



St Joseph's Catholic School Bushfire Plan - 51 Altair Street Southern Cross.

Prepared for Catholic Education Western Australia

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13 March 2026

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The measures contained in this Bushfire Management Plan are considered to be minimum standards and they do not guarantee that a building will not be damaged in a bushfire, persons injured, or fatalities occur either on the subject site or off the site while evacuating. This is substantially due to the unpredictable nature and behaviour of fire and extreme weather conditions. Additionally, the correct implementation of the required bushfire protection measures (and any associated response/evacuation plan if applicable) will depend, among other things, on the actions of the landowners or occupiers over which Bushfire Prone Planning has no control.

All surveys, forecasts, projections and recommendations made in this report associated with the project are made in good faith based on information available to Bushfire Prone Planning at the time.

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Document Control

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Bushfire Prone Planning acknowledges the contribution of the Department of Education and the 'Departments' *The Principal's Guide To Bushfire* document, in the preparation of the Bushfire Plan for Catholic Education Western Australia Schools.



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Executive Summary

This Bushfire Plan (BP) has been prepared in consultation with St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and is developed to assist staff to prepare for total fire-ban days, severe to catastrophic fire danger ratings, or bushfire events in proximity to the School site. Catholic Education WA, in concurrence with the Department of Education, and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) may decide, where appropriate warning is given, to close Schools deemed to be at high risk in areas for which a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating (FDR) has been forecast (Catastrophic Event/Weather Warning). The intent of a planned closure is to ensure maximum safety and minimum risk for students and staff. The preparation of this Plan has been developed in accordance with the CEWA *Crisis Management Planning in Catholic Schools* and the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* with input from the CEWA. The Department of Education *School Bushfire Stand-alone Plan – June 2018* has been utilised in the formation of this plan.

This Bushfire Plan has been developed in consultation with:

- Catholic Education of WA (CEWA);
- The St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Principal; and
- Members of the emergency services and/or other organisations, where appropriate.

The Plan outlines required actions to prepare the School before the bushfire season as per the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*. The Plan also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency including:

- 'Catastrophic' fire danger rating/weather warning days;
- Days where a 'Total Fire Ban' has been declared;
- When there is a bushfire in the local district;
- When a bushfire is threatening or impacting on the School; and
- During the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on the School (referred to as the 'Recovery Phase').

A suitable building within the school site has been identified and is nominated as the Safer Building Location for the School.

- All reasonable mitigation strategies have been implemented and the building has been prepared for a bushfire emergency, which will accommodate all persons normally at the School. It is recommended the nominated safer building be inspected by a building certifier and retro fitted as appropriate to ensure the building conforms to a bushfire attack level construction rating of BAL-12.5, as a minimum;
- **The 'Safer Building Location' for this school is: School Library**

Consideration has been given to a bushfire Safer Building Location that provides protection from radiant heat and embers; and is equipped with drinking water and has accessible toilet facilities available as a minimum. The safer building location would be a safer option than remaining outside in the open environment during a bushfire and is where students, staff or visitors can seek shelter if they have not left the area early prior to a known significant bushfire event. Leaving early would be the primary strategy where clear and informed advice provided by DFES recommends to do so. Leaving early is likely to avoid community panic, people being trapped, and individuals making poor decisions resulting in the risk of serious injury or fatalities. (*Leaving early means leaving the area before there are any signs of a bushfire in proximity to the School, before the chosen route is compromised by fire, smoke or potential blockages – not when flame and radiant heat impact is imminent*).

The **School Library** would provide short-term shelter from the imminent effects of a bushfire. The building is provided with an asset protection zone (APZ) of 46m, created by the managed landscaping that reduces radiant heat impact on the building to 10kWm². The APZ separation also reduces potential fire spread between unmanaged hazardous vegetation and the safer building location.



Distribution

The Principal will ensure the Bushfire Plan is updated annually in readiness for the bushfire season and forward a copy of the site Bushfire Plan to CEWA, to be held in the regional office.

The Principal or delegated officer will forward a copy of the site Bushfire Plan to the relevant local emergency services as determined in this plan, by week 2 of Term 3 each year in the region.

The Principal or delegated officer will publish a copy of the School's bushfire plan on the School's website at the beginning of Term 1 each year.

- Details of the website to be provided to families of new students by the Principal or delegated officer during the enrolment process; and
- The Principal will ensure that all new staff members, relieving staff and visitors are briefed about the requirements of the Bushfire Plan during the site induction process.

The Principal will also include bushfire season reminders and information in site newsletters at least three times each term when applicable. The School's Information Booklet, updated in Term 1 each year, includes detailed information about actions and procedures included in the Bushfire Plan.

All staff members are to receive pre-fire season updates at the beginning of Term 3 and ongoing information and instruction about the contents and requirements of the Bushfire Plan during Term 4 and beginning of Term 1 staff meetings.

Bushfire Preparation checklist (Refer to Appendix 3)

The safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors is at all times the CEWA's main priority. Staff are not expected to fight bushfires.

