

Weld Square Primary School

BUSHFIRE PLAN (2017-2018)

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Introduction

This plan is for *Weld Square Primary School* and has been designed to assist staff to prepare for a total fire ban, catastrophic fire danger rating, or a bushfire. Letters to staff and parents are included in the appendix as well as notices regarding the plans of closures of the school.

The preparation of this plan should be developed in accordance with the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy* and the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* with input from local emergency management agencies.

Overview

General Information

This Bushfire Plan (BP) was been developed during Term 4 of 2016 after consultation with:

- school administration of Weld Square Primary School
- Occupational Health and Safety Representative

It has been reviewed in Feb 2018 and arrangements made for support from DFES.

The BP will be reviewed and updated during the early period of Term 3 each year through consultation with above bodies.

The BP outlines required actions to prepare the school before the bushfire season as per the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* (refer to Appendix A).

The BP also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency including:

- on days of Total Fire Ban;
- Catastrophic fire danger rating;
- when there is a fire in the local district;
- when a bushfire is threatening or impacting on the site; and
- during the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on the site (known as the 'Recovery Phase').

Where applicable, a building is nominated as the **Safer Location** building for this school.

- This building has been prepared for a bushfire emergency and will safely accommodate all persons normally at the school. The elected Safer Location for Weld Square Primary School is the **School Hall** (refer to school map, Appendix C, p. 14).

Distribution

The Principal will forward a copy of the site BP to the Regional Executive Director to be held in the regional office.

The Principal or delegated officer will forward a copy of the site BP to the emergency services 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 schools 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.
- The Principal will ensure that all new staff members, relieving staff and visitors are briefed about the requirements of the BP 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 BP.

All staff members are to receive pre fire season updates during Term 3 and ongoing information and instruction about the contents and requirements of the BP during Term 4 and Term 1 staff meetings

Bushfire Preparation checklist (refer to Appendix A)

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

The school will review (and update where appropriate) the plan on an annual basis.

Any 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 needs to be documented identifying the date and source of the advice.

Date of Review	Reviewing Officer	Date Submitted	Next scheduled Review
Dec 2016	Glen Cookson, Principal, Weld Square PS	Dec 2016	Dec 2017
	Karl Birkelbach, OSH Rep		
	Moiria Darmody on Moria.Darmody@dfes.wa.gov.au .		
Feb 2018	Nicole Kovalevs Principal	March 2018	July 2018
	Karl Birkelbach OSH Rep		

Communication

There are several levels of communication requirements at school level before, during and after bushfire events.

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 is available in Appendix A6 of the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*.
- The Principal should establish contact with emergency services, including DFES, the local volunteer fire brigade, WA Police, the LEMC and CESM.
- 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 regards to bushfire survival plans or household preparedness assessments.*)
- Communication plans (including emergency contacts and a telephone tree) need to be in place for evacuation or planned closure. See Appendix D for a Communication Plan, Appendix E for sample emergency contacts and Appendix F for a sample telephone tree.
- The school has an effectively working emergency warning or alert system and emergency communication equipment is available and working.
- Schools have 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.

Pre-emptive Closure

- The Department of Education Incident Controller (normally the Deputy Director General Schools or delegated officer) will make the decision to close a school based upon advice from Emergency Services and this will be relayed to the Principal via the Regional Executive Director.
- The Principal is to notify staff and parents of closure using emergency contacts and the telephone tree. See also the draft letter to parents in Appendix A7 of the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* advising of pre-emptive closure, being mindful of parents' level of literacy and understanding of English.
- All other necessary parties are advised including (but not limited to) other schools that may have siblings at your school, community users of the school facilities (including before and after school care, community kindergartens or holiday programs), on site contractors and Parents and Citizens Association (P & C).
- If appropriate, bus contractors will be contacted to arrange for the evacuation of students to a designated area.
- 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.

During Evacuation

- The school will contact their Regional Executive Director and the Department's Media Unit.
- The school will contact parents via phone or email, ensuring they have a mobile phone contact number for the school (It would be preferable that parents restrict calling the school at this time to emergency calls only).
- The school will notify out of school programs.

- 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. (Information can be obtained from <http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/pages/default.aspx>).

The Principal communicates directly with Regional and Central Office personnel including any media communications. Staff should not comment directly to media.

Reopening the School

- The Regional Executive Director is to advise the Principal when the school can re-open.
- Parents need to know when the school is reopened. 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 A7).
- The Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure should be physically removed from the school premises and website.
- All parties that were advised of closure (e.g.out of hours users, P&C) should be advised of reopening.

Types of Fire Event

In the event of a Total Fire Ban, catastrophic weather warning, or bushfire, the **BP** will be activated.

1. Total Fire Ban

In the event of a Total Fire Ban the **BP** will be invoked: (refer to *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* for all procedures).

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.
- All reasonable precautions are taken to prevent a bushfire starting.

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

If a Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban has not been implemented by your Local Government Authority the school/college is able to harvest or move vehicles across paddocks for agricultural purposes.

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 www.dfes.wa.gov.au/totalfirebans/Pages/TotalFireBanWhatCantIDo.aspx.

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.

2. 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 (FDR)	Action
Catastrophic	100+	Schools on Bushfire Zone Register closed on instruction from Deputy Director General Schools, through Regional Executive Director. School to invoke communication plan and cancel bus services.
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-Moderate	0-11	Normal school operations

In the event of a catastrophic weather warning the **BP** will be invoked as per the flow chart at Appendix B (refer to *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* for all procedures and sample letters).

2.1 Planned Pre-emptive Closure

Regional executive directors will contact principals of affected schools 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. Schools should have telephone trees in place to provide this information at short notice or after hours.

