

Topic: CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY -

(crisis, evacuation/emergency, bush fire)

Policy No: D2 and D3

Policy Area: COMMUNITY

Originally Released: 2006

Date for Review and Reformatting: 2014

Date for Review: 2015

Principal: Mrs Kerrie Merritt

1. RATIONALE

1.1 Catholic schools have a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive environment for staff, students and members of the community. Every aspect of the school's life should reflect a Christian pastoral dimension. The pastoral dimension of a Catholic school needs to include the mutual care and support staff demonstrate both towards each other and for their students. (Mandate, paras 1 and 3).

1.2 Learning outcomes for students and the wellbeing of students, staff and community members can be adversely affected by crisis events. Appropriate planning and intervention can reduce the likelihood of such events and mitigate the impact should a crisis occur.

2. DEFINITION

2.1 Events that cause severe emotional and social distress may occur at any time and without warning. Such occurrences have been variously called Traumatic Incidents, Critical Incidents, Crises, Disasters and Emergencies.

2.2 Brock (2002) defines crises as 'Sudden, uncontrollable and extremely negative events that have the potential to impact an entire school community'.

2.3 Flannery and Everly (2000) describe a crisis as a response condition and the precipitating event, the stimulus, as a critical incident.

2.4 In schools, a crisis might be considered as any situation faced by staff or students that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions. These may have the potential to interfere with their ability to perform at the scene or later. Crises tend to be far outside of the normal experience of those involved and indeed of most of the population. Accordingly, the individual has little by way of guidelines from past experience on how to deal with the event or the reactions to it.

2.5 Students have even less experience to draw on than adults and usually have a more restricted repertoire of coping responses. Sense of control and self-efficacy are likely to be reduced. Students are likely to be looking to those adults who usually provide support, guidance, direction and leadership to continue to fulfil these roles.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Catholic schools in Western Australia.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 Catholic schools owe a duty of care to their students, staff and others who may visit the school or be involved in school activities.

4.2 Catholic schools take actions to:

- prevent crises or reduce the chance of these occurring and, where these may still occur, acting to mitigate the impact
- prepare for crisis events by appropriate planning, training and education
- respond with a rapid, organised and effective implementation of actions and mobilisation of resources
- facilitate recovery by recognising that this is founded within the Planning, Preparation and Response elements (as described in the previous three bullet points) and by providing appropriate levels of support to the school community

4.3 Establishing an effective Crisis Management Plan requires a whole school community approach that is consistent with the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia's Pastoral Care Framework, the school's Pastoral Care practices and the school's plans for more routine kinds of emergencies such as fire evacuation.

4.4 The response to particular kinds of crises, such as suicide, may increase the risk of imitative behaviour and require an approach which is different to that needed in other kinds of crises. Appropriate actions can reduce risk and have a protective influence.

4.5 The involvement and support of any bereaved parents/caregivers/family and other parents/caregivers who are closely involved are particularly important when putting in place support and recovery processes within the school.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 A.C.P.S has developed a school-based Crisis Management Plan based on the Prevention, Preparation, Response, Recovery (PPRR) model. Alternatively, another similar, comprehensive approach may be followed as approved by the Team Leader, Psychology.

5.2 The Crisis Management Plan shall be informed by a comprehensive safety audit and assessment of vulnerabilities that might precipitate a crisis. This will take place in conjunction with the OHS officer, Mrs Denise Teasdale

5.3 The Crisis Management Plan shall include statements defining the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school's Crisis Management Team, give indication of the kind of crisis the school might face and give broad information on the supports that might be available to aid recovery. Additionally, all staff members shall be made aware of their own responsibilities in crisis situations, where there is potential criminal activity Mandatory Reporting applies.