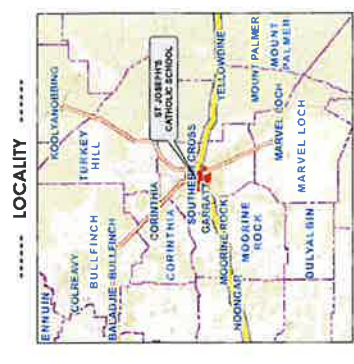
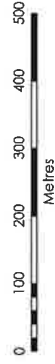
The School will review and update where appropriate, the 'Plan' on an annual basis.

Bushfire advice received by the School from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) or external experts shall be documented, identifying the date, source of the advice and action taken.



St Joseph's Catholic School
61 Allair Street, Southern Cross
SHIRE OF YILGARN

- **LEGEND** -----
-  School Site
 -  Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service



Aerial Imagery : Landgate/SIP
Image Date : Oct 2017

Coordinates System: GDA 1984 MGA Zone 50
 Projection: Universal Transverse Mercator Unit: Metre
 Map compiled by: Ian Ross 27/11/2019
 Map updated by: Ian Ross 27/11/2019

WARNING
PLANNING

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Figure 1.1 School Location Plan (Spatial Context)



2 Compliance

The development and content of this Bushfire Plan is aligned to the directions given through the following policies and guidelines:

- Evacuation Planning Handbook 4, 3rd edition (2013) AEMI;
- State Planning Policy 3.7 – Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas (December 2015);
- Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas WAPC 2017 v1.3;
- Australian Standards AS 3959-2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone- areas;
- Bush Fires Act 1954 (as amended);
- AS 3745-2010 Planning for Emergencies in Facilities;
- CEWA Crisis Management Planning in Catholic Schools policy; and
- Department of Education - The Principal's Guide to Bushfire (June 2018)



3 Safe Evacuation Routes

The suitability of evacuation routes for schools within remote communities will vary depending on lead time to facilitate and evacuation, availability of suitable transport and road conditions which might be normal or restricted and blocked. Therefore, it will be important to have information on road conditions where early evacuation is planned. The evacuation routes for this site are noted on the Bushfire Response Zones Map (**Appendix 6**).

Note: The local government evacuation centres are identified in their Local Emergency Management Arrangements. Should early evacuation be instigated by emergency services, the location of the evacuation centre to be utilised in relation to incidents or for other welfare and recovery purposes will be **determined by the Incident Controller or otherwise advised by the controlling agency/authority**.

Evacuation centres are subject to change and should be confirmed annually. Location/s listed below are for reference only.

*FACILITY	PURPOSE	ADDRESS	CONTACT
Southern Cross Community Hall	Welfare Centre	Antares Street, Southern Cross	Nic Warren M: 0407 491 027 Robert Bosenburg M: 0409 791 135
Southern Cross Sporting Complex & Oval	Welfare Centre	Cnr Spica Street & Archenar Street, Southern Cross	Nic Warren M: 0407 491 027 Robert Bosenburg M: 0409 791 135

**Details of evacuation/welfare centres sourced from the Shire of Westonia & Yilgarn LEMA document and are subject to annual updates & location or facility changes.*

Evacuation Route – Southern Cross Community Hall - Or a safer location as directed by the Incident Controller.

Exit School head southeast Altair Street towards Canopus Street;

Turn left at the 1st cross street onto Canopus Street;

At the round-about, take the 2nd exit onto Antares Street. Community Hall will be on the left.

Evacuation Route – Southern Cross Sporting Complex & Oval - Or a safer location as directed by the Incident Controller.

Exit School head southeast Altair Street towards Canopus Street;

Turn left at the 1st cross street onto Canopus Street;

Go through round-about, 170m;

Southern Cross Sporting Complex will be on the right.



4 Emergency Contacts

Emergency contact details are subject to change annually, including but not limited to, contact person and telephone number. Emergency contacts shall be checked and updated as part of the annual review process. Refer (**Appendix 8**) for Emergency Contacts and (**Appendix 9**) for Communication Tree.

- Seek permission to use private phone numbers; and
- Check contact person and contact numbers regularly.



5 Communication

There are several levels of communication requirements at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School before, during and after bushfire events.

5.1 Preparing for Bushfire Season

- The Principal must ensure all students and staff are aware of the School's Bushfire Plan. It is also necessary to ensure that relief staff and parents have been made aware of the School's Bushfire Plan. A copy of the School's Bushfire Plan should be published on the School's website.

