



## Air Quality Impact and Response Guide for Emmaus

This guide forms the basis for responding to air quality impacts at Emmaus and should be used in addition to and read alongside:

- *Extreme Heat Policy*<sup>1</sup>
- *Excursion Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Emergency Planning and Fire Safety Policy and Procedure*
- *Visitor's Policy*

**For the purposes of this guide, the following categories apply:**

- 1. Sensitive Staff**
  - Pregnant women
  - People over 65 years
  - Those with existing heart or lung conditions (including asthma)
- 2. Sensitive students**
  - Children 14 years or younger – (For practical purposes – Year 9 and below).
  - Those with existing heart or lung conditions (including asthma)
  - Pregnant students
- 3. All other staff**
- 4. All other students**

### Assessing Air Quality

Air quality ratings provide an indicative view of the potential air quality issues within a broad geographic area. While this information is useful, it is not sufficient to guide local responses. For this reason, Emmaus will primarily monitor air quality as directed by <https://canberraair.com/>.

Secondary monitoring and assessment of air quality through direct observations, including by:

- **Looking** – for visible signs of smoke or haze, check windows and doors are used appropriately, and ensure activities are not affecting the indoor air quality.
- **Smelling** – check for odours indicating that smoke may be present. Note specific areas/rooms that are affected.
- **Feeling** – Check air is flowing from vents.
- **Listening** – to the concerns of the students and staff. Do they experience any air quality related symptoms? Listen for unusual equipment noises that may indicate potential problems.
- **Consider wind strength and direction**<sup>2</sup>
- **Consider heat and humidity**<sup>2</sup>

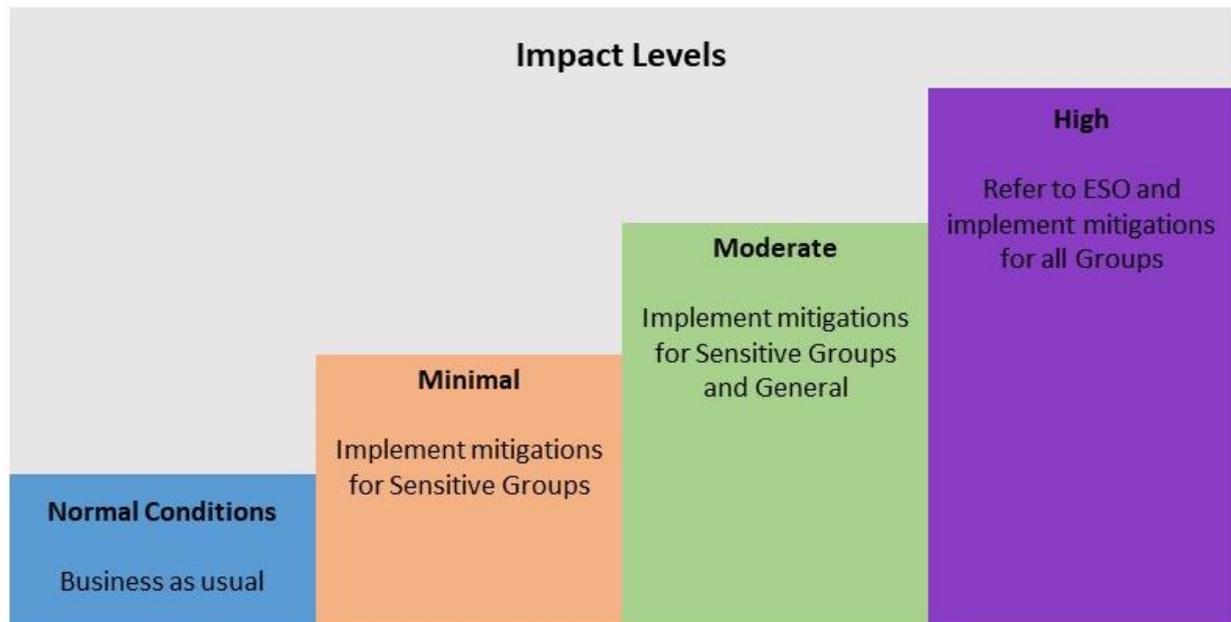
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<sup>1</sup> Currently under review

<sup>2</sup> Added by Emmaus Executive

## This Guide

The Executive will assess air quality on a daily basis, and regularly review throughout the day if conditions change. The level of impact should be determined, noting that different areas within the school may be impacted to a different degree. Once the level of impact is determined, appropriate responses will be put in place. These are set out in the Impact Levels at Figure 1 and in Table 1: Impact Responses. All staff should be advised of the controls and their role in implementing them effectively across the school day.



**Figure 1: Impact Levels**

\*due to limited controls available for sensitive groups in offsite locations.

\*\*see definition of local

\*\*\*for specific responses see table 1.

**Emmaus After School Care (EASC)** will be advised of the air quality impacts for the day and the controls and adjustments at the school that have been enacted that day.

### Venting Buildings

The opportunity to vent and refresh air in buildings will be undertaken in line with the strategies outlined in managing extreme temperature procedures and when external air quality is normal.

### Evaporative Cooling

As per advice, evaporative cooling will not be used when external air quality is poor. **Prolonged Duration of Controls Being Implemented**

The cumulative impact of controls across multiple days will be closely monitored for its impact on student and staff wellbeing.

A range of additional controls should be considered when addressing prolonged events. These include:

- Rotating and providing respite to staff to provide down time and breaks. This might include bringing additional staff into the school for this purpose.
- Rotating student groups into varying areas of the school over different days and providing a range of alternative activities.
- Prioritising and adjusting workload and deliverables.

