

Inclement Weather Policy

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Leader Responsible	Principal
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Context:

Darlington Primary School aims to provide a safe environment for students, staff, families, and visitors. At times, weather conditions can place people on our school grounds in unsafe situations. The Inclement Weather policy outlines procedures designed to maximise the safety of everyone on our site.

Definition:

Inclement weather includes:

- Extreme temperatures
- Heavy rain, hail, and snow
- Strong winds
- Severe dust storms
- Lightning or thunderstorms

The leadership team will monitor daily weather forecasts from the Bureau of Meteorology and identify any potential inclement weather risks.

Darlington Primary School is not in a designated bushfire-prone zone and will not be closed on days of extreme or catastrophic fire danger.

Extreme Temperatures:

Darlington Primary School does not close due to hot weather. All classrooms and general-purpose learning areas are air-conditioned. Hot weather protocols will be enacted if the forecast for Seacombe Gardens is 36°C or higher.

1. Recess and Lunch Breaks

When the temperature reaches 36 degrees or more at 10:30 am or 12:30 pm, the inclement weather siren will sound (two short bursts). Students will remain in their classrooms, supervised by teachers who will share duties between nearby classrooms. Specialist teachers will report to the office and provide relief as needed. The library will be closed during lunch break.

2. Physical Education Lessons

No outdoor brain breaks, fitness, or PE lessons will be conducted by PE or classroom teachers after 11 am on days with a forecasted maximum temperature of 36°C or higher. PE lessons will be modified as necessary. The PE teacher will have priority for using the gym on these days to continue the program in a suitable modified manner. Frequent water breaks will be provided.

3. Excursions and Camps

If the forecasted maximum temperature for Seacombe Gardens is 36°C or higher by 4 pm the day before, the Principal or delegate will assess the suitability of planned excursions or camps. Families will be notified by the excursion coordinator with as much advance notice as possible.

4. School Sports and Practices

For out of hours sports the policy applies if the forecasted maximum temperature for Seacombe Gardens is 36°C or higher by 4 pm the day before. Sporting matches and practices will be cancelled unless they can be accommodated in the gym after a risk assessment and approval by the Principal. Coaches/Coordinators are responsible for informing players and families of any decisions.

Wet Weather - Heavy Rain

Heavy rain is defined as causing significant dampness to clothing. During light rain, students may choose to play under shelter sheds.

1. Recess and Lunch Breaks

If leadership or office staff observe heavy rain before break time, the inclement siren will sound (two short bursts), and students will remain inside their classrooms.

If heavy rain begins during a play period, a yard duty teacher should request the rain bell to be rung. The final decision will be made by a member of the leadership or office staff. Once the bell has rung, all students and classroom teachers should return to their classrooms.

During wet weather days, students should be supervised by their classroom teachers, who will equitably share supervision duties between nearby classrooms. Specialist teachers will report to the office and provide relief for any teachers as required. The library will be closed during lunchtime.

If the weather clears with 15 minutes or more left of recess or lunchtime, the leadership or office staff will ring a single bell to signal a return to playtime. Normal yard duties will resume.

2. Physical Education Lessons

PE lessons will be adjusted for wet weather. The PE teacher may choose to remain outside or move lessons indoors as deemed appropriate.

3. KOALA Days (Waterlogged Grounds)

On KOALA (Keep Off All Lawned Areas) days, declared due to waterlogged conditions after significant wet weather, the oval and grassy areas near the playground will be closed. This will be communicated to staff by a Sentral post. Yard duty teachers will assist in supervising courts and playground areas.

4. Excursions and Camps

Similar to extreme temperatures, the appropriateness of planned excursions or camps will be determined by the Principal or delegate based on significant rain forecasted by the Bureau of Meteorology by 4 pm the day before. Families will be notified accordingly by the excursion coordinator providing as much notice as possible.

5. School Sports and Practices

Out-of-hours sports activities may be cancelled if significant rain is forecasted by 4 pm the day before and if gym use is not feasible. Coaches/coordinators must communicate decisions to families before noon. Where unforeseen wet weather conditions occur, the coach/coordinator will provide a duty of care until the scheduled pick up time.

Storm Event - Strong Winds, Electrical Storm or Dust Storm

Responses to storm events will follow the procedures outlined for wet weather. The inclement weather bell may be activated based on the severity and timing of the storm by a member of leadership or office staff. During thunderstorms with hail, heavy rain, or lightning, students should not be outdoors. Windows and doors should be closed and caution used when opening external doors.

Restrictions may be implemented during severe local conditions, such as excessive wind, hail, or electrical storms. These decisions will be made by leadership in consultation with key staff, prioritising student safety with guidance from the Bureau of Meteorology.