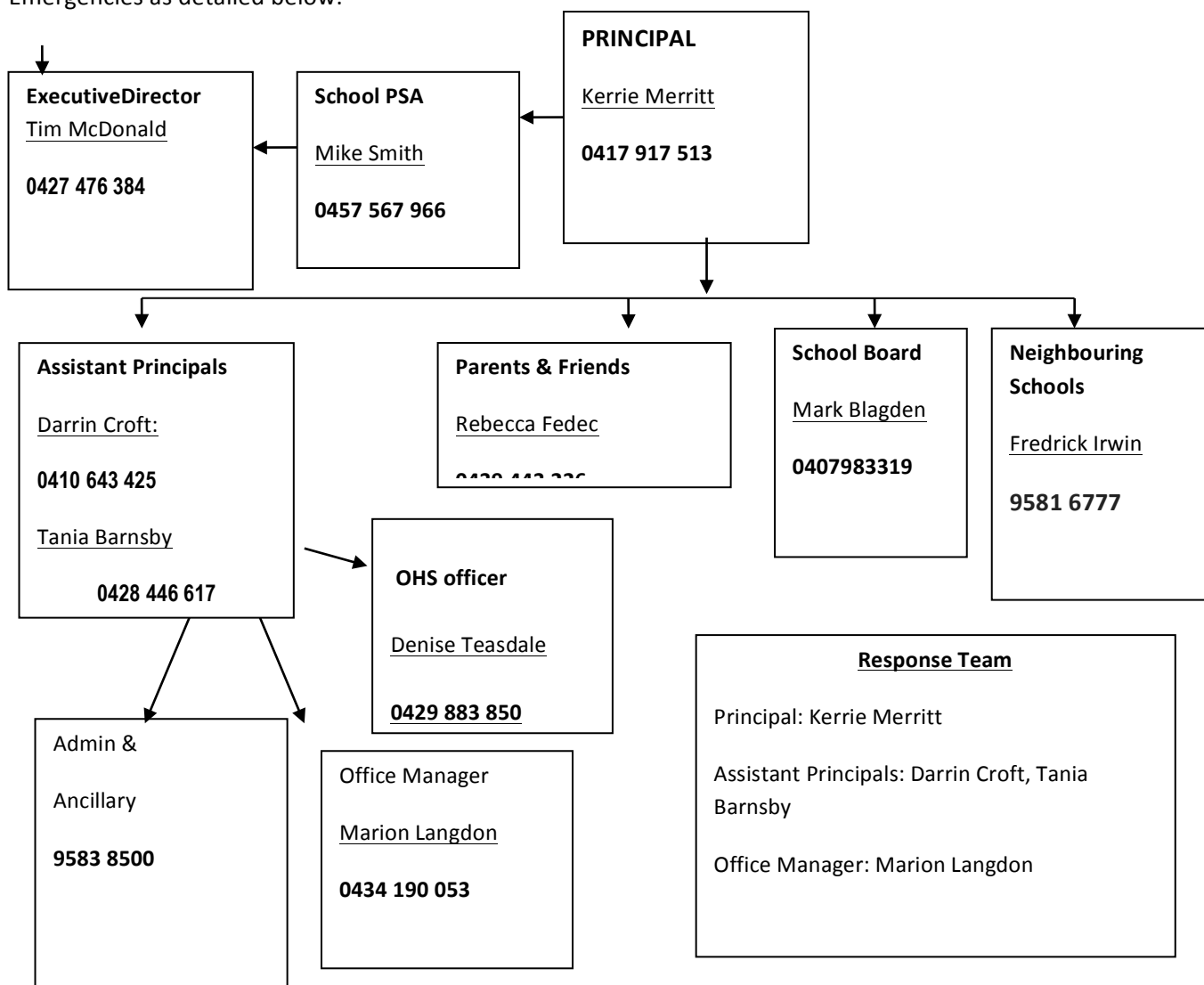
5.4 Schools in areas vulnerable to Bushfire or Catastrophic Weather conditions shall ensure appropriate attention is given to timely evacuation procedures. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES, formerly FESA, The Fire and Emergency Services Authority of WA) –

Prepare, Act, Survive; Planning for Bushfire Protection Guidelines; Bushfire Survival Plan; and, Bushfire Factsheets and the Department of Education’s The Principal’s Guide to Bushfire are recommended for consideration in planning.

5.5 The Crisis Management Plan shall be developed using a broad, consultative, participative and educative process involving students, staff and parents whenever possible and appropriate.

5.6 The completed Plan shall refer to any other relevant policies or procedures and shall be disseminated and promoted to the school community.

5.7 The Crisis management plan is drawn down into specific emergency situations, all with specific needs and procedures. The Principal will follow the communication procedures relevant to all Emergencies as detailed below:



6. REVIEW HISTORY

Year of Review	Reviewed by	Amendments/Review
2009	Administration	
2014	Assistant Principal	reformatted

7. NEXT REVIEW

Year	Responsibility
2015	Administration team



CRISIS PLAN – ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. RATIONALE

1.1 This plan is for implementation in the event of a critical incident, which affects members of the Assumption Catholic Primary School community.