Once advised that your school is to undertake pre-emptive closure, you need to notify your school community that a closure is imminent. The Principal needs to send letters to parents 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 Regional 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 DFES is the final authority on advice about which schools are in danger and the level of risk at the time. The Deputy Director General Schools makes the final decision as to whether or not a planned closure of public schools is to proceed, based on DFES's advice.

2.2 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) and by regularly checking for updates with DFES.

2.3 Re-opening School

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. The school will need to put communication plans in place, such as placing a notice on the school website and providing a phone number for parents to call for information about the reopening of the school. Consideration needs to be given to how parents who do not have internet access or who have diverse needs (e.g. multicultural, special needs) will be provided with information.

3. Bushfire

In the event of a bushfire threatening the school, the school will notify DFES and the **BP** will be invoked by way of the school siren (or hand held siren). As per Weld Square Primary School's Emergency and Critical Incident Plan 2016 (Appendix G) the signal for evacuation will be given either verbally (PA system) or by continuous ringing of the siren and hand and school bells.

SUMMARY (displayed in all classrooms along with aerial map.)

- **Contact DFES.**
- Children to remain seated in classes.
- Air conditioning to be turned off.
- Close doors, windows and roof vents.
- Teachers are to wait for these instructions and have Evacuation Pack at hand and wait for further advice from Zone Warden/Incident Manager.
- Be prepared for evacuation to 'Safer Place' (School Hall) if directed by Zone Warden.
- **Incident Manager or delegate to contact North Metropolitan Regional Office.**

3.1. Bushfire – Watch community

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. Download a copy of DFES bushfire warning table from:

http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/BushfireChecklists/DFES_Bushfire-Warning_Levels.pdf

If the school is likely to be threatened by the fire, activate the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan* (Appendix G) immediately.

3.1.1 Advice

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 evaporative air conditioners, undertake regular checks, patrol of the school for bushfire activity and pay special attention to the evaporative air conditioners.

3.1.2 Watch and Act

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 Location on the site or evacuate.

The direction to evacuate by the Emergency Services Incident Controller will consider the location of the bushfire, the ability to travel safely to the selected evacuation point and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances, it may not be safe to evacuate.

3.1.3 Emergency Warning

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 Location on the site or evacuate.

The direction to evacuate by the Emergency Services Incident Controller will consider the location of the bushfire, the ability to travel safely to the selected evacuation point and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances it may not be safe to evacuate.

3.1.4 All Clear

An **ALL CLEAR** is issued when the threat has passed and the fire is under control. Fire-fighters will still be working to put out the last remnants of the fire and making the area safe, so it is important to remain vigilant in case the situation changes. It may still not be safe to leave to school to return home. Emergency services will advise when school students and/or staff can be released to go home.

3.2. Bushfire – Act

3.2.1 Response when a bushfire starts and the school is open

3.2.1.1 Evacuation Procedure

School to evacuate off-site on advice from DFES

Has the evacuation to the off-site safer location been approved and how long will it take to get there?

- All classes remain with their teachers and allocated education assistants.
- All other staff and visitors report to the Front Office.
- Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions.
- Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed **and evaporative air coolers turned off**.
- Students and staff are to remain in classrooms unless directed otherwise by their fire warden.
- Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff.
- The Principal and fire wardens, will control this response until the arrival of DFES or emergency services who will then take over.
- Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.

Parent Access

Parents will be informed when and where to pick up students upon advice from the school or through DFES or the Incident Controller.

3.2.1.2 Safer Location Procedure – if evacuation is not possible

School to remain on site on advice from DFES.

- The Principal and fire wardens, will control this response until the arrival of the DFES or emergency services who will then take over.
- Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff.
- All classes remain with their teachers and allocated education assistants.
- Initially, students and staff are to remain in classrooms unless directed otherwise by the Incident Manager.
- Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed and **evaporative air coolers turned off**.
- On direction, classes to evacuate to: **the School Hall** building (see Appendix C).
- All other staff and visitors report to the **School Hall**.
- Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions.
- Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.

Parent Access

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

3.2.2 Response when a bushfire starts and the school is closed

If the Department of Education Incident Controller makes a decision on school closure based upon advice from Emergency Services the Regional Executive Director will inform the Principal of closure.

The Principal is to notify staff and parents of the closure using the emergency contact list (see Appendix D Communication Plan).

The Department of Education Incident Controller will, in consultation with the Regional Executive Director, identify alternative accommodation of students and staff if required. The Department's Media Unit will utilise media outlets to make public announcements of school closures, temporary alternative accommodation and contact number(s) for further information.

The Department's Incident Controller in consultation with DFES will inform the Regional Executive Director when the school can reopen, who will inform the Principal accordingly.

3.2.3 Recovery

The priorities for the school during recovery are

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

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. Contact Building Management and Works to commence repairs. The Department should be advised of any damage caused by the bushfire.
- Attend to security if necessary (Contact Head of Security at Central Office on 9264 4825).
- Manage Administrative details including insurance.


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.
- Test the revised bushfire management plan and procedures.