(Suggested draft text for the School newsletter as per Appendix B6 of the Principal's Guide to Bushfire is provided in the Bushfire Plan Addendum);

- The Principal should establish contact with the relevant local emergency services, including DFES, the local volunteer fire brigade, WA Police, the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) and the Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) or Chief Bushfire Control Officer (CBFCO);
- Schools located in bushfire prone areas need to incorporate key bushfire messages in their curriculum. Research shows that if students develop and undertake drills as part of the emergency planning the message is more meaningful and transfers to the home environment. Additional benefits can be realised by taking activities home that need to be completed and returned. This can serve to increase families' level of awareness and preparedness in regard to bushfire survival plans or household preparedness assessments;
- Communication plans (including emergency contacts and a Communications Tree) need to be in place for sheltering in place, evacuation or planned closure;

*(See **Appendix 7** for a Communication Plan, **Appendix 8** for Emergency Contacts List and **Appendix 9** for Communication Tree);*

- The School has an effectively working emergency warning or alert system and emergency communication equipment is available and working;
- The School has in place systems to account for students, staff and visitors in an emergency, such as class rolls (or equivalent) and visitor registers. Consideration should be in place for situations such as a loss of power affecting the ability to print from electronic sources (such as pre-prepared hard copies);
- Arrangements are in place in relation to student transport, if appropriate (notification of contractors where available), if pre-emptive closure is invoked, the availability of suitable transport if off-site evacuation is required; and
- A bushfire can be a traumatic event that may include loud sirens, fire alarms, intense heat and reduced visibility in the form of smoke. Where possible, staff should prepare students both physically and mentally for such an event focusing on the conditions they may be exposed to should a bushfire impact the School, through practice drills and information sessions.



5.2 Pre-emptive Closure (As Advised by Emergency Services)

Pre-emptive Closure may be required where an incident or bushfire may directly or indirectly impact the School, although not imminent, and a precautionary approach taken to ensure the safety of Students, Staff and visitors to the School.

- The School shall be prepared prior to the bushfire season for Pre-emptive Closure;
- The Executive Director will make the decision to close a School based upon advice from Emergency Services and this will be relayed to the Principal via the Executive Director;
- The Principal is to notify staff and parents of closure, using emergency contacts and the Communications Tree. Emergency contact details for parents/guardians should be checked and updated prior to the bushfire season;

(See also the draft letter to parents in Appendix B7 of the Principal's Guide to Bushfire advising of pre-emptive closure provided in the Bushfire Plan Addendum, being mindful of parents' level of literacy and understanding of English).

- All other necessary parties are to be advised including (but not limited to) other Schools that may have siblings at the School, community users of the School facilities (including before and after School care, community kindergartens or holiday programs), on-site contractors and Parents & Friend's Association;
- If appropriate, contractors will be contacted to arrange for the evacuation of students to a designated safer location;
- Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure should be posted as per the Principal's Guide to Bushfire, both physically at the School and electronically on the website;
- The Principal to manage appropriate interim staffing of School to ensure any students that have not been informed of the Temporary School Closure, can be re-located to an off-site safer building location and parents/guardians notified. *(Provision for an endorsed method of student transport required and appropriate authorised supervision of students);*
- The official broadcaster of Emergency Events is ABC Radio. Your local station will be ABC local Radio. They will provide up to date information during a bushfire event in your area.
- The DFES website provides up to date information on fire events. Refer to <http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au>
- NOTE: DFES uses the national Emergency Alert system to send community warning messages via mobile telephones in affected areas.



5.3 Re-opening the School

- The Executive Director is to advise the Principal when the School can re-open. This may also be communicated via the Marketing & Communication Team;
- Parents are to be informed as to when the School is to be re-opened;

(In the event of a pre-emptive closure details are contained in the template letter - Principal's Guide to Bushfire advising of pre-emptive Closure – Appendix B7, provided in the Bushfire Plan Addendum).

- The Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure should be physically removed from the School premises and website; and
- All parties that were advised of closure (e.g. bus contractors, out of hours users, P&F) should be advised of re-opening.

5.4 Planned Pre-emptive Closure (Fire Danger Rating/Weather conditions conducive to bushfire)

The Executive Director will contact the principal directly when a planned (pre-emptive) closure is to be invoked in a particular part of the State. The lead time for a planned closure varies depending on weather patterns, but every attempt is made to give principals as much notice as possible to prepare written documentation for parents. The School should have a 'Telephone Tree' in place to provide this information at short notice or after hours.

Once advised that the School is to undertake pre-emptive closure, you need to notify your School community that a closure is imminent. **The Principal is to notify parents via the most appropriate method available to the local community and provide each staff member with a memo that clearly states when the closure is planned to occur and that the School is on standby.** It may be that between declaration of the closure and the day of closure, weather conditions improve sufficiently to remove the need to close and the School can therefore stand down its pre-emptive closure plans.

The Executive Director confirms with the Principal the final decision to close the School no later than **4.30 pm** the day before the planned closure. If weather conditions become less severe after **4:30 pm**, the closure goes ahead regardless, in order to provide a level of certainty to parents.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services is the final authority on advice about which Schools are in danger and the level of risk at the time. The Executive Director makes the final decision as to whether or not a planned closure of Schools is to proceed, based on DFES's advice.



5.5 During a Planned Closure

The principal must stay informed of current fire danger rating and any fire activity by monitoring local media (local radio, especially the ABC, and television broadcasts) and by regularly checking for updates with DFES.

5.6 Re-opening School (Fire Danger Rating/Weather conditions conducive to bushfire)

Parents need to know when the Catastrophic FDR has been downgraded and that it is therefore safe for their children to return to School after a planned closure.