### **Authority to Close a School Site**

The hierarchy of controls includes the contemplation of site closure will be done collaboratively between the Emmaus Executive and the NCCEA Board.

### **Wellbeing Supports**

Students:

- Monitoring the demand and needs of student wellbeing supports and procedures and make necessary adjustments as required.
- Emmaus Parents may elect to keep their child at home in response to issues of air quality at any time.

### **Interstate Excursions and Camps**

Emmaus will be supporting schools by actively managing risk assessments and threat analysis in areas where schools are planning to conduct excursions and camps. Many areas traditionally used by ACT schools in NSW have been impacted by bushfires and this may impact the ability to use these sites going forward. The ongoing impact of heat, fire and fire danger ratings in these locations will be continuously assessed and camps staff will be advised if alternative options or rescheduling needs to occur.

### **Air Purifiers**

Due to the temporary nature of air quality problems and as a result of the unreasonable cost of installing and monitoring industrial purifiers, Room Air Purifiers will be provided for the two main rooms in Preschool only.

### **Keeping Students Home**

As stated under **Wellbeing Supports** above, parents may at any time elect to keep their child at home in response to issues of air quality at any time. The school needs to be notified as per normal Attendance Policy.

Table 1: Impact Responses- noting additional responses may be required to respond to local needs

| Impact            | Response                                   | Sensitive Students  | All Students  | Sensitive Staff  | All Staff  |
|-------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Normal Conditions | Business as Usual                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring symptoms and reduce activity as needed</li> <li>Exec to continue reviewing advice including forecast for days ahead to consider for planning</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring environmental conditions and individual responses</li> <li>Exec to continue reviewing advice including forecast for days ahead to consider for planning</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring symptoms and reduce activity as needed</li> <li>Exec to continue reviewing advice including forecast for days ahead to consider for planning</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring environmental conditions and individual responses</li> <li>Exec to continue reviewing advice including forecast for days ahead to consider for planning</li> </ul> |
| Minimal           | Implement mitigations for sensitive groups | <p><b>Reduce prolonged or heavy physical activity and limit time spent outdoors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable adjustments to outdoor or physical activities including structured and unstructured play</li> <li>Make internal spaces available</li> <li>Monitor symptoms and manage as needed</li> <li><b>Postpone whole school prolonged outdoor physical activity including swimming and sports carnivals*</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Business as usual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring environmental conditions and individual responses</li> <li><b>Postpone whole school prolonged outdoor physical activity including swimming and sports carnivals*</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Reduce prolonged or heavy physical activity and limit time spent outdoors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable adjustments to outdoor or physical activities including playground supervision adjustments and alternatives</li> <li>Ensure internal teaching spaces are available</li> <li>Monitor symptoms and manage as needed</li> </ul> | <p><b>Business as usual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring environmental conditions and individual responses</li> </ul>   |

|          |  |  |   |  |   |
|----------|--|--|---|--|---|
| Moderate | Implement mitigations for sensitive groups and general | <p><b>Avoid prolonged or heavy physical activity altogether</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit time spent outdoors</li> <li>• Monitoring symptoms and implement controls from individual student plans and <i>First Aid Procedures</i></li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> <li>• Review excursions for relevant controls</li> <li>• <b>Postpone <u>all</u> whole school prolonged physical activity including indoor swimming and sports carnivals*</b></li> <li>• Consider postponing all <u>local</u> off-site activities including excursions</li> </ul> | <p><b>Reduce prolonged or heavy physical activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable adjustments to outdoor or physical activities including structured and unstructured play</li> <li>• Make internal spaces available</li> <li>• Monitor symptoms and manage as needed</li> <li>• <b>Postpone <u>all</u> whole school prolonged physical activity including indoor swimming and sports carnivals*</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>Avoid any prolonged or heavy physical activity altogether</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit time spent outdoors</li> <li>• Monitor symptoms and manage as needed</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> </ul> | <p><b>Reduce prolonged or heavy physical activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit physical activity implementing appropriate controls</li> <li>• Review excursions for relevant controls\</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> </ul> |
|----------|--|--|---|--|---|

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|------|---|---|--|--|---|
| High | Refer to ESO and implement mitigations for all groups | <p><b>Remain indoors and keep activity as low as possible</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit time spent outside to transitions only</li> <li>• Monitoring symptoms and implement controls</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> <li>• Communication to parents and carers</li> </ul> | <p><b>Remain indoors and keep activity as low as possible</b><br/><b>Avoid all physical activity outdoors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not deliver physical activity</li> <li>• Postpone all <u>local</u> off-site** activities including excursions</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> <li>• Enact whole school controls from risk assessment</li> <li>• Communication to parents/carers (timing – using to forecasting)</li> <li>•</li> </ul> | <p><b>Remain indoors and keep activity as low as possible</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit time spent outside to transitions only</li> <li>• Monitoring symptoms and implement controls</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> <li>• Access leave</li> </ul> | <p><b>Remain indoors and keep activity as low as possible</b><br/><b>Avoid all physical activity outdoors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not deliver physical activity</li> <li>• Implement controls from school plan for <i>Managing Extreme Temperatures</i></li> <li>• Enact whole school controls from risk assessment</li> <li>• Communication to parents/carers (timing – using to forecasting)</li> <li>• Monitoring of workloads to allow reprieve</li> <li>• Monitoring staff absences</li> <li>• Monitoring of workloads to allow reprieve</li> <li>• Monitoring staff absences</li> </ul> |
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