For further details and contacts refer to the Recovery Section of the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan* and *The Principal's Guide to Bushfire*.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: COMPLIANCE: Bushfire Preparation Checklist

	Department of Education	Bushfire Preparation Check List for the Summer Months
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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 plans.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Tick when task has been completed, or write NA if not applicable(☐)

Evidence

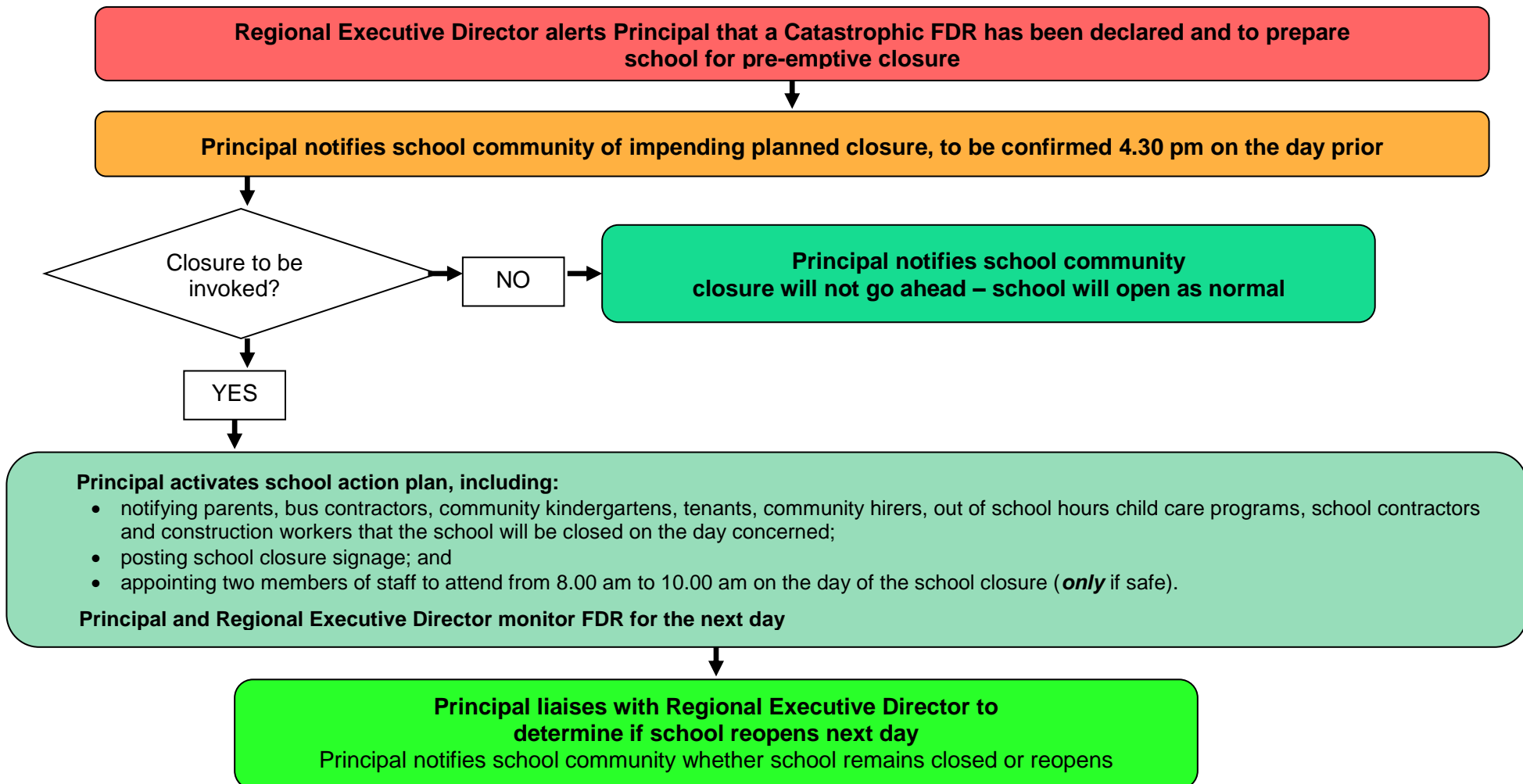
<p>The School <i>Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan</i> provides a plan for dealing with bushfires. Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register must also have a separate stand-alone bushfire plan.</p>	<p><i>School Stand-alone Bushfire Plan 2017/18 Weld Square Primary School</i> <i>Share drive location:</i> S:\AdminShared\Administration Staff\100 Administration\110 Procedures\BUSH FIRES\2017 2018</p>
<p>Principal is thoroughly familiar with the school's current <i>Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan</i> and where applicable the stand-alone bushfire plan.</p>	<p>Plan reviewed 6/3/2018</p>
<p>Students, staff, relief staff and parents/carers have been made aware of the school bushfire plan.</p>	<p>Staff meeting 7/3/2018 and newsletter sent to parents/carers with bushfire information 14/3/2018 Sent to Nmero 8/3/2018</p>
<p>The bushfire plan has been reviewed prior to the bushfire season (Term 3 each year) and a copy forwarded to the local education regional office.</p>	<p>Establishing process to comply.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Pre-primary EA</p>
<p>The principal and liaison officer have established contact with local emergency services including DFES, the Department of Parks and Wildlife (if relevant), the local volunteer fire brigade, 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).</p>	<p>Awaiting response for request for support.</p>
<p>Emergency Services, outlined above, are informed of your nominated pre-determined Safer Location as part of your Emergency Critical Incident Management Plan procedures.</p>	
<p>Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register understand the bushfire warning system (refer DFES website page 8) and the Emergency Alert telephone warning system (www.emergencyalert.gov.au).</p>	<p>Yes Displayed in school office and staff room</p>

Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register need to incorporate key bushfire messages in the curriculum.		To be implemented.
Schools know how to turn off evaporative air conditioner units, including awareness of the location of the switches, and how to close roof vents.		Yes
Communication plans (include telephone tree – see Appendix D1) 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 June to late October in northern WA. Note this is a minimum of three drills per year.		Historically these have not been done. Drills begun in Term 1 2018.
School has a correctly functioning emergency warning or alert system.		Yes
Emergency communications equipment is available e.g. mobile telephones, hand-operated fire alarm (portable siren), portable radios and spare batteries.		Personal mobile phones
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.		3 staff member trained.
Evacuation kit should be checked at least once per term.		Being investigated
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)		No school buses
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 Location in the school building is identified and prepared in the event that an off-site evacuation is not possible (Refer Appendix C).		School Hall
Asset Protection Zone (APZ) (20 metre radius), cleared of all rubbish, long dry grass, bark and flammable materials.		DFES asked to check.