The template letter to parents contains advice on how parents can monitor the situation. **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School** will put the communication plans in place, via placing a notice on the School website and providing a phone number for parents to call for information about the reopening of the School. (*A SMS will be sent out to parents and a notice at the front of the School). ***The Principal is to notify parents via the most appropriate method available to the local community.**

Consideration needs to be given to how parents who do not have internet access, mobile phones or who have diverse needs (e.g. multicultural, special needs) will be provided with information.



6 Bushfire Emergency - Awareness

6.1 School Site Plan & Evacuation Routes

The School Site Plan & Evacuation Routes Map (**Appendix 6**) identifies:

1. The nominated Safer Building Location: (**School Library**) ; and
2. Directions for the safe evacuation route.

6.2 Bushfire Response Zones Map

The Bushfire Response Zones Map (**Appendix 5**) identifies the bushfire response zones. The required response is detailed in Section 8.

The dimensions of the bushfire response zones have been determined with consideration of a bushfire's potential rate of spread in the surrounding vegetation. Key factors in this determination are the type and structure of vegetation that is present and the topography of the area.

The map is produced at a scale that enables the Bushfire Response Zones to be easily identified and is to be used to locate and monitor a bushfire to assist in determining the appropriate action to be taken.

1. Bushfire Awareness (Monitor) Zone

The purpose of the Bushfire Awareness Zone is to indicate an appropriate area surrounding the School within which you must:

- Be aware of the existence and to the best extent possible, the location and movement of a bushfire; and
- Confirm that the required on-site preparation has been conducted earlier and monitor (Appendix 10).

2. Bushfire Awareness (Prepare) Zone

The purpose of the Bushfire Awareness (Prepare) Zone, is to indicate an appropriate area surrounding the School within which:

- If a bushfire is present in the Bushfire Awareness (Prepare) Zone, the focus must be on executing safe evacuation or shelter; and
- Proceed to evacuate if safe to do so or shelter in place if evacuation routes are deemed not to be safe – Required actions are set out in Section 8.



6.3 Information Sources to Monitor

1. ABC Local Radio

- monitor regularly for local bushfire information (weather trends, warnings, locations).

2. BoM Website

- monitor regularly for fire danger ratings and weather conditions and trends.

3. DFES/Emergency WA Website

- monitor regularly for fire danger ratings, warnings bushfire locations / movement, and instructions. Source information and prepare requirements for sheltering from a bushfire within a building.

4. Mobile Phones

- monitor for emergency text messages.



7 Bushfire Warnings – Response (No Bushfire Identified)

Daily actions during the bushfire risk season

7.1 DFES Total Fire Ban

In the event of a Total Fire Ban the Bushfire Plan will be invoked:

This means:

- No fires must be lit or used in the open air;
- All open fires for the purpose of cooking or camping are not allowed; and
- 'Hot work' such as metal work, grinding, welding, soldering, gas cutting or similar is not allowed unless there is an exemption.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services advice is that chainsaws, plant or grass trimmers or lawn mowers can be used during a total fire ban in suburban or built up areas which are cleared of flammable material, but not in bushland or other areas where their use is likely to cause fire.

It is also necessary to ensure:

- The equipment or machinery is mechanically sound; and
- All reasonable precautions are taken to prevent a bushfire starting.

It is recommended postponing the activity altogether to minimise the risk of fire.

Individuals could be fined up to \$25,000 or jailed for 12 months or both if the Total Fire Ban is ignored.

For information on activities that can or cannot be carried out during a Total Fire Ban visit:

<https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/#totalfirebans>.

https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/BushfireFactsheets/DFES_Bushfire_Factsheet-Total_Fire_Bans.pdf

If the information required is not available from the website, telephone the Total Fire Ban Information Line 1800 709 355.

This information is also available by visiting:

www.dfes.wa.gov.au and Emergency WA website: www.emergency.wa.gov.au.



7.2 Bureau of Meteorology FDR Forecast 'Severe', 'Extreme' or 'Catastrophic'

Confirm or conduct the **bushfire preparedness checklist** either the day before or first thing in the morning (**Appendix 10**);

A briefing to be provided to all staff that addresses the forecast Fire Danger Rating and its implications for the day;

Assessment of planned activities to be conducted during the day and review based on bushfire risk;

Nominated personnel will consult and continue to monitor the Bushfire Awareness Zone for bushfires throughout the day. Monitoring will consist of checking websites, listening to the radio and general awareness of the School grounds and surrounding area by regular visual assessment throughout the day (e.g. late morning, midday and early afternoon).

7.2.1 Catastrophic Fire Danger

The Catastrophic Fire Danger Index (FDR) has been added to the Australia-wide FDR system since the 2009 bushfires in Victoria. If a fire starts in catastrophic conditions, its impact potential includes death or injury to people and destruction of buildings.

