



ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

PURPOSE

Adverse weather can present risks and hazards for both students and staff. This policy seeks to define adverse weather and provide guidelines for ensuring the safety and the wellbeing of students, staff and other visitors to the School.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, student's and visitors to the School. Its application covers both onsite and offsite activities including Boarding house activities and weekends.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Adverse Weather	is a period of unusual and uncomfortable weather that can negatively affect health. It may include, but is not limited to weather conditions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• extreme cold - refers to temperatures below 0° C, or freezing point, or temperatures under 5°C with added wind-chill factor;• extreme heat - refers to temperatures in the shade of 35°C or above;• heavy or consistent rain;• extreme storms – refers to high winds, lightening, hail, dust or asthma causing thunderstorms;• extreme fire danger; and• hazardous air quality as a result of smoke or other air pollution.
Staff	includes paid and volunteer personnel engaged by the School.

POLICY STATEMENT

Monivae College is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of students and staff in all school locations onsite and offsite.

This policy authorises staff to make decisions to ensure the health and safety of persons on the day as well as if and when the weather conditions change. We provide the following information to assist staff in managing extreme weather conditions and mitigate their impact on health and safety.

The aims of this Policy are to:

- promote awareness of the impact of environmental conditions in schools during adverse weather days;

- ensure staff and students are not exposed to conditions that may cause health related issues associated with adverse weather whilst minimising the impact on student learning;
- ensure the wellbeing of students and staff during times of adverse weather conditions by consistently implementing a planned management strategy that will cater for all circumstances.
- provide guidelines for appropriate measures and arrangements to be made for students during adverse weather conditions.

Staff must take into consideration the weather conditions when planning all activities including Boarding House weekend activities, events, camps or excursions.

1. General Principles

- 1.1. All staff should be aware of impending weather conditions throughout scheduled breaks in the school day and the impact on all outdoor activities within and outside of the school grounds.
- 1.2. An adverse weather timetable or supervision arrangements will be called by the Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate.
- 1.3. The Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate may determine, on days of adverse weather, to:
 - 1.3.1. Shorten the recess or lunch breaks;
 - 1.3.2. Keep students in classrooms or inside buildings during recess or lunch;
 - 1.3.3. Modify room-change arrangements, if this involves exposure to adverse weather conditions;
 - 1.3.4. Call an adverse weather timetable for the entire day; and / or
 - 1.3.5. Cancel events or activities outdoors where students are deemed to be at risk.

2. Extreme Heat

- 2.1. Monivae College does not close because of hot weather, unless exceptional circumstances such as a Catastrophic Fire Danger rating, or a local power outage makes it unsafe for students to remain at school. All rooms are air-conditioned and safe places for students and staff.
- 2.2. If the temperature reaches 35°C or above by 10.49am (morning recess) or when a combination of heat and wind create hazardous conditions, the Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate will make an announcement that the adverse weather timetable is activated. Options available to implement are as follows:
 - 2.2.1. Students will be directed to a safe indoor location for recess and/or lunch;
 - 2.2.2. The adverse weather supervision roster will be activated. Staff rostered for duty on an adverse weather activated day will be reallocated for indoor duty where required;
 - 2.2.3. Staff members will not be required to supervise outside during recess and lunch if the adverse weather timetable is activated (Note: End-of-day / Bus duty supervision will have to occur, with every attempt to keep students out of adverse weather whilst waiting for collection);
 - 2.2.4. Maintenance and gardening staff will not be required to undertake outside manual work if the temperature is 35°C or above;
 - 2.2.5. Any classes or activities planned to run outside will be modified to take place inside; and
 - 2.2.6. Keep windows closed, blinds drawn (where applicable) and air conditioners on.
- 2.3. Should extreme heat arise whilst a camp or excursion is underway, the Teacher-in-charge must make modifications to the activity or program to ensure student and staff are inside and not at risk of any heat related injury.

