



St Joseph's School ~ Renmark

Bushfire & Emergency Evacuation Policy



RATIONALE:

Schools have a duty of care to staff and students at all times. This duty of care includes protection against bushfires and emergencies during times when staff and students are in attendance.

AIMS:

To ensure the wellbeing of staff and students during times of bushfires and emergencies by consistently implementing a planned management strategy that will cater for all circumstances.

IMPLEMENTATION:

As part of the usual yard duty timetable process, a bushfire or emergency notification activated by the Principal will be put in place when conditions are considered to be unsuitable for staff and students.

PRINCIPLES:

This policy has been prepared by the Principal and will be reviewed at regular intervals by staff, board and fire authorities. School authorities have ensured that the school conforms to all Fire Safety Requirements of the S.A. Schools Registration Board. St Joseph's School has full registration.

The Principal is responsible for the safety and welfare of staff, pupils and visitors to the school and therefore will ensure that:

- there are regular checks of fire extinguishers and fire hose reels
- staff are familiar with the placement and use of fire equipment
- fire drills occur approximately 4 times/year, during the first weeks of each term. All staff and children learn to react immediately and appropriately to the warnings.
- fire awareness - fire safety lessons regarding Bushfire Procedures are included in the curriculum at all year levels
- regular maintenance of buildings and grounds is carried out to ensure a safe environment e.g. fire prone areas are cleared, gutters cleaned regularly, trees lopped and trimmed, windows and doors fit snugly, timber surfaces are painted etc.

PROCEDURES:

Bushfire Warning System for SA:

A Bushfire Information and Bushfire Warning system has been developed by the Police and Emergency Services to alert the community to bushfires and provide advice on what to do during a bushfire. The system is based on the policy: PREPARE, ACT, SURVIVE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCALED ADVICE AND WARNINGS TO THE COMMUNITY (4 September 2009 - VERSION 5.1)

BUSHFIRE INFORMATION MESSAGES will be issued when there is a potential threat to public safety in the immediate area of a bushfire.

BUSHFIRE WARNING MESSAGES will be issued when a bushfire, burning out of control under catastrophic conditions, requires an immediate response from the public to ensure their safety and survival. The school office and the community should listen out for these messages. With the broadcast of a Bushfire Warning message, the Standard Emergency Warning Signal, (a distinctive siren) will be aired on the radio to assist in drawing people's attention to the situation.

For the management of Catastrophic (**CODE RED**) bushfire danger St Joseph's School now involves identification of 3 levels of alert.

Level 1:

A day of 100+ Catastrophic (Code Red) forecast for the Riverland location. Parents notified that the children are permitted to remain at home and no buses will be running. Children remaining at school will be supervised by principal and staff who chose to attend.

Level 2:

A fire actually threatening our area of concern. School to be closed on notification of police.

Level 3:

A fire actually threatening the school and a full evacuation.

PROCEDURES FOR DAYS OF CATASTROPHIC/EXTREME FIRE DANGER IN THE RIVERLAND

Our fire drill arrangements are based on the belief, supported by fire officers' opinion, that our Library/Activity Room are the safest refuge in the immediate vicinity, in the event of a bushfire, and the school oval is a safe refuge in the event of a fire in our building(s).

In the event of a fire in our 'area' we shall make every effort to ensure that no student is allowed to leave the school to go home to an area threatened by fire.

No student will be able to leave school before their normal dismissal unless previous authority has been received from a parent or guardian. Parents must not collect any other child/ren unless they have written authority from the parents. All excursions/trips will be cancelled on a High Risk Day. The Council Office and Police (8586 6606) will be informed that the children are being held at the school. On "Catastrophic/Extreme Fire Danger" days parents may feel more at ease if they transport their children to friends or relatives homes. Please ensure the school is informed. No parents, staff or children should move into a risk area. Parents in threatened areas are strongly encouraged to delay collecting children from school until the danger has passed.

Internal Fire:

The first and major responsibility of staff, parents and children is for their own safety.

In the case of an internal fire the rooms and buildings are to be evacuated before a teacher attempts to fight the fire.

The fire signal is to be sounded. All classes respond according to agreed procedures i.e. move as per direction on attached map to safe refuge area for each class at the bus shelter or smaller oval.

Contact C.F.S. (phone 000).

Have monitor (teacher/parent/senior pupil) with school plan wait at front of school to direct C.F.S. to fire.

Signed:

Chairperson School Board: *Emma Warner* June 2022

Principal: *Don DePalma* June 2022

Policy Review Date: June 2022

Next Review Date: June 2025