



**MOUNT MURCHISON STATE
SCHOOL MANAGING EXCESSIVE
HEAT**

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Statement of Intent

The authority to close a school, even on a temporary basis, rests with the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts. Education Queensland schools remain open during periods of excessive heat. Students are not sent home during periods of excessive heat.

Schools put in place a number of strategies to manage excessive heat conditions and thereby reduce the associated discomfort and risks of student or staff heat-related illness. Management of sporting and outdoor activities during hot conditions will be important elements of the schools' strategies.

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.

Heatwave conditions are specifically, **when excessively high temperatures combine with high humidity levels and are sustained over a number of days**. That means that 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 ".

What to drink

- Queensland Health recommends that during hot weather, water (room temperature or slightly cool rather than very cold) is the best fluid to drink;
- Drinks containing caffeine (tea, coffee, cola and some "energy" drinks) as well as drinks containing excessive sugar (soft drinks, colas, some "energy" and "sports" drinks) should be limited or avoided altogether.
- View [Smartplay website](#) for more information.

Health Effects of Excessive Heat

- Heat-related conditions cover a wide range of diseases ranging from swelling of hands and feet, prickly heat occurring in unacclimatised people and heat cramps, through to heat exhaustion, to the more severe and potentially fatal heatstroke.
- Visit [Department of Employment and Industrial Relations website](#) for information on types of heat related illnesses.

Symptoms of Heat Stress

- Symptoms of more severe heat stress include malaise, headache, rapid pulse, nausea and vomiting.
- People with heat stroke usually have core body temperatures above 39 degrees Celsius and an altered mental state such as confusion, lethargy or agitation. Seizures and coma can follow.
- See [Public Health Fact Sheet](#) on Heat Related Illness: Signs, Treatment and Prevention

Playing and Exercising Safely in Hot Weather

- In any sporting or outdoor activity, the risk of heat stress increases with increasing air temperature. This is the case for both sporting participants as well as umpires, officials and volunteers.
- Factors which need to be taken into account before considering cancelling or postponing a sporting event include but are not limited to:
 - The temperature - both ambient and relative humidity;
 - The duration and intensity of the event (for example, an endurance or distance event has more potential for problems than a stop-start team event);
 - Hydration and interchange opportunities, time of day and local environment;
 - Acclimatisation of the participants (for example, students visiting from hot, dry climates may not cope well with hot, humid conditions of some northern, coastal regions);
 - Fitness levels of participants;
 - Age and gender of participants.
 - If the ambient temperature is between 31 and 35 degrees Celsius and the relative humidity is over 30 per cent, planned vigorous, sustained activity may 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 25 per cent, planned vigorous, sustained activity may be postponed to a cooler part of the day or even cancelled.