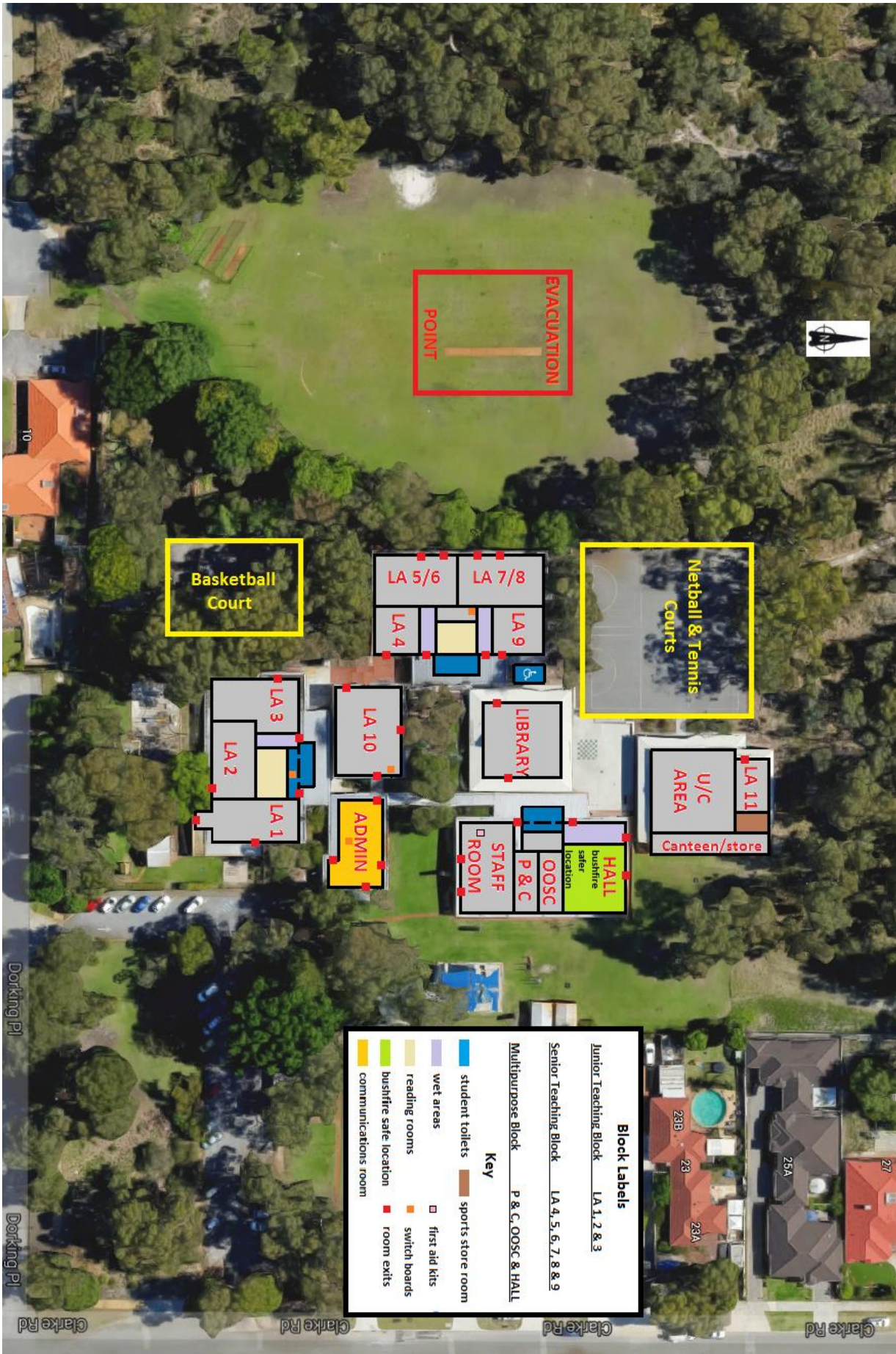
Appendix B: Catastrophic Event Flow Chart

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)