1.2 These events can impact considerably on the psychological well-being of students, staff and families having an adverse influence in areas such as learning, occupational performance and family interactions. Assumption Catholic Primary School is concerned to reduce the traumatic effects of emergency situations both in the short and longer terms, and shall ensure that adequate and appropriate measures are in place to manage the response to traumatic events, or emergency situations.

2. CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

2.1 The Crisis Management Team

Principal – Convenor
Assistant Principals
Parish Priest
School Counsellor
Administration Team
Senior Staff Members

The management of activities of the committee will always be handled by the Principal. All members of the Crisis Intervention committee will have a list of all staff phone numbers. See appendix (ii) for phone tree contacts

2.2 Crisis Management Contact Numbers

Person	Position	Number
Tim MacDonald	CEO Director	0427 476 384
Mike Smith	Bunbury PSA	0457 567 966
Ambulance		000
Fire Brigade		000
Police	Mandurah	9531 8888
CEO	CEO Psych Coordinator	6380 5256
	NGSPS	6212 6206
Father Shemil	Parish Priest	9581 2061
Father Xavier	Associate Parish Priest	
Mandatory Reporting		1800 708 704

3. DEFINITIONS

3.0 The following are Crisis situations that could arise:

3.1 Students

- Attempted suicide
- Completed suicide

- Child abuse
- Accidental death
- Death from illness
- Abduction

3.2 Family

- Death of a Parent
- Death of a sibling

3.3 Staff

- Death

3.4 Emergency Situations (Treated separately under Emergency Evacuation Plan)

- Bomb threat
- Evacuation
- Lock down
- Fire
- Natural disaster
- Chemical spills
- Gas leak
- Car accident in or near school

4. ACTION PLAN

4.1 The following points are not meant to be a comprehensive list of procedures but rather a quick reference for key personnel in planning to meet the immediate and long term welfare needs of students, staff and others affected by the incident. The Principal is the key authority in all instances.

4.2 RESPONSE

4.2.1 Principal (or appointee)

- Oversee the implementation of the Crisis Management Plan
- Set up a recovery room
- Establish facts of situation
- Consult with the Parish Priest on overall situation/approach
- Inform Catholic Education Office
- Inform School Board contact
- Contact the family
- Offer family assistance
- If necessary handle media enquiries. See appendix (iii)
- Keep students and staff up to date with new information
- Inform parents of the incident through appropriate means

4.2.2 Phase 1 – Initial Response (Relevant to all Crisis response and enacted on as deemed appropriate by Principal or delegate)

- Inform Administration as soon as crisis occurs – staff nearest to the crises centre to inform office
- Inform the Principal
- Contact emergency service required – phone call (office staff)
- Initial response – siren, bell
- Inform staff (Principal/office staff)
- If power is on – office staff will alert people over the PA
- Principal or Teacher Assistant staff to scan buildings to alert all personnel of the type of threat/dangers
- Everyone is to follow the evacuation procedures.

NOTE - THE SAFETY OF THE STUDENTS IN YOUR CARE MUST BE GIVEN THE FIRST PRIORITY IN EVERY INSTANCE.

4.2.3 Phase 2 - Principal's Response

- Record events
- Oversee emergency procedures

Collect the following:

- What happened when?
- Who was involved?
- Who was directly at the scene?
- Who witnessed the event and what did they see?
- Are there siblings at the school?
- What has been done so far?
- Is anyone in hospital, if so, who?
- Has there been any police involvement, if so, what is the name of the attending officer?
- Have other agencies been involved?
- Have neighbouring schools been notified?

4.3 RECOVERY

Ensure that it is safe to return to school. If not, arrangements need to be made. Review procedure.

4.3.1 Phase 3 - Monitoring

- Contact the hospital for up to date information
- Monitor school community reactions and provide support
- Monitor and support those in care-giving roles
- Decide which agencies to work with
- Liaise with outside agencies
- Communication with the media – if required (through contact)
- Set a time for key people to review the response so far
- Plan a Liturgy/Mass

5. LONGER TERM MONITORING

- Monitor staff for signs of stress
- Assist by:
 - Encouraging staff to seek professional help
 - Providing a supportive environment
 - Offer increased teacher relief time
- Establish procedures for ensuring continuity or monitoring long term effects despite staff changes in school.
- Be alert for and sensitive to the disturbing influences of anniversaries, inquests, and legal procedures.

