

7 September 2020

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2020 - 2021 BUSH FIRE SEASON

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to advise you of arrangements for our school for the current bush fire season.

Our school has been identified as Category 1 as we are in a bush fire prone area.

To ensure the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, the NSW Department of Education has determined that on days when a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating is issued for our area, the school will temporarily cease operations. This is based on information obtained through a bush fire assessment of our school arranged by the Department.

A Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating does not mean there will be a catastrophic fire, but rather weather conditions that could pose a high risk for a bush fire. The rating is a proactive measure to ensure staff, students and the community remain safe.

This is likely to occur on a very small number of days during the bush fire season, if at all. To ensure that we continue to support student learning on these days, I have put the following arrangements in place:

Students will be learning from home, with tasks on Seesaw and/or Google Classroom. Please check Seesaw for information first.

The school will receive notification of a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating on the day before the forecast is issued. To assist the school in contacting all parents please ensure that you have provided us with up-to-date home or after hours contact details. You can also check the school website and social media on these days for up to date communications on school operations.

Please familiarise yourself with the information attached:

- What to do in the event of local bush fire activity
- Bush Fire Season Information for Parents

To ensure we have your correct contact details, and a list of other authorised adults who can pick up your child/ren in the event of emergency, please FILL OUT AND RETURN the final page and return it to the school by Friday 11 September 2020.

Please contact the school if you would like any further information about this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Jodie Corrigan
Principal



Education

NSW Department of Education

Bushfire Season Information for parents

This brochure provides information for parents and carers about arrangements for the bushfire season. This information is only relevant for schools identified as Category 1 in a bushfire prone area. These schools are required to temporarily cease operations when a catastrophic fire danger rating is issued in their area.

Introduction

The NSW Department of Education has conducted bushfire assessments for NSW government schools in bushfire prone areas. These results have been validated by an independent external expert and reviewed in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service.

A small number of schools have been identified as being at risk if a fire were to break out on a day when a catastrophic fire danger rating is issued for the local area. This includes the school your child attends.

To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff, the NSW Department of Education has determined that on days when a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating is issued for the area the school is in, the school will temporarily cease operations for the day(s) the rating is current. Alternative learning arrangements will be put in place on these day(s).



What is a Fire Danger Rating?

A Fire Danger Rating is the expected fire danger on a particular day and is determined by considering a combination of factors including air temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and drought. The ratings range from Low – Moderate to High, Very High, Severe, Extreme and Catastrophic.



What is a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating?

A Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating means that if fires broke out they would be uncontrollable, unpredictable and very fast moving. For more information on Fire Danger Ratings, visit the [NSW RFS Website](#).

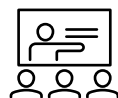


When will I know if my child's school won't be operating the next day?

The State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) notifies the Department at approximately 4:00pm each day when there are catastrophic fire danger ratings predicted for the following day. This means that the school will only receive notification of a catastrophic fire danger rating after school hours the day before the forecast is issued.

Your school will notify you as soon as possible. You will be notified by telephone or other communication, depending on when the school is advised that the catastrophic fire danger rating has been issued. The school will contact all parents and carers and, where appropriate, issue advice through local media.

Please provide your current home or after hours contact details to your school. Parents and carers should also watch or listen to local media as information may be provided through these outlets.



What education arrangements will be in place if the school isn't operating?

Talk to your school about the arrangements that will be put in place in the event of the school temporarily ceasing operations due to a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating being issued. Schools will be undertaking advanced planning to ensure that if they do need to cease operations on some days, they will have alternative educational arrangements in place. This may include re-locating to another school, where practicable, or students learning from home.



Will my child's school be affected by Severe or Extreme Fire Danger Ratings?

During the bushfire season, including days of severe or extreme fire danger rating, schools will continue to operate as normal unless advised otherwise by emergency services. During the bushfire season schools will be vigilant and monitor local conditions, particularly on days when severe or extreme fire danger ratings are issued.



Plan and Prepare

The NSW Rural Fire Service has resources for all residents to plan and prepare for the bushfire season. It is important that you consider the safety of your own home from bushfire.

Please find more information and resources on the [RFS website](#).