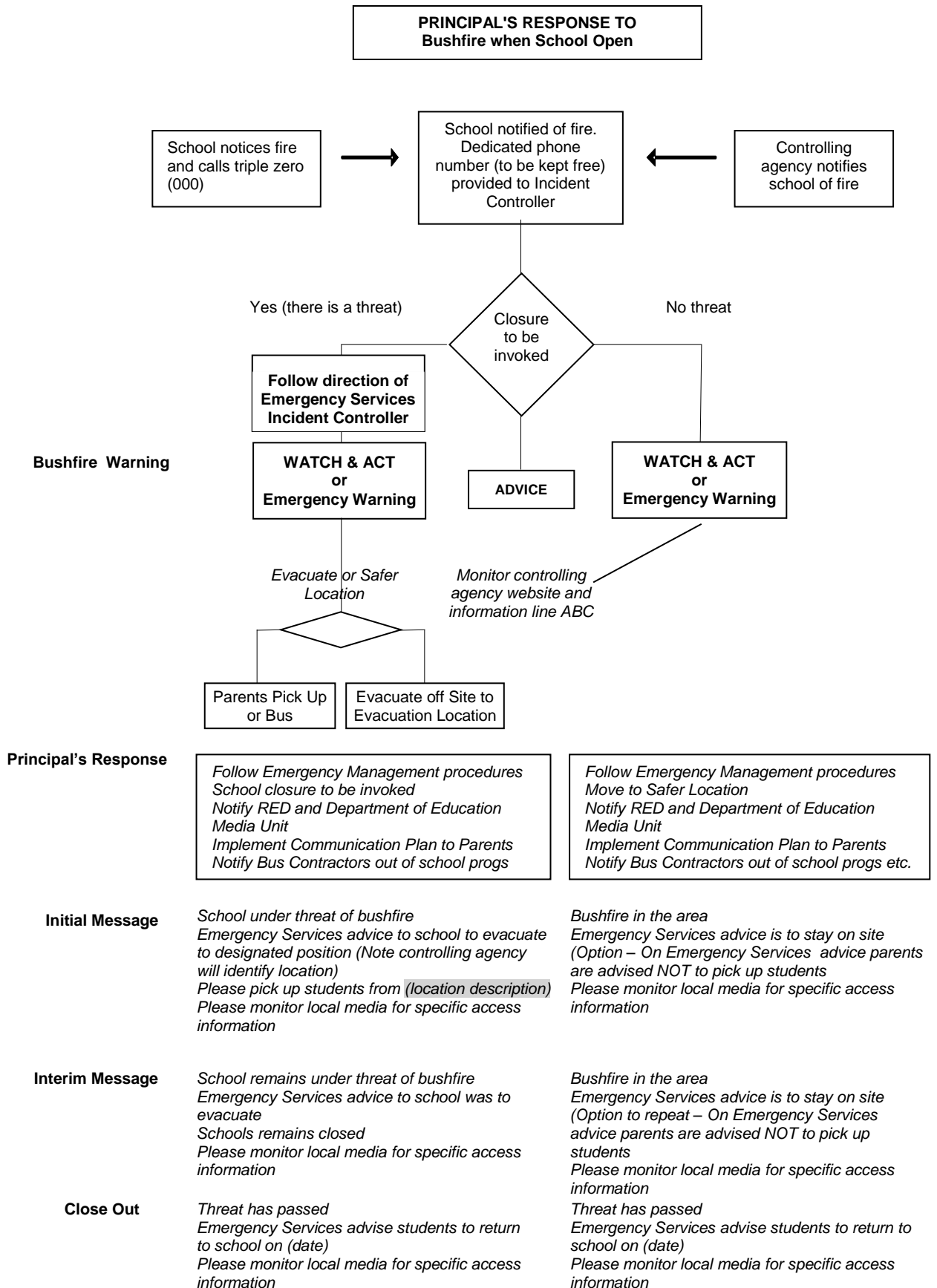
PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSE TO Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating



Appendix C: Sample School Site Plan and Evacuation Routes



Appendix D: Communication Plan



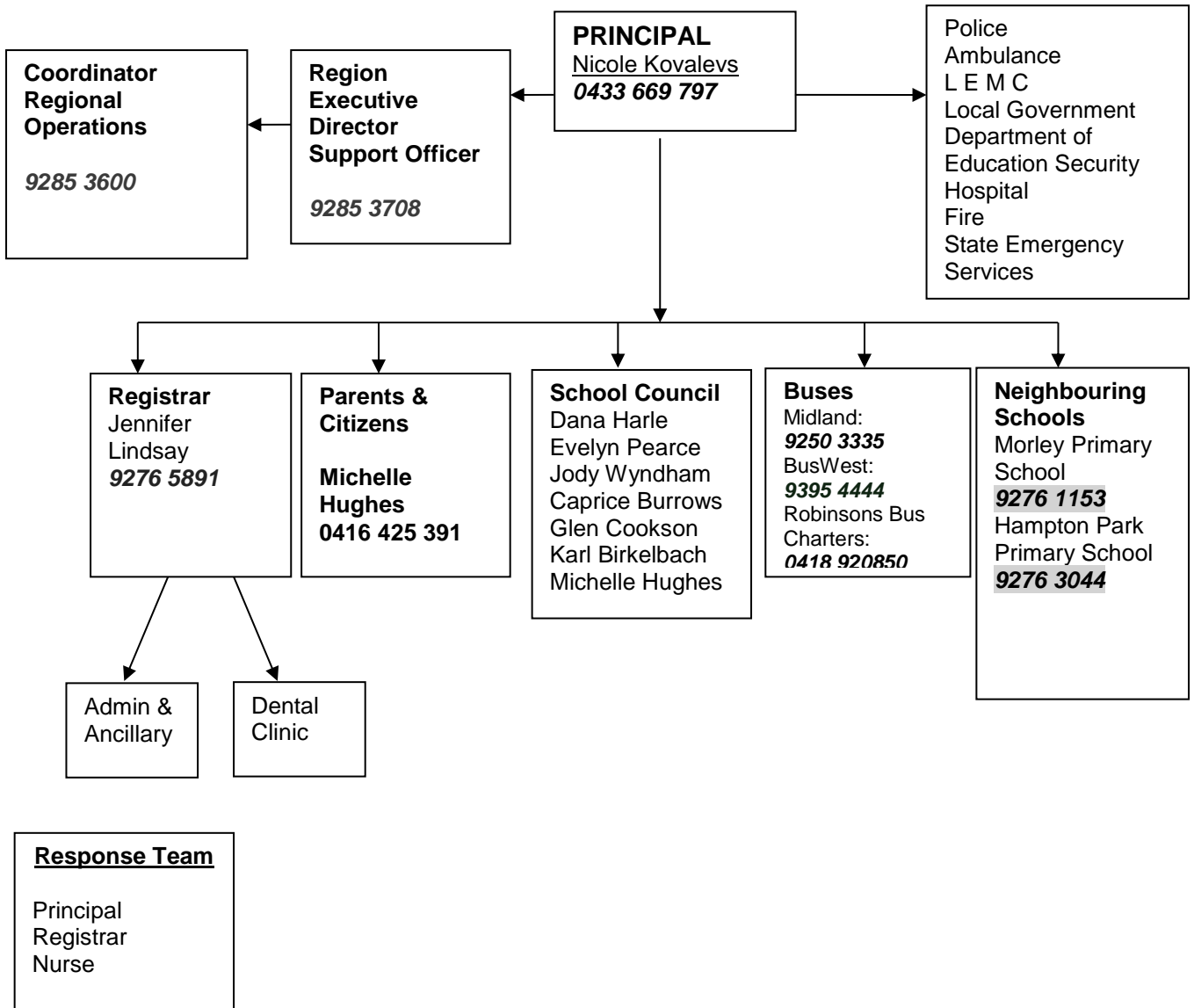
Appendix E: Emergency Response Contact List