CATEGORY	FIRE DANGER INDEX (FDI)	ACTION
CATASTROPHIC	100+	School closed on directive by the relevant authority, through Executive Director. (CEWA or DFES) School to invoke communication plan.
EXTREME	75 – 99	Monitor DFES website
SEVERE	50 – 74	Monitor DFES website
VERY HIGH	32 – 49	Normal School operations
HIGH	12 – 31	Normal School operations
LOW TO MODERATE	0 – 11	Normal School operations

In the event of a catastrophic weather warning the Bushfire Plan will be invoked as per the flow chart at **Appendix 4**, following the instruction of the Executive Director.



7.3 Bureau of Meteorology FDR Forecast 'Very High'

Confirm or conduct the **bushfire preparedness checklist (Appendix 10)** either the day before or first thing in the morning;

A briefing to be provided to all staff that addresses the forecast Fire Danger Rating and its implications for the day; and

Nominated personnel will consult and continue to monitor the Bushfire Awareness Zone for bushfires throughout the day. Monitoring will consist of checking websites, listening to the radio and general awareness of the School grounds and surrounding area by regular visual assessment throughout the day (e.g. late morning, midday and early afternoon).

7.4 Bureau of Meteorology FDR Forecast 'High' or 'Low-Moderate'

Carry on normal business; and

Monitor the Bushfire Awareness Zone for any signs of bushfire (Section 6.3).

7.5 Bushfire – Warnings

During a bushfire, emergency services provide as much information as possible through a number of different channels. There are three levels of warning:

- **ADVICE;**
- **WATCH AND ACT;** and
- **EMERGENCY WARNING.**

These change to reflect the increasing risk to life and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire arrives.

An **ADVICE** provides you with information on a bushfire that is not threatening lives or property, but may be causing smoke near Schools.

The actions required are to turn off and monitor evaporative air conditioners, undertake regular checks, and patrol the School for bushfire activity.

A **WATCH AND ACT** message tells you the fire conditions are changing and there is a possible threat to lives and Schools.

The Principal or delegate should contact the controlling agency to seek instruction as to whether to move students, staff and visitors to their pre-determined Safer Building Location and **not** an open area on the site, or to evacuate.

If the decision is to evacuate, and contact cannot be made with the Emergency Services, the Principal should ensure the safe movement of staff and students to a safer location off-site. Considerations should include the location of bushfire, ability to travel safely to the selected location and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances, it may not be safe to evacuate.



An **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level of warning and indicates **immediate** danger. In some circumstances, it may start with a siren sound called the **Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)** to get your attention as the fire is about to arrive. SEWS is a distinctive sound that is broadcast immediately prior to major emergency announcements on radio, television and other communication systems. SEWS tells people 'you need to listen – there is an emergency in your area and you need to take action now'. It is used like a siren and is strictly controlled for use by an authorised hazard management agency only.

The Principal or delegate should contact the controlling agency to seek instruction as to whether to move students, staff and visitors to their pre-determined Safer Building Location and **not** an open area on the site, or to evacuate.

If the decision is to evacuate, and contact cannot be made with the emergency services, the Principal should ensure the safe movement of staff and students to a safer location off-site. Considerations should include the location of bushfire, ability to travel safely to the selected location and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances, it may not be safe to evacuate.

An **ALL CLEAR** is issued when the threat has passed, and the fire is under control.

Firefighters may still be working to put out the last remnants of the fire and making the area safe. Emergency services will advise when School students and/or staff can be released.



8 Bushfire Emergency – Response (Bushfire Identified)

8.1 Bushfire is Identified within the Bushfire Awareness Zone

A bushfire is identified within the Bushfire Awareness (Monitor) Zone, **but** it is not within the Bushfire Awareness (Prepare) Zone.

If the School is likely to be threatened by the fire, activate the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan* immediately. In the event of a bushfire threatening the School, the School will notify DFES and the Bushfire Plan will be invoked by way of the School siren or hand-held siren.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School alert method will be – 'Siren' (Pause) x 3 or Continuous Hand Bell or Invacuation: Continuous 'Siren' or Short Whistle Blasts; (Following the Critical Management Plan School alarm method).

ACTION

1. Confirm completion or conduct the bushfire preparedness checklist (**Appendix 10**);
2. Contact with local DFES Officer and/or DFES Communications Centre (Notify DFES of the Safer Building Location point); (**Appendix 5**)
3. Staff or occupants should, to the best extent possible, locate the bushfire on the Bushfire Response Zones Map and identify the direction of the fire movement (consider local wind direction and any information from the emergency services). Be aware there may be several bushfires. (**Appendix 5**); and
4. Contact with parents/guardians will be informed when and where to pick up students upon advice from the College or through DFES or the Incident Controller.

If the bushfire location is unable to be determined with reasonable accuracy, assume the worst and prepare to take action.

5. Staff must identify the appropriate evacuation route to use should the decision be made to evacuate, and an alternative if available (**Appendix 5**); and
6. Monitor the situation closely, keep informed.

If the bushfire is identified within the Bushfire Awareness (Prepare) Zone.

MAKING THE DECISION TO EVACUATE OR SHELTER

1. Be aware of your ongoing ability to evacuate safely and base the decision to evacuate on this ability or any emergency services directives received; and

If the Evacuation Routes are determined to no longer be safe, then SHELTERING-IN-PLACE will be the required action. Follow the procedures in Section 8.3.

