, will receive active adult support throughout the day.
- Outdoor continuous provision will remain available in a modified, supervised way where safe, including access to sheltered or cooler alternatives.
- Protection arrangements will be inclusive; adjustments must preserve dignity and access to learning wherever possible.

STAFF WELFARE, PREGNANCY AND ADJUSTMENTS

The Academy will consider the impact of heat on staff working indoors and outdoors, including lunchtime supervision, site work and educational visits. Managers will respond to reported concerns, undertake individual risk assessments where required (including new and expectant mothers), and make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff where appropriate. Measures may include changes to duty location, timing or duration, additional breaks, access to cooler areas or alternative tasks. Medical information will be handled confidentially and shared only where needed for safety.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The visit/activity leader will consider UV index, expected temperatures, alert status, transport and waiting conditions, walking distances, availability of drinking water, shade, first aid, access to toilets, vulnerable participants and communications. Staff will make dynamic risk assessments and can modify, postpone or cancel an activity if necessary. Coaches and other transport must be assessed for overheating, including the risk of leaving children in stationary vehicles.

RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

All staff must respond promptly to signs of heat-related illness. Designated first aiders should be summoned without delay, but requesting help must not delay calling emergency services when indicated.

Heat stress and heat exhaustion

Signs can include unusual irritability, tiredness, headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, heavy sweating and pale or clammy skin. Move the child to a cooler area, begin active cooling (for example cool water on skin, cold packs wrapped in cloth at neck/armpits, a cool wet sheet or an appropriate fan) and offer cool water if the child is fully alert and able to swallow. Supervise continuously. Seek NHS 111 advice if concerned or symptoms worsen. If the person does not improve after approximately 30 minutes of cooling, seek urgent medical help; call 999 if there are emergency symptoms.

Suspected heatstroke — medical emergency

Signs may include confusion, lack of coordination, seizures, loss of consciousness, a high temperature (40°C or above is a major sign), red/hot skin that may be sweaty or dry, rapid

heartbeat or rapid shallow breathing. Heatstroke can develop suddenly and does not require every listed symptom.

CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY IF HEATSTROKE IS SUSPECTED. Continue rapid cooling while awaiting the ambulance and follow emergency-service instructions. Never delay the call for a 30-minute trial of cooling. Do not give drinks to a pupil who is drowsy, confused, unconscious or unable to swallow safely. If unconscious, follow first-aid guidance, check breathing, use the recovery position where appropriate, and commence CPR/AED procedures if they are not breathing normally. Manage seizures in accordance with first-aid training and emergency-service advice.

A designated member of staff will contact parents/carers, coordinate the emergency response, document the event and ensure appropriate subsequent review. An incident will be assessed for statutory RIDDOR reporting where legally applicable; not every heat illness is RIDDOR-reportable.

COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND ASSURANCE

- Before the summer term, staff will receive a reminder of sun-safety routines, pupil vulnerabilities, emergency signs, sunscreen arrangements and the heat-alert response.
- Seasonal advice to families will cover hats, clothing, sunscreen, water and notifying the Academy of additional needs. Communications will be clear and accessible.
- School leaders will review incidents, near misses, temperature concerns and gaps in shade or water provision, and ensure proportionate corrective action.
- Significant risks, resource needs and serious incidents will be reported through the Academy's established health and safety/governance arrangements.

REVIEW

The CoHeadteachers will review this policy annually before the summer term and sooner following a serious incident, significant change in the estate or school provision, or substantive new statutory guidance. The Governing Board will approve the policy in accordance with the Academy's policy-approval schedule.

Appendix A. Staff hot weather checklist

- Check local forecast, UV level and any Heat-Health Alert; know today's activity changes.
- Confirm water access and plan reminders for children who require support.
- Identify adequate shade, safe sunhat/clothing arrangements and sunscreen consent where relevant.
- Check vulnerable pupils' individual plans and ensure supply/cover staff know essential actions.
- Check rooms or areas that are overheating; report issues and record readings where required.
- Review PE, outdoor activities and trips; avoid vigorous exertion on very hot days.
- Know signs of heat exhaustion and heatstroke; call 999 immediately for suspected heatstroke.
- Report concerns, incidents or near misses to a senior leader.

Appendix B. Heat emergency quick reference

Heat exhaustion — act promptly	Suspected heatstroke — CALL 999
Move to cool location; cool skin with water and use wrapped cold packs; offer cool water only if fully alert; supervise; seek NHS 111 if concerned/worsening; escalate if not improving.	Call 999 immediately; start and continue rapid cooling; follow dispatcher instructions; monitor breathing/consciousness; do not give oral drinks if confused or drowsy; notify Academy first aid lead and parents.

Appendix C. Official guidance and reference links

UKHSA hot weather guidance (updated 8 July 2026): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/looking-after-children-and-those-in-early-years-settings-before-and-during-hot-weather-teachers-and-other-educational-professionals>

DfE hot weather and heatwaves guidance (22 June 2026):

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2026/06/hot-weather-and-heatwaves-guidance-for-schools-and-other-education-settings/>

EYFS framework (effective 1 September 2026):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

HSE workplace temperatures: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/Temperature/employer/index.htm>

NHS sunscreen advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

Implementation note: before approval, confirm the school's named role holders, sunscreen consent approach, stock/storage arrangements, local extreme-weather risk assessment and communication procedures.