

Bushfire Preparedness Procedure

Pre-emptive actions

- The Principal will annually review the DET & Country Fire Authority Bushfire Preparedness guidelines, Bushfire and Emergency Self-Assessment Plan, and the Emergency Management Plan (EMP), and then ensure that all staff are familiar with the details.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff and parent/carers are aware of the Bushfire Preparedness Policy and the EMP for evacuation to the designated off-site location, and will conduct evacuation drills in each term to support this.
- Copies of the Emergency Services Contacts and Resources List are always visible at the Office phone and in every classroom.
- All staff with responsibilities identified in the EMP will ensure they have local Emergency Service phone numbers in their mobile phone and ensure mobile phones are charged at all times.

Preparing school grounds

- The Principal will regularly assess and delegate clearing clutter, debris, plant litter, gutters and flammable materials;
- A watered green zone is maintained around school buildings during summer,
- All water hoses are connected to outside water supply at all times.
- The School's tree planting guidelines for school grounds complies with Bushfire low risk selection and the DDS Land Management Plan.

Preparing Bushfire Equipment

- At the beginning of each Term, the portable carry bag First Aid Kits in all classrooms and the Office are refreshed, and with up-to-date lists of students and staff with medical needs and current copies of class roles.
- Ensure the Bushfire Equipment is in good order with sufficient woollen blankets, drinkable water and respiration masks.
- The Principal will ensure the annual backflow test for the fire hydrant is completed and recorded.

Closure of School due to Bushfire

- Where possible, up to 3-days notice of a planned closure will be provided should the School be required to close due to a CODE RED Day. Parents and carers should, however, expect that in some instances fewer than 3-days notice may be provided.
- When the School is closed for bushfire, NO staff or members of the School community will remain onsite OR are permitted on site during a closure.

- The Principal will review the timing arrangements for the release of students on days of extreme fire danger, including their movement by bus at the end of the school day, when fire risk is generally higher.
- Parents will be notified at the start of Term 4 and again at the beginning of the school year about these arrangements, including the arrangements for communicating emergency information to them.

School bus transport

- Bus routes passing through high-risk areas or routes operated by schools in high-risk locations will be closed on high-risk fire days.
- A school bus route will be closed if it has to pass through an area affected by fire even if the associated school is not affected by fire and remains open.
- The School will liaise with Daylesford Secondary College as the bus depot coordinating school as to any changes or cancellation of services.
- If a bus route is threatened by unexpected fire, the School will enact its local Emergency Management Plan (EMP).
- Information on any changes to bus routes or cancellation of services will be provided by the School to parents as soon as is possible and practicable.

Off-site activities

The safety of students and staff is paramount and off-site activities may be cancelled, postponed or relocated if faced with the threat of bushfire or on high alert days.

Off-site activities include any activity undertaken by staff/students away from their normal school facility. This can include camps, field trips/excursions, sporting activities, training or conferences for staff.

As the school is in a fire-prone area, we must consider the appropriateness of activities undertaken on days of extreme weather as well as days of total fire ban. Options could include cancelling, postponing or relocating the activity if extreme weather or fire conditions are forecast. Such decisions should be made as early as possible to ensure the ongoing safety of staff and students. The Principal will be responsible for making this decision and informing those concerned.

Further matters to note

The School will provide local government agencies with a copy of their plan to facilitate overall coordination in the event of a bushfire and ensure the school EMP is integrated into local emergency arrangements. Staff, students and parents shall be informed about, and understand the school arrangements in advance of any fire emergency.

Review Date

October 2022

Basis of Discretion:

Not applicable