Schools have a responsibility to be sensitive to and manage the reactions of students and teachers after an incident through direct support programs mounted within the school or in cooperation with community agencies.

If response to incidents is of a rapid and organised psychological intervention, it can lessen the time lost in recovery from the physical and emotional impact of the event and restore people to productive lives.

It is important to note: the nature of any intervention by the school personnel and the extent to which responsibility for mounting programs is shared with local agencies will be determined largely by the type of crisis and the degree to which the school community is affected.

6. GUIDELINES FOR STAFF SUPPORT OF STUDENTS

- Be aware of how the event is affecting you and consider how your reactions may affect your dealing with students.
- Read the preliminary statement of what has happened to students and clear up any misinformation. To avoid rumours give information in a clear, factual way.
- Avoid speculation and glorification, particularly in the case of suspected suicide. It would be best to refrain from commenting on the individual's good qualities, what courage they must have had, how much they will be missed, why it happened etc.
- Try to use phrases such as the following when talking to students
 - It's OK to feel shocked and helpless now
 - You must be finding it really hard to believe
 - We all feel the shock of something like this
 - The thoughts will keep coming back at times
 - If you want to talk to someone the counsellors are available
- Try to avoid phrases like
 - Do something to take your mind off it
 - You'll feel better about it tomorrow
 - Try not to be so emotional about it
- Tell the class it is not helpful to discuss the issue endlessly and widely or make a sensation out of it. Also let the class know not to talk to the media out of respect for the families involved.
- Allow students to express how they feel. Be prepared to listen and reflect feelings and try not to judge the person or their reaction
- Be careful not to speak about things you don't know or, if the event was a result of a person's actions, avoid getting involved in discussions of blame.
- It is helpful to label children's reactions as normal GRIEF. Remind students that certain responses can be expected from a grieving situation. They are natural and should be accommodated with sensitivity (eg anger, tears)

- Grieving generally involves a number of the following phases:
 - A period of unreality
 - Feelings of intense sadness
 - Feelings of anger
 - Guilt

These do not last for any predictable period or occur in a fixed order.

- Assess students who you feel need to be referred to a counsellor
- Take care of yourself

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN – ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY



1. RATIONALE

While experiencing or witnessing highly traumatic events is still uncommon, it is clear that the frequency of such events is growing. Consequently, the risks faced by students, staff and the broader school community are also growing. Such events can impact considerably on the psychological well-being of students, staff and families having an adverse influence in areas such as learning, occupational performance and family interactions. Assumption Catholic Primary School is concerned to reduce the traumatic effects of emergency situations both in the short and longer terms, and shall ensure that adequate and appropriate measures are in place to manage the response to traumatic events, or emergency situations.

2. PRINCIPLES.

2.1 Assumption Catholic Primary School shall establish a comprehensive and integrated Emergency Management Manual and ensure that this is communicated to the whole school community.

2.2 Assumption Catholic Primary School shall ensure that there are appropriate organisational systems to allow prompt and effective response to an emergency situation.

2.3. Assumption Catholic Primary School shall establish and maintain liaison with appropriate community organisations (e.g. Police, FESA, hospital, counselling services etc.) that may be involved in a response to an emergency situation.

2.4 .Assumption Catholic Primary School shall ensure that a comprehensive training program is in place for all staff, particularly those in leadership roles.

2.5. Assumption Catholic Primary School shall ensure that all students, staff and families have appropriate support, counselling and debriefing programs available to them should an emergency occur in the context of school activities or where such event has significant impact upon the Assumption Catholic Primary School community.

2.6. Assumption Catholic Primary School shall establish an Emergency Management Team under the leadership of the Principal.

2.7. Assumption Catholic Primary School shall ensure that the development of an Emergency Management Manual (EMM) follows a participative and consultative approach and addresses the four primary aspects of Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery.

2.8. Assumption Catholic Primary School shall ensure the appropriate evaluation of the response to any emergency; regular review and maintenance of the Emergency Management Manual (at least annually); induction of new staff to procedures; relief staff to evacuation, lockdown, and drop and tuck procedures; and shall maintain an ongoing commitment to remaining aware of current research and developments in this area.

2.9. One copy of the EMM is to be located in the Principal's office. A second copy is to be available in the Administration Office and available to staff. EMT members may have their own copy of the EAM.