 Assess
  Evacuate
  Inform
  Organise
  Undertake

EMERGENCY CONTACT & PHONE NUMBERS		ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
Police	Local: 131444	Evacuation: Principal	PA announcement, or, Continuous handbell/ Continuous siren
Ambulance / Hospital St John of God Local Ambulance	Local: 9370 9222	Checking Rooms	Manager of Corporate Services /Principal
Malaga Fire Department	9249 6444 SES Emergency assistance: 132 500	Marshalling Evacuation: oval Invacuation: classrooms	Teachers Teachers
Bus Contractors	Midland: 9250 3335 BusWest: 9395 4444 Robinsons Bus Charters: 0418 920850		
Power Outage (Horizon Power or Western Power)	Western Power emergency and outages: 131351	Trained FIRST AIDERS	Maria vanderLinden Maria Lomma Lee Francis
State Emergency Service	132 500	Communication	Principal /Registrar
Poisons Information	131 126	Next of Kin Notification	Principal (Police if death)
REGIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Name: James Webb	CRO: 9285 3600 Executive support officer: 9285 3708	Reporting and Review	Principal
PRINCIPAL	Nicole Kovalevs	9276 5891 mobile: 0433 669 797	
REGISTRAR (Manager of Corporate Services)	Jennifer Lindsay	9276 5891	

In the case of an EMERGENCY
Call
000

Appendix F: Communication Tree



AT THE END OF ANY INCIDENT A DEBRIEFING WILL OCCUR TO ALLOW ALL INFORMATION TO BE COLLECTED.

Contacts

Front Office: 9276 5891
Principal: Nicole Kovalevs 0433 669 797
Associate Principal: Maria van der Linden 0448 522 374
Manager of Corporate Services: Jennifer Lindsay
OSH representative: Karl Birkelbach 0434 936 696

Appendix G:

EVACUATION TO SAFER LOCATION PROCEDURE – Bushfire

Pre- Evacuation

“Watch and Act” announcement delivered over PA. “Watch and Act in place, teachers to proceed accordingly”. Teachers to remain with students in classrooms and ensure evacuation pack is at hand.

On ‘Watch and Act’ announcement, MCS to print emergency roles and collect visitors’ book.

Evacuation to Safer Location – The School Hall

If threat requires evacuation to Safer Location, the signal for evacuation will be given either verbally or by continuous ringing of the siren and hand and school bells.

Teachers will move calmly with their classes to the School Hall.

MCS will take visitors’ book and school roll to the School Hall.

Principal to take Evacuation Box to School Hall.

- To ensure that all areas in each block (classroom, storerooms and withdrawal areas) are cleared the following staff will check the blocks immediately after classes have safely exited their classrooms.

Multi-Purpose Block, LA 11 & Covered Assembly Area
Senior/Middle Block & LA10
Junior Block (including Pre Primary & Kindy)
Library Resource Centre
Administration Block & P.C. Room
Visitors to school (visitors book)

Principal
Associate Principal
Associate Principal
Manager of Corporate Services
Manager of Corporate Services
Manager of Corporate Services

<p>AT ALL TIMES, THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS, STAFF AND OTHER PERSONNEL ON THE PROPERTY IS PARAMOUNT AND SHOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED</p>

Appendix H:

BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

- Monitor Bushfire Warning System.
- **Admin to contact DFES.**
- **Admin to announce Watch and Act in Place, or signal evacuation.**
- Children to remain seated in classes. (If Watch and Act).
- Air conditioning to be turned off.
- Close doors, windows and roof vents.
- Teachers are to wait for these instructions and have Evacuation Pack at hand and wait for further advice from Zone Warden/Incident Manager (Principal or Delegate).
- **Be prepared for evacuation to 'Safer Place' (School Hall) if directed by Zone Warden.**
- **Incident Manager or delegate to contact North Metropolitan Regional Office.**
- **Follow instructions of the Incident Manager.**

Appendix I: ***Bushfire Zone Register Information for School Newsletter***

Bushfire Zone Register

The Department of Education is committed to maximising the safety of its students and staff. Weld Square Primary School has been added to the Bushfire Zone Register. Inclusion on this register means that the school may be required to invoke a pre-emptive closure on a day for which a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating (FDR) has been declared for the City of Bayswater. A Catastrophic FDR means that if a fire starts, it is likely to be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving.

What does this mean for our school?

When given advance warning by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) that a Catastrophic FDR has been forecast for a given day, the Deputy Director General, Schools may direct the pre-emptive closure of Weld Square Primary School. If the school receives such a direction, you will be informed of the possible planned closure by a letter sent home with your child. Parents of students absent on the day this letter is sent home will be contacted by telephone, so please ensure the school has up to date contact details for you.

In the intervening period between the declaration of the pre-emptive closure and the day of planned closure, DFES will keep the Department informed of any change to the FDR forecast for the declared day. The final decision to pre-emptively close the school will be confirmed with the principal no later than 4.30pm on the day before the planned closure. If the forecast changes after that deadline, the closure will stand, regardless of improvements to the weather conditions later in the afternoon of the day before the planned closure or overnight. The intention is to limit confusion or uncertainty for parents and to allow you ample time to make alternative child care arrangements. Parents will be advised of the confirmation of closure, or its reversal, by a note sent home with your child on the day before the planned closure. Again, parents of students absent on this day will be contacted by telephone.

