



*"In All Things Love"*

# St Joseph's School Port Lincoln

## Bushfire Procedures



*Educating in faith, hope and love.*

**AIM:**

The aim of this Procedure is:

- To identify that the Principal and/or Leadership Team is/are responsible for giving directions in the event of a Catastrophic Bushfire
- To identify what actions are expected of staff, students, parents, caregivers, school visitors and Parish staff and members in the event of a bushfire occurring within 10-20 kilometres of Port Lincoln

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

- This Procedure has been written using information provided by the South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) and has been approved by the St Joseph's School Board
- Port Lincoln is located within the Lower Eyre Peninsula Fire Ban District
- St Joseph's School is located within the Bushfire Safer Precinct of Port Lincoln as determined by the CFS. As a result, the school will remain open on all Fire Danger Days
- St Joseph's School receives notification from the CFS via an automated email service, at approximately 4 pm the day before, of forecast Severe, Extreme and Catastrophic Fire Danger Days
- If notification is received of a forecast Catastrophic Fire Danger Day, St Joseph's School will send out a MGM wireless notification text message. This message will read: "*dd/mm/yy = Catastrophic Fire Danger. SJS will remain open but no school bus.*"
- The CFS advises that if your home is outside a Bushfire Safer Precinct and the Fire Danger Rating is Severe or Extreme you should only stay to defend your home if your property has been fully prepared and if you are emotionally and physically able to do so. They also advise that if the Fire Danger Rating is Catastrophic your home cannot be guaranteed to provide you with safety. The only option under these conditions, to ensure your safety, is to relocate to within a Bushfire Safer Precinct either the night before or early on the morning of a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day

**Responsibilities:**

- All staff, students, parents, caregivers, school visitors and Parish Staff and members must follow the instructions given by the Principal and/or Leadership Team
- On days when a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day has been forecast for the Lower Eyre Peninsula Fire Ban District, the school bus service will not operate. An alternative means of transport for students to and from school on these days is at the discretion and responsibility of parents/caregivers. Parents/caregivers have the options of either transporting their children to and from school or keeping them at home on Catastrophic Fire Danger Days
- All Front Office computers will have the CFS website open during every school day in the Fire Danger Season. The Front Office Staff will monitor the CFS website for any notifications of Bushfires in the Lower Eyre Peninsula Fire Ban District
- It is recommended that all parents/caregivers implement their Bushfire Survival Plans and monitor:
  - **CFS website:** [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au),
  - **Bushfire Information Hotline:** 1300 362 361
  - **Social media** – follow [@cfsalerts](https://twitter.com/cfsalerts) and [@cfstalk](https://twitter.com/cfstalk) on Twitter
  - **Or like** [SA Country Fire Service](https://www.facebook.com/sa.cfs) and [CFSUpdates](https://www.facebook.com/cfsupdates) on Facebook
  - **Local ABC radio, FIVEaa, or one of our other Emergency Broadcast Partners**

**Do not rely on a single source for emergency warning information**

- On a day when a bushfire threatens Port Lincoln dismissal arrangements will change. Reception to Year 12 students will not be dismissed as usual. Parents/caregivers must collect students on these days from the Front Office only, **NOT** the classroom
- Staff who live outside the Bushfire Safer Precinct of Port Lincoln and wish to be released from their duties to return to their home to prepare it or defend it against a Bushfire need to negotiate this with the Principal prior to the Fire Danger Season. A written copy of the staff members' Bushfire Survival Plan must be supplied to the Principal and arrangements for leave must be negotiated and agreed upon. Once these arrangements are in place and a bushfire occurs the staff member must advise the Principal before leaving the school grounds

### Bushfire Threat Procedures:

St Joseph's School is a well prepared facility in regards to Bushfire. Under most circumstances the safest course of action is to maintain a normal classroom/student/study timetable.

Keeping children in air-conditioned classrooms, with the curtains closed, provides safety and removes distraction and any anxiety that may prevail.