3. MEDIA

3.1 Assumption Catholic Primary School staff shall not release any information to family or the public unless authorised to do so by the Principal/EMTL

3.2 The Principal/EMTL is the only person authorised to act as MLO, unless the role is delegated to another EMT member by the leader.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Each classroom will have a "working copy", i.e. relevant pages from the EMM, readily accessible to the teacher. Similarly "working copies" are to be located in accessible positions in all buildings, i.e. library, staff room, community centre, administration block, gymnasium, canteen etc.

4.2 Neither the Principal, nor the teaching and the administrative staff, nor Assumption Catholic Primary School community can rely on a random response to an emergency. Well-rehearsed contingency plans must be in place. In an emergency these plans must produce specific, immediate and automatic reactions. Those reactions must be instilled through frequent training and drill rehearsal, and must be so well understood that they permit instantaneous flexibility without sacrificing the essentials.

With this in mind, at the earliest opportunity following the commencement of school year, staff will receive refresher training in the school Emergency Management Manual (EMM).

During the course of the year;

1. New staff will be inducted in Assumption Catholic Primary School EMM, to insure they are familiar with procedures and responsibilities.
2. Students will be drilled in the protective "Drop and Tuck" position, i.e. kneeling head down with hands covering head.
3. Students will be instructed in safety procedures. They will be shown both the safe areas with-in each building, and the evacuation "mustering" areas.
4. Students will be instructed in the basic emergency hand signals, (refer page 74).
5. School evacuation exercise will be conducted twice yearly, as determined by the Principal.
6. A full-scale emergency exercise will be carried out bi-annually, to assess the effectiveness the procedures. After the exercise the Emergency Management Team (EMT) will conduct a thorough evaluation.

If required, the Principal will select staff to receive either first aid training, or Critical Incident Stress Debriefing /training.

4.3 The EMT will receive additional training to enable the members to fulfil their function. The training will address, procedures, specific roles and any skills required to carry out tasks more effectively.

5. VISITORS POLICY

All visitors to Assumption Catholic Primary School premises are required to sign in and wear a visitor's pass for the duration of their stay.

Visitors are required to

1. Report to the office before going elsewhere in the building or Assumption Catholic Primary School grounds.
2. Indicate the reason for their visit,
3. Sign a visitor registration book and obtain a numbered visitor pass.

6.CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

6.1. Catholic Education Office (CEO)

The **CEO** Critical Incident Management Team **CIMT** representative will be notified of an emergency. The **C1MT** will provide assistance to Assumption Catholic Primary School in accordance with its own policy and procedures.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (as displayed in classrooms and Emergency management Folder)

OBJECTIVE: The main concern of each class room teacher is the safety of their children. **These procedures are for any situation requiring buildings to be evacuated, i.e. fire, bomb threat, damage etc.** Therefore should there be cause to evacuate the premises, the following procedures will be followed. All school personnel will follow the same procedures. This includes canteen, maintenance/grounds and office staff.

These procedures are by no means in order of priority. It is expected that each individual staff member will realise their particular area of importance and plan accordingly.

All relief staff must be made aware of these procedures when employed on any given day.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

If the need for an evacuation arises the Principal, or a member of the school Leadership team, will raise the alarm and call the necessary emergency procedure. If the school Leadership team is not on site, the role will fall with staff entrusted with authority on that particular occasion.

Warning will be given as follows dependent on circumstance:

- a. The school siren will sound.**
- b. Classes will be informed via classroom intercom.**
- c. In the case of power outage the school hand bell will be rung continuously by member of Leadership team.**

GENERAL RULES FOR EVACUATION

ALL STAFF TO WEAR HIGH VISIBILITY VESTS (IF POSSIBLE)

LEADERSHIP TEAM

1. Principal to raise evacuation alarm.
2. Principal to contact Police, Ambulance, or FESA using 000.
3. Instruct Administration team to convene Emergency Management procedures immediately.
4. Assistant Principal (Logistics) will check Presentation Centre buildings then move to scene and assume role of Vicinity/Records Officer.
5. Assistant Principal (Learning) will check Junior primary building, Pre-Primary, Kindergarten and Junior toilets. If the need arises, the Assistant Principal's year level teaching partner will be responsible for taking his/her class onto the school oval.
6. Principal will check the Senior primary building, Senior toilets and Library.
7. Principal to work with the Leadership team and convene Emergency Management checklist.

