



# Fire Policy

**Date of Policy:**

**Date of last major review:**

**Date of next major review:**

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## **RATIONALE**

Schools that have been identified as being at high fire risk and are listed on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will close on days declared Code Red. CUDGEER PRIMARY SCHOOL IS ON THIS LIST.

The incidence of bushfire in Victoria highlights the need for our school to be thoroughly prepared. The School's Emergency Management Plan addresses the risk and procedure for dealing with Bushfire Emergencies and Incidents, and is informed by the DEECDs Bushfire Checklist . This checklist covers:

- Arrangements for the safety and welfare of staff and students, including relocation to pre-arranged sites or rendezvous points;
  - Readiness levels and "trigger points" for decisions regarding school closure;
  - Monitoring fire risks and activity on high-risk or total fire ban days;
  - Notification arrangements to emergency services;
  - Accessing support, including transportation (e.g. buses) at short notice, in line with "stay or go" planning strategies;
  - Communications plan and contact lists (including school community, local government and emergency services);
- and
- Roles and responsibilities of school personnel in executing emergency plans.

## **AIMS**

- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of the 'Whole School Community' during incidents of Bushfire or potential Bushfire. Students are to remain at School until we are notified that the Fire threat has passed. Parents are able to stay with their children.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- At the beginning of the fire season all garden sprinklers and fire equipment (pump that can be used with water tank) will be checked and tested to ensure it is working correctly and fixed as needed.
- Where possible, up to 3 days notice of a planned closure will be provided by the DEECD 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.
- The final decision to close should be confirmed by 12 noon the day prior by the DEECD. This decision will not change and cannot change – regardless of any changes in the weather forecast.
- When the school is closed for bushfire, NO staff or members of the Cudgee Primary School community will remain on site OR are permitted on site during a closure (DEECD Requirement).
- Parents will be notified at the start of the "summer period (Term 4) and again at the beginning of the school year about these arrangements, including arrangements for communicating emergency information to them.

- Sprinklers for keeping the grounds green will be checked and maintained at the beginning of the fire season.

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.

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

As CPS 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/affected. All staff are required to ensure that information about their activity (e.g. camp or excursions) has been

entered into the Student Activity Locator (SAL) online database as per the DSC Excursion planning requirements

(<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp>).

**Further matters to note:**

Staff, students and parents shall be informed about, and understand the school arrangements in advance of any fire emergency.

The Emergency and Security Management Unit (ESMU) liaises with fire authorities to monitor major fire activity throughout the fire danger period, and communicates directly with schools that may be affected. ESMU Should be contacted ASAP regardless in the event of a threat of approaching bushfire.