In the event that the school grounds are impacted by smoke, ash or embers, the Principal and/or Leadership may activate the following procedures:

- The siren will sound, with a voice over, to alert everyone that the school is going into a 'Bushfire Lockdown'
- Staff and students are to move quickly but calmly to the following allocated secure buildings and adhere to the procedures for a **'Lockdown'**
- Some classes may already be in their allocated 'secure building' **but staff must relocate to their designated area as soon as possible**
- All students must take their bags (lunch boxes and water bottles) to their allocated building
- All visitors and contractors are to report to the Front Office to sign out as soon as possible

Year Levels	Secure building
Junior Joeys & Little Saints	Staff Room (To be signed out)
Reception and Year 1	Rooms 10, 11 and 12
Year 2	Room 22
Year 3 & 4	GP Room
Years 5 - 7	Kelly Centre
Years 8 – 9	Resource Centre
Years 10 - 11	Senior Centre Common Area
Year 12	Senior Centre Year 12 Area

- 'Emergency Procedure' maps and instructions are located throughout all school buildings and all staff must be familiar with them
- Before departing any room, not used as 'secure building', teachers must ensure windows are locked, lights and air-conditioners are switched off and doors are locked

- ESOs are to report to the Staffroom to offer support to Front Office staff and assist in collecting Primary students to be taken to the office
- Office Manager will collect the '**Emergency Bushfire Procedure Folders**' from front desk and arrange for them to be distributed to class teachers in 'secure buildings' to check all students are present
- All class teachers must ensure all of their students are accounted for once in the 'secure building' and tick them off on the list from the '**Emergency Bushfire Procedure Folder**'. Any students unaccounted for must be reported to the front office via the phone system in that area
- Once in these secure buildings teachers and ESOs must keep the room cool with air-conditioning, keep the curtains closed and engage with the children to distract them from becoming unnecessarily anxious about the circumstances
- Front Office Staff will use the intercom/telephone system to advise teachers in designated 'secure buildings' to mark students off the 'class attendance list' and send the relevant students to the Front Office for "signing out", when parents/caregivers arrive
- **F-6 students must be accompanied by a member of staff** when moving to the office (ESOs will be used to collect students)
- The '**Emergency Bushfire Procedure Folders**' (one for each building) are to be kept until all students have left their designated 'secure building' and they must then be returned to the Front Office
- Teachers and classroom ESOs must endeavour to monitor student behaviour and the need to access water and toilet amenities in a controlled and supervised manner such that students return to their secure building
- Boarding House students must remain with their class during school hours
- The Boarding House Manager or Supervisor in charge must make direct contact with Front Office Staff to advise which students are in their care and for what reasons i.e. illness or injury. If deemed necessary the Principal and/or Leadership Team may request that the Boarding House be evacuated to the Front Office and/or sick room if necessary
- In the event of a Catastrophic bushfire occurring at a time of non-school attendance, Boarding House staff and students are to remain inside the Boarding House
- Parish staff and church parishioners are to be advised to seek shelter either in the Church or Presbytery
- Grounds and Maintenance Staff will patrol the church and school grounds in pairs, to identify and extinguish embers and ignitions should they occur. The chemical tank will be filled with water in preparation
- The school canteen may continue to provide lunch orders but no counter sales will be available. Lunch orders can be delivered to classrooms or the designated lockdown buildings by the grounds/maintenance or non-class ESOs provided it is safe to do so
- If parents/caregivers arrive to collect students they must be directed to the Front Office. Collection of all students must be conducted through the Front Office by Staff

- Parents who regularly have their children collected by another adult must notify the school in writing, prior to the Fire Season, of their consent. If pick up arrangements change for your child on the day, the school will need to be notified by phone before children are allowed to leave
- Students who drive a vehicle to school must remain at school for their safety until parent / caregiver permission is phoned through to the school. These students will not be permitted to take other students with them other than usual family members
- A “Bushfire” folder will be kept in the Front Office. This is to be used to record the movement of all students and staff for legal and safety reasons. It will be checked prior to Terms 1 and 4 by Front Office Staff for accuracy
- In the event of a building fire:
  - Call 000
  - Normal evacuation procedures must occur
  - All Lockdown procedures must be cancelledOnce on the school oval the Principal, Leadership Team and/or Emergency Services will advise of the safest course of action