How will I know when the school is reopening?

It is anticipated that the school will typically only be required to close for a single day at a time, but this will depend on the weather. If you are on the school's SMS register you will receive an SMS to advise you whether the school will reopen the day after the planned closure, or whether it will remain closed. The school website will contain a notice to advise you of the current status of the school closure and when it is expected to reopen.

I ask that you monitor local media for current information about fire danger ratings and notification of schools reopening. Staying tuned to ABC Local Radio in your locality is advisable. You can also check with DFES on 13 DFES (13 33 37) or www.dfes.wa.gov.au. Alternatively you can call me on **0431 011 963** or The Northern Metropolitan Education Regional Office on **9285 3708**. If any of the options listed above for finding out when to send your child back to school will prove problematic, please contact the school to arrange for us to phone you to advise you when the school will reopen.

Questions?

Please contact the school on **9276 5891** if you have any questions about planned closures during the bushfire season.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix J: ***Letter to Parents Advising of Pre-emptive Closure***

BUSHFIRE ALERT NOTIFICATION OF TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Dear Parent,

Based on advice from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), the Deputy Director General, Schools has directed the temporary closure of Weld Square Primary School, on [<insert day, date>](#), due to a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating (FDR) for the City of Bayswater. A Catastrophic FDR means that if a fire starts, it is likely to be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services will keep the Department of Education (the Department) informed of any change to the FDR forecast for [<insert date>](#). The final decision to pre-emptively close the school will be confirmed with me no later than 4.30pm on [<insert date of the day before the declared day>](#). If the forecast changes after that deadline, the closure will stand, regardless of improvements to the weather conditions on the afternoon of [<insert date of the day before the declared day>](#) or overnight. The intention is to limit confusion or uncertainty for parents and to allow you ample time to make alternative child care arrangements.

You will be advised of the confirmation of closure, or its reversal, by a note sent home with your child on [<insert day and date of the day before the planned closure>](#). If your child is absent on that day, the school will phone you to advise whether the closure will go ahead as planned. Please ensure that we have up to date phone contact details for you.

It is anticipated that the school will only be required to close for a single day at a time, but this will depend on the weather. If you are on the school's SMS register you will receive an SMS to advise you whether the school will reopen the day after the planned closure, or whether it will remain closed. The school website will contain a notice to advise you of the current status of the school closure and when it is expected to reopen.

I ask that you monitor local media for current information about fire danger ratings and notification of schools reopening. Staying tuned to ABC Local Radio in your locality is advisable. You can also check with DFES on 13 DFES (13 33 37) or www.dfes.wa.gov.au. Alternatively you can call me on **0431 011 963** or Northern Metropolitan Education Regional Office on **9285 3708**. If any of the options listed above for finding out when your child can return to school will prove problematic, please contact the school to arrange for us to phone you to advise you when the school will reopen. Children may experience some anxiety as a result of this closure. You are encouraged to reassure your children of the safe environment we will provide for them on their return. We will be taking measures, consistent with advice from DFES, to make the school safe before children return. While no formal education program is available during this time, children are encouraged to:

- continue unfinished work;
- undertake research;
- complete due assignments;
- review recent school work;
- play educational games; and
- read.

This precautionary measure will maximise children's safety.
Thank you for your cooperation.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix K: ***Planned Closure Notification for Staff – Memo***

BUSHFIRE ALERT

NOTIFICATION OF PLANNED TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

MEMO TO STAFF

Based on advice from DFES, the Deputy Director General, Schools has directed the temporary closure of Weld Square Primary School , on <insert day, date>, due to a Catastrophic Fire Danger rating (FDR) for the City of Bayswater. A catastrophic FDR means that if a fire starts, it is likely to be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving.

DFES will keep the Department of education informed of any change to the FDR forecast for <insert date>. The final decision to pre-emptively close the school will confirmed with me no later than 4:30pm on <insert date of the day before the declared day>. If the forecast changes after that deadline, the closure will be stand, regardless of improvements to the weather conditions on the day before the declared day or overnight. The intention is to limit confusion or uncertainty for parents and allow them ample time to make alternate child care arrangements.

You will be advised of the confirmation of closure, or its reversal, by me on <insert day and date of the day before the planned closure>. If you are absent on that day, the school will phone you to advise you as to whether the closure will go ahead as planned. Please ensure that we have up to date phone contact details for you.

It is anticipated that the school will only be required to close for a single day at a time, but this will depend on the weather. The school website will contain a notice to advise you of the current status of the school closure and when it is expected to reopen.

I ask that you monitor local media for current information about the fire danger ratings and notification of the schools reopening. Staying tuned to ABC Local Radio in your locality is advisable. You can also check with DFES on 13DFES (13 33 37) or www.dfes.wa.gov.au.

This precautionary measure will maximize staff and student safety.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix L: ***Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure***

Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure

Please be advised that as a result of a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating for <day, date>, it is planned to temporarily close this school on that day.

The final decision to close the school will be confirmed with the Principal no later than 4.30pm on <insert date of the day before the declared day>. If conditions have improved sufficiently by that time, the school will open as normal on <day, date>. If not, closure will go ahead.

For further information please contact the Principal on **0431 011 963** or the Northern Metropolitan Education Regional Office on **9285 3708**.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix M: ***Template Letter to Parents Confirming Pre-emptive Closure***

BUSHFIRE ALERT CONFIRMATION OF TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Dear Parent,

The planned pre-emptive closure of Weld Square Primary School on <insert day, date of planned closure> of which I advised you on <insert date that initial letter was sent> **will** go ahead as planned. The Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating for that day has not changed, so the safest option remains to close the school for the day.