Bushfire Awareness Zones consider a bushfire scenario including fire weather and fuel conditions that represents what may be expected at elevated seasonal times conducive to a bushfire event.



Bushfire Response Zones Calculation Tables

Refer Appendix 5 - Bushfire Response Zones Map

CALCULATED MINIMUM DISTANCES (WOODLAND)

Vegetation Classification	Effective Slope (Degrees)	Site Slope (Degrees)	Assessment Method Applied ²	Inputs		Outputs		
				FDI	Flame Temp.	Rate of Spread (km/h)	Minimum distance to <10kW/m ² (metres)	Minimum distance to <2kW/m ² (metres)
Class B Woodland	0	0	Method 2	80	1,200K	1.43	46.1	120.0

² Method 2 Minimum Distance calculation AS 3959-2009 calculation inputs and outputs as per FPA Australia 'FLAMESOL'.

CALCULATED BUSHFIRE AWARENESS ZONE DISTANCES (EVACUATE OR SHELTER IN SAFER BUILDING LOCATION)

Response Zone	Inputs			Outputs		
	Rate of Spread (km/h)	Rate of Spread (metres per/minute)	Estimated time to Shelter (minutes)	Zone Distance (kilometres)	Minimum distance to exposure of <2kW/m ² (metres) <u>Able to remain outside of Safer Building Location</u>	Minimum distance to exposure of <10kW/m ² (metres) <u>Fire-fighting Operations only (Full PPE)</u>
Shelter in Place			30.0	0.750		
Bushfire Awareness (Prepare)	1.43	23.83	45.0	1.0	120.0	46.0
Bushfire Awareness (Monitor)			90.0	2.0		

The Table above should be used as a guide to inform the decision-making process and consideration of time available to enact a determined response to a bushfire event. The decision to evacuate or shelter in place must therefore be based on an informed analysis of the situation in context of the site, available information and daily variations to routine that may alter the preparedness or response time available.



EVACUATION PROCEDURE

School to evacuate off-site from directive by the relevant authority or on advice from DFES.

Has the evacuation to the off-site safer building location been approved and how long will it take to get there? (The off-site safer building location may be determined by DFES based on incident location).

1. All classes remain with their teachers and support staff;
2. All other staff and visitors report to the Front Office;
3. Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions;
4. Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed;
5. Students and staff are to remain in classrooms unless directed otherwise by the fire warden;
6. Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff;
7. The Principal and fire wardens will control this response and must liaise with DFES or emergency services as soon as possible; and
8. Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.

PARENT ACCESS

1. Parents will be informed when and where to pick up students upon advice from the School.

8.2 During Evacuation

- The School will contact the Executive Director and the Department's Marketing & Communication Team. **Note: The Principal communicates directly with the Marketing & Communication Team including any media communications. Staff should not comment directly to media;**
- The Schools designated Evacuation Wardens for each area to commence evacuation roles;
- The School will contact parents/guardians via phone, text message system or email, ensuring parents/guardians are provided a mobile phone contact number for the School/School representative as a point of contact. (It would be preferable that parents restrict calling the School at this time to emergency calls only);
- The School will notify bus contractors and out of School programs (as appropriate);
- The official broadcaster of 'Emergency Events' is ABC radio. Our local station will be ABC local radio. They will provide up to date information during a bushfire event in our area; and
- The DFES website provides up to date information on fire events. Refer to <http://www.emergency.wa.gov.au> NOTE: DFES uses the national Emergency Alert system to send community warning messages via mobile telephones in affected areas.



8.3 Shelter in Place Procedures

If the bushfire is identified and safe evacuation is not able to be undertaken, seek shelter in the Safer Building Location. Shelter in the nominated Emergency Safer Building Location stated below and identified on the Site Response Map (**Appendix 6**). **SAFER BUILDING LOCATION: SCHOOL LIBRARY**

IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY DFES BY DIALLING 000 AND GIVE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS

1. Nature of the incident and state that people are sheltering in place;
2. Location – **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – Southern Cross;**
3. Nearest cross-road – **Altair Street & Centaur Street;**
4. Where sheltering – **School Library**
5. Entry point to shelter – **Altair Street School Entrance;**
6. Number of people sheltering;
7. Number of special needs persons;
8. Can you see the fire front /estimate distance away; and
9. Can you see spot fires / are spot fires around the shelter?

SCHOOL TO REMAIN ON-SITE ON ADVICE FROM DFES

1. All classes remain with their teachers and allocated education assistants;
2. All other staff and visitors report to the Administration/Front Office;
3. Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions;
4. Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff.
5. Students and staff are to remain in classrooms unless directed otherwise by the fire warden;
6. Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed;
7. The Principal and fire wardens will control this response and must liaise with DFES or emergency services as soon as possible.
8. The Principal and fire wardens will control this response until the arrival of the DFES or emergency services who will then take over;
9. Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.



