

Assessing Your School's Vulnerability to Extreme Heat (Heatwaves) and Adaptation Options

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The [DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Education Strategy](#) (2022) states that

Young people can: participate in the implementation of climate adaptation measures

In particular, by doing so students not only develop key understanding and skills, but also feel empowered and engaged in identifying risks and solutions relevant to their own lives, thereby encouraging action and reducing the risk of anxiety.

A **Climate Action Plan** should typically cover the following 4 areas, to align with DfE's sustainability and climate change strategy:

- decarbonisation, for example calculating and taking actions to reduce carbon emissions, such as becoming more energy efficient
 - **adaptation and resilience, such as taking actions to reduce the risk of flooding and overheating**
 - biodiversity, for example engaging with the National Education Nature Park
 - climate education and green careers, such as ensuring the education you provide gives knowledge-rich and comprehensive teaching about climate change, and that your teaching staff and lecturers feel supported to offer this
- For many schools, the risks of extreme heat – heat waves, are higher than the risks of climate-related flooding.

Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. The most common risk from heat is dehydration (not having enough water in the body) and sunburn. If sensible precautions are taken, children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions. However, all staff should look out for signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

However, even without causing illness, heat can have an adverse impact on students' **ability to learn and wellbeing**.

In 2022, temperatures of 40°C were recorded for the first time in the UK. By 2100, the UK could see 40°C every three to four years unless we as a global community take very rapid action to limit the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

[This RMetS/ Field Studies Council resource](#) will allow students to gather information relevant to your school and its grounds. This will inform your understanding of specific issues relevant to your school and allow you to begin to prepare for future heat waves and put in place adaptations to your school estate and staff and student behaviour. In addition, students will gain curriculum-relevant understanding and skills.

Further guidance: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_schools_adaptation_guidance_14-10-20_issue.pdf