LOCKDOWN (Staff to check current Staff Handbook for updated procedures)

Warning will be given by either a message over the classroom intercom announcing "lockdown procedure", the continuous sounding of the alarm or by a coded message over the intercom (if confidentiality is required). These are dependent on level of concern.

- I. Teachers are to gather children in class room, lock doors and draw blinds. Inform students there is an emergency, and advise them it is "unknown" but there is a need to move to "lockdown procedure."
- II. Instruct students to drop, tuck and hide under desks if required. Under no circumstance are children/staff to move outside until the all clear is given.
- III. Students in specialist classes are to move to the nearest building/classroom or a pre-determined location point that specialist staff are aware of, in the case of severe lockdown.(Check handbook)

- IV. Common areas such as Staffroom, Presentation Centre, Junior/Senior corridor/ Support room are to be locked by staff present in these areas.
- V. The Leadership team or Administration staff is to contact emergency services (if need be) asking for immediate assistance. Assistant Principals will check toilets and move students to safety if need be.

FIRE

If a fire is noticed, alert others in the immediate area then evacuate the building. Carefully feel any door handle to see if it is hot. If not, proceed in this direction. If the handle is hot, quickly find an alternate route

EARTHQUAKE

Wait until the tremor ceases, then evacuate buildings as per procedure

BOMB EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Should a suspicious object be found, the following procedures apply

1. Do not touch.
2. Clear people away from the immediate area, change evacuation route.
3. Secure the area.
4. Inform Principal/Assistant Principals
5. Evacuate buildings as per procedure

TEACHING STAFF

1. Teachers need to collect attendance Register/Emergency Response folder in order to check children once they are on the school oval.
2. Teachers with children (teachers leave last), will vacate the room in an orderly manner and follow the shortest route to the school large oval.
3. Teachers will ensure that everyone is out of the room and then close the classroom door.
3. Class teachers must ensure evacuation route is safe and free of suspicious objects.
4. Assembly order on large oval will start Three Year Old Kindergarten at the Gordon Road goal posts. (See diagram)
5. When clear of danger, teachers call the roll and ascertain absences.
6. Report anyone not accounted for to the Records Officer (AP Logistics) /Principal immediately. On no account is the teacher to leave the children in his/her care and return to the school looking for missing children. The Principal/Assistant Principals will do this.
7. It is the responsibility of the teachers conducting Library, LOTE, Art, Music, Physical Education, Support and Science or any other planned activities to follow the same procedure as above and to take the children in their care to the large oval. Specialist teachers must take the children to the school oval and the class teacher will collect the Emergency Response folder should it be safe to do so.
8. Teachers with classes outside must go immediately to the school oval.
9. Complete Emergency Management checklist.

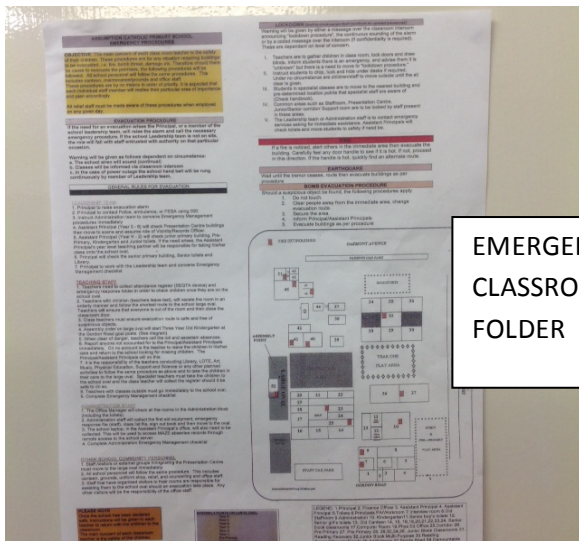
ADMINISTRATION STAFF

1. The Office Manager will check all the rooms in the Administration block (including the toilets).

- Administration staff will collect the first aid equipment, emergency response file (staff), class list file, sign out book and then move to the oval.
- The school laptop, in the Assistant Principal's office, will also need to be collected. This will be used to access MAZE absentee records through remote access to the school server.
- Complete Administration Emergency Management checklist