PARENT ACCESS

1. Parents advised **NOT** to pick up students and to monitor local media for specific access information.

SAFER BUILDING LOCATION – (IMPACTED BY BUSHFIRE)

1. If the nominated Safer Building Location is deemed unsafe or to be under direct threat, staff must evaluate the situation and make informed decisions. The choice will be to proceed to an alternative safer building location or an area of minimal fuel vegetation as a last resort and if it is safe to do so;
2. The latter action is not recommended but is an alternative if the current refuge is deemed to be not safe for occupants, no other building is deemed safe to shelter in and vehicle evacuation routes remain unsafe.

8.4 Response when a bushfire occurs, and the School is closed

If the Executive Director/Marketing & Communication Team makes a decision on School closure based upon advice from Emergency Services, the Executive Director will inform the Principal of closure.

The Principal is to notify staff and parents of the closure using the emergency contact list.

The Executive Director/Marketing & Communication Team will identify alternative accommodation of students and staff if required. The Marketing & Communication Team will utilise media outlets to make public announcements of School closures, temporary alternative accommodation and contact number(s) for further information.

The Executive Director/Marketing & Communication Team in consultation with DFES will inform the Executive Director when the School can reopen, who will inform the Principal accordingly.



9 Return Procedures Post Evacuation

9.1 Recovery

The priorities for the School during recovery are:

- Health and Safety of individuals;
- Social Recovery; and
- Physical (Structural) Recovery.

1. General

- When possible, return to normal routine as soon as possible;
- Attend to staff and student welfare, considering counselling support;
- Provide information for families and the community of any impact (including if there is none) on the School and School routine following the bushfire;
- Undertake a check of any equipment or stock used and arrange for replacement/replenishment;
- Address any physical damage to the School, isolating areas if required and if necessary relocate to alternative accommodation;
- Attend to security if necessary; and
- Manage Administrative details including insurance.

2. Debrief

- What worked, what didn't?
- Was anything overlooked?
- What could you and your staff do better next time?
- Should roles change?
- If changes are made, incorporate them into the formal plan and advise the appropriate parties including staff and other authorities;
- Share the knowledge with other Schools; and
- Test the revised bushfire plan and procedures.



10 Appendices – Resources and Maps

- Appendix 1 – Information: Fire Danger Ratings (Decision Aid)
- Appendix 2 – Information: Bushfire Warning Systems
- Appendix 3 – Compliance: Bushfire Preparation Checklist
- Appendix 4 – Catastrophic Event Flow Chart
- Appendix 5 – Bushfire Response Zones Map
- Appendix 6 – School Site Response Map with Safer Location Plan
- Appendix 7 – Communication Plan
- Appendix 8 – Emergency Response Contact List
- Appendix 9 – Communications Tree
- Appendix 10 – Preparedness: Bushfire Preparedness Checklist

Note: Refer to 'The Principal's Guide to Bushfire' for additional checklist packages, letters, newsletter and School closure notice templates. Where templates are modified by the School for use locally, these should form an addendum to this stand-alone bushfire plan and reviewed/updated annually to suit local requirements.



Appendix 1 – Information: Fire Danger Ratings (Decision Aid)

FIRE DANGER RATINGS:

Use this tool daily during bushfire season to monitor conditions in your area.
Based on forecast weather conditions, the higher the rating, the higher the risk of bushfire.

BEFORE A BUSHFIRE



CATASTROPHIC

The worst conditions for a fire. Homes are not designed or built to withstand a fire in these conditions. The only safe place is away from bushfire risk areas.

EXTREME SEVERE VERY HIGH

Seek out information and be ready to leave or stay and actively defend your property if a fire starts. Only stay if you are 100% prepared.

HIGH LOW-MODERATE

Be vigilant. Check your fire plan and continue to monitor conditions as they can change quickly.

WHERE TO FIND THESE TOOLS AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION



emergency.wa.gov.au
dfes.wa.gov.au
DFES Twitter & Facebook



Local news from the tv, radio and websites



DFES emergency information line: 13 3337



Your surroundings could be your best information source.

Source: Department of Fire and Emergency Services



Appendix 2 – Information: Bushfire Warning Systems

Bushfire Warning System

Bushfire Fact Sheet

During a bushfire, emergency services will provide you as much information as possible through a number of different methods.

There are **four levels of warning**. These change to reflect the increasing risk to your life or property, and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire arrives.

Bushfire Warning System



ADVICE



WATCH AND ACT



EMERGENCY WARNING



ALL CLEAR

ADVICE

A fire has started but there is no immediate threat to lives or homes. Be aware and keep up to date.

WATCH AND ACT

There is a possible threat to lives or homes. You need to leave or get ready to defend – do not wait and see.

EMERGENCY WARNING

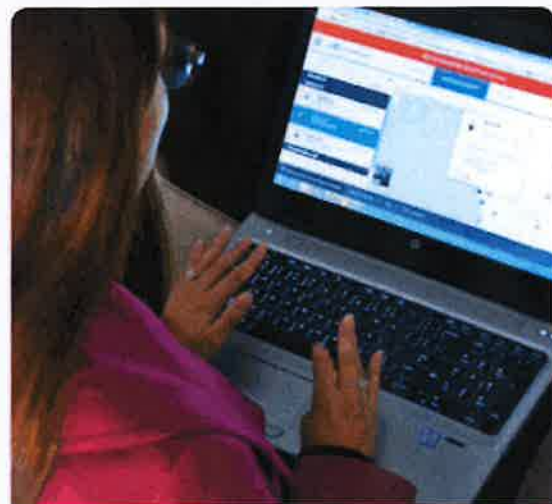
You are in danger and need to take immediate action to survive. There is a threat to lives or homes.

