



Mainstream and Steiner Education
Two streams – one river

Bushfire & Emergency Procedures Policy

Purpose

To mitigate the potential impact upon staff, students, residents, visitors and children through the effective preparation for, management of and response to emergencies and other major incidents.

Bushfires are a natural part of the Australian eco-system and South Australia is particularly at risk, especially during the summer months.

The purpose of the Site Bushfire Response Procedure is to:

- Complement the requirements and stipulations within the *Site Bushfire Preparation Procedure*
- Establish clearly defined parameters and processes in relation to the enactment of bushfire and emergency management strategies.
- Clearly outline the requirements and responsibilities of sites and corporate business units in the effective management of bushfire emergencies and Fire Danger Season as a whole.
- Ensure that site leaders, staff, students and DfE communities are appropriately informed and able to respond to active bushfire emergencies impacting upon a site or service

Although predominantly intended to address actions to be undertaken during Fire Danger Season (traditionally 1 November to 30 April each year), the information contained within this document may be applied in responding to bushfire threats and Total Fire Bans issued by the Country Fire Service (CFS) at any time of the year.

School Structures and Processes

Our Bushfire & Emergency Procedures Policy is reviewed annually prior to the commencement of the fire season and distributed to parents each year or on enrolment. *A copy is also available on the school website.*

Regular Fire Drills are conducted with students so that students and staff know exactly what to do in the event of a bushfire.

Please ensure you are fully aware of the various situations that can arise if a day of catastrophic or extreme fire risk is declared. It is imperative that we have up-to-date contact information for all families; especially during fire season.

Basket Range Primary School has a **'high risk'** bushfire rating. This means on days of a forecast catastrophic fire danger rating, our school will be closed. Generally we will be notified by the DfE regional office at approximately 4:30pm prior to a day that is deemed catastrophic. The school will also be closed if there is a bushfire reported within the local district.

If the decision is made to close the school Basket Range PS staff will make every attempt to contact parents and carers to inform them. Staff will use the skoolbag platform and/or telephone tree and attempt to contact every family. If we are unable to contact you a message will be left and we will follow up in a timely fashion with a repeat call. If you receive a message please respond to acknowledge.

If possible, we will put a message on the school's answering machine.

If possible a 'Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating Sign' will be placed at the bottom of Cramond Road.

In addition, information will be provided through:

- ABC Radio 891
- ABC TV
- The CFS website <http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au>

Bushfire season can be an anxious time for children and families. Please read this information carefully in the best interests of children.

By being prepared, and acting now, you will help our school to be bushfire ready and keep our children as safe as possible.

For this reason, we have prepared Basket Range PS to cope in the event of a wildfire. This preparation includes:

- pump and sprinklers on the roof and special high powered hose reels
- sealed windows fitted with ember-proof mesh
- rehearsed procedures and responsibilities for all staff
- regular practices for the children to know and understand what to do
- drinking water on hand

Before the Bushfire Season

To prepare for the bushfire season we have consulted with fire authorities and building specialists to be better prepared. We have:

- Completed a Bushfire Safety Audit and checklist.
- Updated our Bushfire Action Plan
- Prepared buildings and grounds including clearing gutters, and removing vegetation
- Practiced bushfire safety drills.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We ask parents and carers to:

- Read all bushfire information provided.
- Talk to your children about what will happen if a bushfire occurs when they are at school.
- Make sure your emergency contact details are up-to-date with our school.

WHAT IS A CATASTROPHIC FIRE DANGER RATING?

Catastrophic fire danger rating days are days when the weather conditions mean a fire is more likely to start and be more difficult to control.

When a catastrophic fire danger rating is forecast for the following day by the Bureau of Meteorology, **all 'high risk' schools and preschools in the declared Fire Ban District will be closed.**

Basket Range Primary School has a high risk bushfire rating. *Parents and carers will need to make alternative arrangements for their children on these days.*

Remember that mobile phone networks may be down and power may be cut.

Please make sure your emergency contact details are updated before the bushfire season starts.

APPROACHING BUSHFIRE

If our school is open and a bushfire is approaching, the safety of children is our highest priority.

The South Australian Police (SAPOL) and the Country Fire Service (CFS) will take charge if a bushfire is approaching. **They recommend that in such an event, everybody should remain at their school or preschool unless instructed to do otherwise.**

Principals and preschool directors must comply with SAPOL or CFS instructions.

If the police have not advised an evacuation, everyone will remain inside a designated building (**at Basket Range PS this is the stone building**) and emergency procedures will be activated. These are detailed in a separate school document called a 'Bushfire Action Plan' and include:

- Moving everybody inside to the stone building, closing windows, doors, and blocking crevices, cracks and gaps.
- Putting on our roof sprinklers
- Hosing down walls, garden etc. on the side facing the 'fire-front' and leaving garden sprinklers on.
- Filling available containers with water to supplement our stored emergency water.

We hope that we will never have to enact fire drill procedures. However we are working with our school community to be bushfire ready in the event of a bushfire emergency and trust that parents and carers will add their support.

BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY CONTACTS

School telephone: **8390 3466**

Please note that this number may be engaged during an emergency situation and you may not be able to get through immediately.

Regional Office, Bushfire Coordinator: **8391 4705**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

DECD Emergency & Crisis Management Website Department for Education www.crisis.sa.edu.au

SA Country Fire Service (CFS) Website www.cfs.org.au

CFS Bushfire Information Line **1300 362 361**

During days of forecast catastrophic fire danger ratings or an actual bushfire, a Parent Information Hotline will be activated.

Version	Date Prepared	Date Adopted	Approved By	Next Review
1	12-10-2021	12-10-2021	Sybila Ford	12-10-2022