OTHER SCHOOL COMMUNITY PERSONNEL

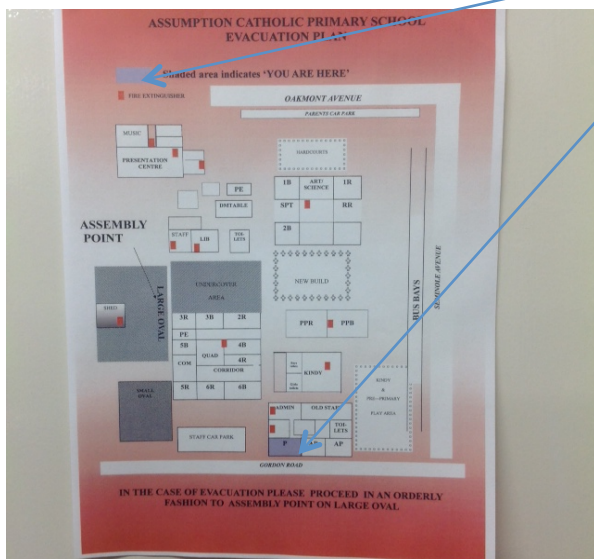
- Staff /visitors or external groups hiring/using the Presentation Centre must move to the large oval immediately.
- All school personnel will follow the same procedure. This includes canteen, grounds, uniform shop, relief, counselling and office staff.



3. Staff that have organised visitors to their rooms are responsible for assisting them to the school oval should an evacuation take place. Any other visitors will be the responsibility of the office staff.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN DISPLAYED IN CLASSROOMS AND IN STAFF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOLDER

SHADED AREA INDICATING 'YOU ARE HERE'



BUSHFIRE PLAN – ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Introduction

This plan is for the Assumption Catholic School and has been designed to assist staff in the event of 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.

This sample plan is designed as a guide only with a view to achieving consistency across the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA). It is not going to be suitable for all schools due to their unique situation, such as size, location and design.

Overview

GENERAL INFORMATION This Bushfire Plan (BP) has been developed during Term Three after consultation with:

- families of students attending the School
- members of the emergency services (e.g. DFES, Local Emergency Management Committee and/or Community Emergency Services Manager)

The BP is to be reviewed annually during Term Three each year to reflect any changes that may have taken place in:

- Department of Education or government policy
- site facilities
- Personnel normally on site.

The BP outlines required actions to prepare the school before the bushfire season as per the *Principal's Guide To Bushfire*. (refer Appendix 1)

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

- on days of Total Fire Ban
- Catastrophic 'Code Red'
- when there is a fire in the local district
- when a bushfire is threatening or impacting on the site
- 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.

- It has been prepared for a bushfire emergency and will safely accommodate all persons normally at the school.

The Principal will forward a copy of the site BP to the CEOWA.

The Principal will include bushfire season reminders and information in site newsletters at least three

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 response plan. It is also necessary to ensure that relief staff and parents have been made aware of the school's bushfire plan. Suggested draft text for the school newsletter is available in the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire (Appendix A6)*
- 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.
- Communication plans (including emergency contacts and a telephone tree) need to be in place for evacuation or planned closure. See *Appendix 4 for a Communication Plan, Appendix 5 for Sample Emergency Contacts and Appendix 6 for a 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.
- Arrangements are in place in relation to school buses if appropriate (notification of contractors if pre-emptive closure is invoked; the availability of buses if off-site evacuation is required).

Pre-emptive Closure

- The DOE 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 using emergency contacts and the telephone tree of closure. See also the draft letter to parents in the *Principal's Guide to Bushfires advising of pre-emptive Closure (Appendix A7)*, being mindful of parent's 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 Principal Schools Advisor.
- The school will contact parents via phone or email.
- The school will notify bus contractors and out of school programs.
- The school has landlines and one school mobile phone (**089583 8500**) Leadership team has mobile facilities. It would be preferable that parents restrict calling the school at this time to emergency calls only.
- The official broadcaster of Emergency Events is ABC radio. Our local station is ABC local radio. They will provide up to date information during a bushfire event in our area.
- The DFES website provides up to date information on fire events. Refer to <http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/> .

NOTE: DFES are introducing 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 the CEOWA personnel including any media communications. Staff should not comment directly to media.

Reopening the School

- The Principal Schools Advisor 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 Bushfires 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. Bus Contractors, 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 **Bushfire Plan** will be activated.

