Extreme Weather Policy

## Rationale

Extreme weather can present as a hazard to students’ and staff members’ health and wellbeing. Extreme weather is considered to be weather conditions too cold, wet, hot, windy or unsafe

## Do we remain open?

Yes. The Government of Western Australia invested heavily in our infrastructure to ensure that classrooms at Northam PS are fully air conditioned.

## Purpose:

1. To provide a safe and healthy school environment that takes into consideration the needs of all students, staff and visitors including those who may suffer from pre-existing conditions.
2. To provide guidelines and processes to accommodate extreme weather conditions.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

This decision will be based on current weather conditions and information from the Bureau of Meteorology. The decision will be set and monitored and if weather conditions change, the decision will be updated and staff informed.

The Principal, Associate Principal or nominated staff member may decide on days of impending extreme weather to:

• shorten the recess or lunch breaks of outside play

• plan an extreme weather timetable for the entire school day. This decision will be based on current weather conditions and information from the Bureau of Meteorology. The decision will be set and monitored and if weather conditions change, the decision will be updated and staff informed.

• When the weather is too wet, cold or windy or hot, the following procedures will apply:

* Implementation of policy to be notified by administration member.
* All staff and students to remain undercover. (Teachers may open their classrooms to their students and will take duty of care for them)
* Normal playground duty remains with modifications.

***Duty Areas***: Teachers will collaborate to ensure adequate supervision of all students in undercover, library and technical centre.

* Large oval moves to Stage undercover area.
* Basketball courts and climbing equipment move to canteen undercover area.
* All staff in Nature Play move to Admin /toilet veranda area.
* Library and Tech Centre will be open during the *lunchtime* only. (Students choosing to use these facilities will not be permitted to leave until the siren ends the session. Admin will assist in supervision in these area.
* Suspension of the policy procedures will only occur when advised by admin.
* Staff to ensure all students supervised at all times. These are designed to prevent students returning to class wet and/or cold and to minimize the risk of injury at these times.
* Please ensure that all students are reminded to be careful and sensible if allowed out when the grounds will be wet.
* Sport equipment can be taken out. Teachers will be notified of this by a member of the administration team.
* All teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of and implement their duty of care during extreme weather timetables.
* Students and staff must follow the Sun Smart guidelines of wearing an approved hat when outdoors - No singlets are to be worn on free dress days, excursions or camp.
* On days of impending extreme hot weather, students are advised to use the shaded areas of the playground and to drink water on a regular basis.
* Staff taking Physical Education and Sport classes are to make appropriate decisions in regards to the type of and location of activities on days of extreme weather or impending extreme weather.
* Staff who work outside (gardeners, PE teachers, duty teacher etc.) should ensure they follow Sun Smart guidelines, including appropriate school Sun smart hats, sunscreen use (SPF 30+) and have adequate hydration.

### Extreme Weather: (*all seasons*)

* All students will remain in their home classrooms.
* Teachers will supervise their classrooms.
* Admin and Specialist Teachers will release teachers for a break.
* Students are permitted to go to the canteen and then return to their classrooms. Admin will supervise the canteen area.
* Technical Centre and Library *WILL NOT* be open.

### What is a heatwave?

Heatwave conditions are specifically when excessively high temperatures combine with high humidity levels and are sustained over a number of days. That means, although the predicted maximum temperature for a region may be in the mid-to-high 30s, unless this coincides with high humidity and lasts for a few days, it is considered 'hot' rather than a 'heatwave'. People are most at risk during extreme heat conditions when the temperatures reach about 5 degrees Celsius above the average for sustained periods of time. The Bureau of Meteorology provides a Heatwave Service for Australia External Link with heatwave forecasts and heatwave assessments. This service is a set of maps showing colour-coded heatwave severity for the previous two three-day periods, and the next five three-day periods.

### What are heat-related conditions?

Heat-related conditions cover a wide range of symptoms ranging from swelling of hands and feet, prickly heat occurring in acclimatised people and heat cramps, through to heat exhaustion, to the more severe and potentially fatal heat stroke.

**“Play in a safe and sensible manner.”**