

Nottinghamshire FA Guidance

Football activity during hot weather



Weather warnings

An **Amber or Red** means there is a potential risk to life so appropriate measures need to be in place prior to an organised event taking place; measures should also be continually reviewed during the planned activity.

All clubs / teams have a duty of care and safeguarding responsibility towards their members; **for u18 participants parents / carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends the event with suitable refreshments, equipment and clothing.**

Considerations for football events during hot weather / heatwave

- **Children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are in excess of 30°C**
- Does the venue have suitable shaded areas - can teams bring a gazebo?
- Include regular water breaks during games i.e. every 10 / 15 mins
- Does the venue have a constant fresh water supply?
- Sunscreen reminders.
- Suitable clothing - hats, UV protective clothing.
- Is there a first aid room or an area for participants to rest if they show symptoms of sun stroke / heat exhaustion.
- Avoid constant exposure to direct sunlight between 11am & 3pm.
- Activity leaders should reinforce key messages throughout the day - keep hydrated, stay in the shade and apply sunscreen.
- If general announcements are made during the event, key messages about keeping hydrated should be included.

Other information

CPSU – Safe Events Weather Considerations

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445912/safe-events-weather-considerations.pdf>

Public Health England / Government Advice

Looking after children during a heatwave

Health risks from heat

Children cannot control their body temperature as efficiently as adults during hot weather because they do not sweat as much and so can be at risk of ill-health from heat. Heat-related illness can range from mild heat stress to potentially life-threatening heatstroke.

Children's susceptibility to high temperatures varies; those under 4 years of age, who are overweight, or who are taking certain medication may be at increased risk of adverse effects. Some children with disabilities or complex health needs may be more susceptible to high temperatures.

The main risk from heat is dehydration (not having enough water in the body). If sensible precautions are taken children are unlikely to be adversely affected by hot conditions, however, all adults, in a position of responsibility, who care for children should look out for signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

Heat stress

Children suffering from heat stress may seem out of character or show signs of discomfort and irritability (including those listed below for heat exhaustion). These signs will worsen with physical activity and if left untreated can lead to heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

Heat exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion vary but include one or more of the following:

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- nausea
- vomiting
- hot, red and dry skin
- confusion

Heatstroke

When the body is exposed to very high temperatures, the mechanism that controls body temperature may stop working. Heatstroke can develop if heat stress or heat exhaustion is left untreated, but it can also occur suddenly and without warning.

Symptoms of heatstroke may include:

- high body temperature – a temperature of or above 40°C (104°F) is a major sign of heatstroke
- red, hot skin and sweating that then suddenly stops
- fast heartbeat
- fast shallow breathing
- confusion/lack of co-ordination
- fits
- loss of consciousness

Actions to protect children suffering from heat illness

The following steps to reduce body temperature should be taken immediately:

1. Move the child to as cool a room as possible and encourage them to drink cool water (such as water from a cold tap).
2. Cool the child as rapidly as possible, using whatever methods you can. For example, sponge or spray the child with cool (25 to 30°C) water – if available, place cold packs around the neck and armpits, or wrap the child in a cool, wet sheet and assist cooling with a fan.
3. Dial 999 to request an ambulance if the person doesn't respond to the above treatment within 30 minutes.

If a child loses consciousness, or has a fit, place the child in the recovery position, call 999 immediately and follow the steps above until medical assistance arrive.

Protecting Children Outdoors

During periods of high temperature, the following steps should be taken:

- **children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days, such as when temperatures are in excess of 30°C**
- encourage children playing outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible
- children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sunhats with wide brims to avoid sunburn
- use sunscreen (at least factor 15 with UVA protection) to protect skin if children are outdoors for more than 20 minutes
- provide children with plenty of water (such as water from a cold tap) and encourage them to drink more than usual when conditions are hot.

Other information

[Heatwave plan for England](#) (UKHSA, 2022) and associated documents.

[Clothing as protection from the sun.](#) [Ultraviolet radiation safety.](#) [Cancer Research UK Sun Smart.](#)