1. Total Fire Ban

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

This means:

- you must not light or use any fires in the open air;
- all open fires for the purpose of cooking or camping are not allowed;
- 'hot work' such as metal work, grinding, welding, soldering, gas cutting or similar is not allowed unless you have an exemption; and
- You must not undertake any other activities that may start a fire.

The DFES 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 there 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 you are 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 you want 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 **Bushfire Plan** will be invoked as per the flow chart at Appendix 2 (refer to *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* for all procedures and sample letters).

2.1 Planned Pre-emptive Closure

The CEOWA 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 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 DEFS 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 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 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 **Bushfire Plan** will be invoked by way of the school siren (or hand held siren) (**add your school's site specific alert tone**).

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.

3.1.1 Advice

If the school is likely to be threatened by the fire, activate the Emergency Management Plan immediately. Notify DFES Communication Centre of your decision and relocation point.

An **ADVICE** provides you with information on a bushfire that is not threatening lives or property but may be causing smoke near the school. Turn off evaporative air conditioners. Regular checks of the school are to be undertaken paying 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 the school. The Principal's decision to leave or relocate students, staff and visitors off site should be based upon assessment of known information and current circumstances, including advice from emergency services or observations at the time of the event.

3.1.3 Emergency Warning

An **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level of warning and tells you of 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 School should activate their Bushfire Plan in regards to evacuation. Consideration will include; location of fire and ability to travel safely to the selected relocation point, notify DFES Communication Centre of your decision and relocation point. The Principal is to liaise with the Regional Executive Director. **If it is not safe to evacuate, direct all students, staff and visitors to the school's Safer Location.**

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 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, 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 Incident Controller.

3.2.1.2 Safer Location Procedure – if evacuation is not possible

School to remain on site on advice from DFES.

- All classes remain with their teachers and allocated education assistants.
- All classes in transportable buildings to be relocated to **(add name of safer location within school)**. See Appendix 3 for a sample safer location evacuation plan.
- 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 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 the 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 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 DOE 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 using the emergency contact list (see Appendix 4 for a Sample Communication Plan) of Closure.

The CEOWA Incident Controller will, in consultation with the 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 CEOWA's Incident Controller in consultation with DFES will inform the 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

1. Health and Safety of individuals;
2. Social Recovery;
3. Physical (Structural) Recovery.

General

- When possible, return to normal routine.
- 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 replacement/replenishment.
- Address any physical damage to the school, isolating areas if required and if necessary relocate to alternative accommodation. Contact the Resources Team at the CEOWA to commence repairs. The CEOWA should be advised of any damage caused by the bushfire.
- Manage Administrative details including insurance.


Debrief

- What worked, what didn't?
- Was anything overlooked?
- What could you 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*

APPENDICIES

1. 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

The School <i>Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan</i> includes a plan for dealing with bushfires. Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register must also have a separate stand-alone bushfire plan.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students, staff, relief staff and parents/carers have been made aware of the school bushfire plan. The bushfire plan must be reviewed prior to each bushfire season (Term 3) and a copy forwarded to your education regional office. 	
If school is on the Bushfire Zone Register, the principal (or a nominated staff member) has established contact with emergency services, including DFES, the local volunteer fire brigade, WA Police, your Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) or Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) and incorporated their feedback into the plans (as required) .	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Emergency Alert warning system (www.emergencyalert.gov.au/) Emergency Services must be informed of your nominated Safer Location as part of your <i>Emergency Critical Incident Management Plan procedures</i>. 	
Schools on the Bushfire Zone Register need to incorporate key bushfire messages in their curriculum.	
Evaporative air conditioners – awareness of location of the switches and how to switch off the units.	
Communication plans (include telephone tree – see Appendix D1) are in place for evacuation or planned closure.	
Practice evacuation drills prior to October and at least once per term during the bushfire season, October to March. Note this is a minimum three drills per year.	
School has a correctly functioning emergency warning or alert system.	
Emergency communications equipment is available e.g. mobile telephones, hand-operated fire alarm (portable siren), portable radios and spare batteries.	
Class rolls and visitor register (or equivalent) are readily accessible in an emergency to account for students, staff and visitors.	
First aid equipment is available and staff members trained in first aid have been identified.	
Evacuation kit should be checked at least once per term.	
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)	
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.	
A Safer Location within the school building should be identified and prepared in the event that an off-site evacuation is not possible (Refer page 4).	
BPZ (20 metre radius), cleared of all rubbish, long dry grass, bark and flammable materials.	