3. Wet Weather – Heavy or Consistent Rain

- 3.1. The adverse weather timetable can be activated if there is heavy or consistent rain at either morning recess (10.49am) or at lunch time (12.54pm), or if the grounds are deemed to be in an unsafe or hazardous condition.
 - 3.2. The Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate will make an announcement that the adverse weather timetable is activated. This will mean:
 - 3.2.1. Students will be directed to a safe indoor location for recess and/or lunch;
 - 3.2.2. The adverse weather supervision roster will be activated. Staff rostered for duty on an adverse weather activated day will be reallocated for indoor duty where required;
 - 3.2.3. Staff members will not be required to supervise outside during recess and lunch if the adverse weather timetable is activated (Note: End-of-day / Bus duty supervision will have to occur, with every attempt to keep students and staff out of direct adverse weather whilst waiting for collection);
 - 3.2.4. Maintenance and gardening staff will not be required to undertake outside manual work if an adverse weather timetable is activated due to heavy or consistent rain;
 - 3.2.5. Any classes or activities planned to run outside will be modified to take place inside; and
 - 3.2.6. If rain clears during the day, an announcement may be made to revert to normal timetable and students will be free to be outside on paved areas only. Restrictions on areas impacted by wet weather may apply.
 - 3.3. Should wet weather – heavy or consistent rain arise whilst a camp or excursion is underway, the Teacher-in-charge must make modifications to the activity or program to ensure student and staff are inside and not at risk of any injury.
- 4. Storms – Wind, Dust, Hail, Thunder / Lightning**
- 4.1. The response to storm events is the same as for wet weather in section 3. The Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate will determine when or if to activate the adverse weather timetable based on the timing and severity of the event.
 - 4.2. Thunderstorms with associated hail, heavy rain, high dust/pollen counts or lightning are significant risks, and students and staff should not be outside during such events, including during offsite activities.
 - 4.3. All windows and doors should be closed and greater care should be taken when opening external doors.
 - 4.4. Students diagnosed or at risk of asthma or anaphylaxis must be monitored throughout the day.
- 5. Fire Danger Ratings**
- 5.1. Monivae College is not listed on the Bushfire At Risk Register and therefore is not required to close on days of Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger. School leadership will however determine the appropriate responses to fire danger and may decide on the following:
 - 5.1.1. Relocation pre-emptive action plan - relocation of the school to operate on a safer school site
 - 5.1.2. Learning from home pre-emptive action plan
 - 5.1.3. Closure pre-emptive action plan
 - 5.2. In the event that an Extreme Fire Danger Rating is advised for the region the Principal, Deputy Principal or delegate will make an announcement that the adverse weather timetable is activated. This will mean:
 - 5.2.1. Students will be directed to a safe indoor location for recess and/or lunch;
 - 5.2.2. The adverse weather supervision roster will be activated. Staff rostered for duty on an adverse weather activated day will be reallocated for indoor duty where required;
 - 5.2.3. Staff members will not be required to supervise outside during recess and lunch if the adverse weather timetable is activated (Note: End-of-day / Bus duty

supervision will have to occur, with every attempt to keep students out of direct sun whilst waiting for collection);

5.2.4. Maintenance and gardening staff will not be required to undertake outside manual work and machinery will not be operated during the period.

5.2.5. Any classes or activities planned to run outside will be modified to take place inside; and

5.2.6. All excursions and offsite activities including professional development will be cancelled.

5.2.7. Keep windows closed, blinds drawn (where applicable) and air conditioners on.

5.3. Should a fire danger rating change whilst a camp or excursion is underway, the Teacher-in-charge must make modifications to the activity or program to ensure student and staff are inside and not at risk of any heat or wind related injury and the emergency management plan activated and return to school plan activated.

6. Air Pollution

6.1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regularly monitors the quality of air for Hamilton. There are five categories of air quality: Good; Moderate; Poor; Very Poor; Hazardous. In most cases it is possible to visually observe Very Poor or Hazardous air quality.

6.2. Staff who are working outside should report to Reception if the air is hazy or there is a strong smell of woodfire or chemical smoke, who will notify the Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or Chief Warden.

6.3. If the EPA classifies the air quality as Very Poor or Hazardous on its website, then this will trigger the adverse weather timetable. This hazard is extremely dangerous to asthma sufferers or those with other kinds of respiratory issues. In this case, the Director – Students, Principal, Deputy Principal or Chief Warden will make an announcement that the adverse weather timetable is activated. This will mean:

6.3.1. Students will be directed to a safe indoor location for recess and/or lunch;

6.3.2. The adverse weather supervision roster will be activated. Staff rostered for duty on an adverse weather activated day will be reallocated for indoor duty where required;

6.3.3. Staff members will not be required to supervise outside during recess and lunch if the adverse weather timetable is activated (Note: End-of-day / Bus duty supervision will have to occur, with every attempt to keep students and staff out of direct adverse weather whilst waiting for collection);

6.3.4. Maintenance and gardening staff will not be required to undertake outside manual work;

6.3.5. Any classes or activities planned to run outside will be modified to take place inside; and

6.3.6. All doors and windows should be kept closed and air-conditioning and/or air purifiers switched on.

7. Communication

1.1. This Policy shall be communicated to all staff and listed on the School website to ensure students and families are aware of the schools response to managing adverse weather.

GOVERNANCE

Supporting procedures	Bushfire Preparedness Procedure
Supporting schedules	Emergency Management Plan Critical Incident Plan
Associated policies	Sun Protection Policy

	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Related Legislation	Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
Category	Occupational Health and Safety
Approval	School Leadership Team 28.02.2024
Endorsement	Relevant Senior Officer 27.02.2024
Policy Owner	Compliance and Risk Manager
Date Effective	28.02.2024
Review Date	(5 years from effective date)
Version	1.0
Content Enquiries	eguthrie@monivae.vic.edu.au

VERSION CONTROL

28.02.2024	V1.0	Initial release.
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