Learn more

We appreciate your cooperation during the bushfire season. For further information about Fire Danger Ratings and the bushfire season, please refer to the [NSW Rural Fire Service website](#).

The Department's [School Safety website](#) has also been established to provide up to date information during bushfires and other situations such as floods or storms.

Get in contact with your school if you have any questions.






Education



What to do in the event of local bush fire activity

Information for parents and carers

	ADVICE ALERT		WATCH AND ACT ALERT		EMERGENCY WARNING ALERT
	<p>A bush fire has started and there is no immediate danger. Our school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update student rolls and account for early leavers/absences in our school system ▪ Monitor air quality and adjust school activities accordingly i.e. if smoke affected we will cease outdoor activities ▪ Monitor Fire Danger Ratings, <i>Fires Near Me</i> app, <i>Live Traffic NSW</i> app and local ABC Radio 		<p>There is a heightened level of threat and bush fire conditions are changing, in addition to the Advice Alert procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School staff will take action to prepare i.e. provide regular updates of bush fire activity to all persons on site and prepare bush fire emergency equipment ▪ We will liaise with the Local RFS Control Centre for support and advice. If required, we will take action to implement our <i>Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan</i> ▪ We will alert parents/carers as soon as possible via Facebook or Seesaw. If the district is affected by heavy smoke, consider keeping students with an Asthma Plan at home. ▪ Parents/carers stay updated using the <i>Fires Near Me</i> app, <i>Live Traffic NSW</i> app and/or listen to local ABC Radio ▪ If the district is affected by heavy smoke, consider keeping students with an Asthma Plan at home 		<p>This is the highest level of bush fire alert.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school will take action to implement our <i>Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan</i> • We will continue liaising with Local RFS Control Centre and keep parents/carers informed via Facebook or Seesaw. • If the district is affected by heavy smoke, consider keeping students with an Asthma Plan at home • Stay updated on the fire activity using the <i>Fires Near Me</i> app, <i>Live Traffic NSW</i> app and/or listen to local ABC Radio

SHELTERING PROCEDURES	EVACUATION PROCEDURES
<p>In the event of an approaching bush fire threatening our school premises, our primary action is to SHELTER IN PLACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All persons on site will be relocated to our designated refuges and accounted for ▪ Emergency services will be notified of the location and number of people sheltering in place so assistance can be provided ▪ Parents/carers DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL. We will be safely sheltering in place and keeping all staff and students calm through activities and games ▪ It is important that parents/carers take measures to activate your family Bush Fire Survival Plan ▪ We will continue to keep you informed via Facebook or Seesaw 	<p>We will be evaluating the safety of all staff and students, with the Local RFS Control Centre, throughout the bush fire event. If the threat is increasing and it is determined that it would be safer for all persons to evacuate, we will be asking for all students to be collected by a parent/carer or previously nominated adult. At this time, staff will be unable to respond to messages asking to change collection arrangement. If an evacuation is to occur we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immediately inform parents/carers via Facebook or Seesaw ▪ Information will be provided to all parents/carers for the safe collection of all persons from the school ▪ Any students unable to be collected will continue to shelter in place with staff. ▪ Emergency services will be notified of the location and number of people sheltering in place so assistance can be provided



7 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

To ensure our family contact records are up to date, please fill in your details below and return this form to the office no later than Friday 11 September. This will allow us to contact you in the event of an emergency.

At times, parents may be unable to collect their children in an emergency situation, such as a bushfire evacuation. Our school evacuation procedures require parents to nominate another adult, outside their immediate family, who they authorise to pick up their children. Please include this person in the information requested below.

If your contact details change in the future, please ensure you notify the office.

Kind Regards,

Ms Jodie Corrigan
Principal

Updated Family Contact Details - September 2020

Names of children: _____

Parent 1

Name	Home phone	Mobile	Work phone

Home Address	Postal Address	Email

Parent 2

Name	Home phone	Mobile	Work phone

Home Address	Postal Address	Email

In the event of an emergency which requires the school to be evacuated, I give permission for _____ to collect my children if I/we are unable to do so. His/her contact number is _____. I understand that I may change this nomination in writing at any time but will be **unable to change the person during an emergency event.**

_____ Name

_____ Signature

_____ Date