



Bunyaville Environmental Education Centre Extreme Heat Standard Operating Procedure 2022



There have been prolonged extreme temperature events the last few years, with the Australian Bureau of Meteorology indicating in their State of the Climate documents that is to continue. The decision to run programs is dictated by:

- The age of the students.
- The type of program being run (e.g. will it be possible to 'shade hop' and find shade).
- The temperature itself. According to the Department of Education Managing Excessive Heat in Schools (<https://education.qld.gov.au/students/student-health-safety-wellbeing/student-health/managing-excessive-heat-schools>):
 - If the ambient temperature is between 31 and 35 degrees Celsius **and** the relative humidity is over 50%, there is a high to very high risk of heat illness. Planned vigorous, sustained physical activity should be limited in intensity or duration to less than 60 minutes per session.
 - If the ambient temperature is over 36 degrees Celsius **and** the relative humidity is over 30%, there is an extreme risk of heat illness. Planned vigorous, sustained physical activity should be postponed to a cooler part of the day or even cancelled.

Activities undertaken by Bunyaville EEC however, generally do not involve vigorous, sustained physical activity. Those that do, are usually carefully scheduled to occur in cooler months. It is important though to be aware of the above bullet point directives.

- For further information, the Department's Quick Reference Guide for Heatwaves can be found under: <https://qed.qld.gov.au/emergencymanagement/Documents/qrg-heatwave.pdf#search=managing%20heat>.

Support strategies and program adjustments utilised by Bunyaville EEC staff:

- Phoning visiting teachers at 7am to discuss management of the program and negotiation during orientation on arrival before the start of the program to collaboratively mitigate risk.
- For programs running in the Picnic Area, a gazebo is erected to provide additional shade (placed in a dappled area to provide deeper shade).
- Students and adults instructed and directed to take plenty of water breaks, and all participants asked to bring two water bottles when hot weather is anticipated during their excursion (unfrozen).
- Use of water spray bottles – students and adults asked to put their hands up (if they wanted to be sprayed) then to close their eyes and smile!
- Provision of a large water container with ice within for ease of refilling water bottles – USOs monitor the water level through the day and top up water when needed. May need USOs to remain in Picnic Area or set timers on their phones to do this, on a particularly hot day in Term 1 2019 it needed to be refilled 4 times!
- Provision of 'cool neck cloths' for use by students, teachers and parents/carers requiring same. Simply wet, flick then place around neck. These have Bunyaville EEC's logo printed on same and are for borrowing only.
- Ice packs on ice in an esky for students, teachers and parents/carers with medical conditions (particularly those that are worsened in hot weather) to use.
- For Earthwalks:
 - a realistic pace is set;
 - shorter tracks are utilised; and
 - Bunyaville EEC teachers 'shade hop' with students, stopping only in deepest shade wherever possible.