It is anticipated that the school will only be required to close for the single day, but this will depend on the weather. If you are on the school's SMS register you will receive an SMS to advise parents of student absences: You will receive an SMS to advise you whether the school will reopen the day after the planned closure, or whether it will remain closed. The school website will contain a notice to advise you of the current status of the school closure and when it is expected to reopen.

I ask that you monitor local media for current information about fire danger ratings and notification of schools reopening. Staying tuned to ABC Local Radio in your locality is advisable. You can also check with DFES on 13 DFES (13 33 37) or www.dfes.wa.gov.au.

Alternatively you can call me on **0431 011 963** or the Northern Metropolitan Education Regional Office on **9285 3708**.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to make our school as safe as possible for your children.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix N: ***Template Letter to Parents Reversing Pre-emptive Closure***

BUSHFIRE ALERT REVERSAL OF TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Dear Parent,

The planned pre-emptive closure of Weld Square Primary School on <insert day, date of planned closure> of which I advised you on <insert date that initial letter was sent> will **not** go ahead. The Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating for that day has been downgraded. Accordingly, the school will open and operate as normal.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to make our school as safe as possible for your children.

Nicole Kovalevs
Principal

Appendix O: ***Bushfire Alert NOTICE OF TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE***

BUSHFIRE ALERT

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY SCHOOL CLOSURE

Please be advised that as a result of a Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating, this school has been temporarily closed.

The school will re-open on advice from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

If you have any further questions or concerns about the threat of bushfire, call 13 DFES (13 33 37), visit www.dfes.wa.gov.au or stay tuned to ABC Local Radio.

For further information please contact the Principal on **0431 011 963** or the Northern Metropolitan Education Regional Office on **9285 3708**.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Nicole KOVALEVS
Principal

Appendix P: **INFORMATION ABOUT BUSHFIRES**

Bushfire Hazard

Many schools in Western Australia are located in areas that may be impacted by a bushfire. The level of risk to which schools in these areas are exposed can vary considerably and is dependent on the bushfire hazard surrounding a school, and also on how well a school is prepared and able to act in a bushfire emergency.

Generally, only flammable vegetation covering an area greater than about 10 000 m² should be assessed. Isolated single trees and small groups of trees and shrubs would not normally be included in an assessment. However, if these add to the fire hazard in the general area, or if they are close to buildings, some work would be required to reduce the hazard. This can often be achieved through gardening or landscaping activities.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has grouped bushfire hazards into four levels. These are: Low, Medium, High and Extreme. These levels can also be used to determine the severity of bushfire hazards adjacent to schools, and within school grounds.

Low bushfire hazard areas

This typically includes urban and suburban areas with maintained gardens, parklands and street verges. These areas are generally devoid of native vegetation. Farm pasture and cropping areas would normally be included in this category. It should be noted that severe bushfires may still impact on schools which are located within low bushfire hazard areas.

Medium bushfire hazard areas

This level includes areas where standing native vegetation occupies no more than about 30% of the total vegetation spread across the area. Suburban areas with some native vegetation cover would also fall into this category. Shrub land and open heath on moderate slopes with a gradient of less than 10° are included in this category.

High bushfire hazard

Forested and well treed areas where the leaf litter and understorey has been reduced, as well as plantations, which are located on moderate slopes less than 10°, fall into this category. Shrub land and open heath on steeper slopes may also be included in this hazard category.

Extreme bushfire hazard

This category includes forests with a dense understorey, heavy leaf litter, as well as timber plantations where the fuel hazard has not been reduced. Hazard-reduced forests and plantations on slopes with a gradient greater than 10°, as well as dense heath and shrub land, are placed into this category.

How Bushfires Behave

All fires need fuel, air and heat to start and grow. Bushfires in particular behave in a number of ways depending on the amount of these elements, and most severe bushfire threats generally occur in summer when high temperatures, strong easterlies and lightning from thunderstorm activity combine.

Fuel

Vegetation around your school, such as dry grass, leaves, twigs and bark, provide fuel for a fire. This fuel plays a part in how hot a fire can be and how fast it can spread. If fuel is removed, the fire will starve.

Heat and radiant heat

Bushfires generate enormous heat. Much of this heat goes up into the air but significant heat also radiates at ground level. This radiant heat spreads the fire by drying out vegetation so it will burn. Radiant heat is the main cause of people dying in a bushfire. Radiant heat may not set fire to your school but it can crack and break windows that will allow embers in that can start fires inside school buildings.

Embers

Even if the fire front does not reach your school, it can still be damaged by burning embers carried by strong winds. Embers can get into your school through gaps in roofs, walls, evaporative air conditioners, windows and doors. They can land on materials that easily burn and this can start a fire. Research has shown that ember attack is the main reason that buildings catch fire during a bushfire. Embers can continue to threaten your school even after the fire front has passed.

Direct flame contact

When materials close to your school catch fire, flames can touch the outside of your school buildings. How long flames are in direct contact with school buildings depends on the amount of fuel to be burnt.

Oxygen

Bushfires need oxygen in the air to keep going and the more there is, the faster the fire burns. Strong winds not only force the fire along but also increase air circulation and provide more air. Any change in wind direction or speed can rapidly increase the rate of spread and the direction of the fire.

Wind

Strong winds usually come with bushfires and as the wind increases so does the fire's temperature. The wind pushes flames closer to fuel making the fire travel faster. Embers and other burning materials are also carried by the wind which can damage buildings kilometres from the fire front.

Fire spread

Fires usually spread faster in grassland than in forests, because winds are stronger and the fuels are less dense. Bushfires will move faster when travelling uphill. The speed of a fire front advancing will double with every 10° increase in slope. On a 20° slope, bushfire speed is four times faster than flat ground. Buildings located on tops of hills or ridges are particularly vulnerable to fires burning in a valley below.