ALL CLEAR

Take care to avoid any dangers and keep up to date.

Your surroundings could be your best information source.

Stay alert to what is happening around you. If you believe you may be in danger, act immediately to stay safe.



Where can you get information during a bushfire?

Know where to find information before the fire season starts. Work out what your local ABC radio station is and familiarise yourself with the DFES website.

Bushfire Warnings at www.emergency.wa.gov.au

DFES Information Line on 13DFES (13 3337)

Local radio and other local media



**Stay alert when a bushfire starts!
Do not wait and see, this can be deadly.**



For more information visit dfes.wa.gov.au
or contact DFES Community Engagement – 9395 9816

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Government of Western Australia
Department of Fire & Emergency Services



Source: Department of Fire and Emergency Service

Appendix 3 – Compliance: Bushfire Preparation Checklist

BUSHFIRE PREPARATION CHECKLIST (ALL YEAR ROUND)

Principals should be thoroughly familiar with their current plans for dealing with bushfires. All staff members should be aware of their responsibilities in accordance with the plan.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

TICK WHEN TASK HAS BEEN COMPLETED, OR WRITE N/A IF NOT APPLICABLE	EVIDENCE/YES
The School <i>Emergency Management Plan</i> provides a plan for dealing with bushfires.	Yes
Principal is thoroughly familiar with the Schools current <i>Emergency Management Plan</i> and the stand-alone bushfire plan.	Yes
Students, staff, relief staff and parents/carers have been made aware of the School bushfire plan.	Yes
The bushfire plan has been reviewed prior to the bushfire season (Term 3 each year) and a copy forwarded to the CEWA head office.	Yes
Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register have appointed a School emergency liaison officer. The appointed liaison officer may be required to relocate during an emergency, to the Incident Control Point to provide an information conduit between the School and the controlling agency.	Yes
The principal and liaison officer have established contact with local emergency services including DFES, the Department of Parks and Wildlife (if relevant), the VFRS, WA Police, Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), local government representative or Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) (if there is one for the area) and incorporated their feedback into the plans (as required).	Yes
Emergency Services, outlined above, are informed of your nominated pre-determined Safer Location as part of your Emergency Critical Incident Management Plan procedures.	Yes

Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register understand the bushfire warning system (refer Appendix 2) and the Emergency WA Website & the National Emergency Alert telephone warning system www.emergencyalert.gov.au	Yes
Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register need to incorporate key bushfire messages in the curriculum.	Yes
School staff know how to turn off evaporative air conditioner units, including awareness of the location of the switches, and how to close roof vents (if applicable).	N/A
Communication plans (including Communications Tree – see Appendix 9) are in place for directed evacuation or planned closure.	Yes
Evacuation drills practised prior to the start of the bushfire season and at least once per term during the bushfire season. The bushfire season typically runs from late October to April in southern WA and May to late October in northern WA. Note this is a minimum of three drills per year.	Yes
School has a correctly functioning emergency warning or alert system.	Yes
Evacuation Kit has been checked at least twice per term.	Yes
Emergency communications equipment is available e.g. mobile telephones, hand-operated fire alarm (portable siren), portable radios and spare batteries (check throughout the season).	Yes
Class rolls and visitor register (or equivalent) are readily accessible in an emergency to account for students, staff and visitors.	Yes
First aid equipment is available and staff members trained in first aid have been identified.	Yes
Arrangements are in place in relation to School buses (notification of contractors if pre-emptive closure is invoked; availability of buses if off-site evacuation is required).	Yes
Procedures are in place to restrict use of machinery (e.g. angle grinders, mowers, and machinery with internal combustion engines) in close proximity to bushfire fuels where they may start a fire on severe fire danger days.	Yes
A Safer Building Location within the School buildings should be identified and prepared in the event that an off-site evacuation is not possible. (Appendix 6)	Yes
More than one suitable off-site location needs to be identified, in case one of the sites is under threat from the bushfire.	Yes
Asset Protection Zones (APZ) minimum 20 metre radius around all buildings, cleared of all rubbish, long dry grass, bark, dead fallen branches and flammable materials. An APZ of XXm around Safer Location Building (where APZ falls within School grounds), refer to Bushfire Risk Treatment notes if applicable for this distance.	N/A
Mitigation works as per bushfire consultant recommendations, have been implemented.	Yes



Appendix 4 – Catastrophic Event Flow Chart

In the event of a catastrophic weather warning the **Bushfire Plan** will be invoked as per the following flow chart: (refer to *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* for all procedures and sample letters)

PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSE TO CATASTROPHIC WEATHER WARNING

