

BUSHFIRE RESPONSE PLAN

Saint James School

1 King Edward Tce, Jamestown SA 5491

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This plan will be valid for 12 months from the Date Effective.

This plan is based on the requirements of AS/NZS 3745 *Planning for emergencies in facilities*.

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Bushfire Response Plan is to document the arrangements, and procedures relating to the response and management of any Bushfire which may arise at this site.

In accordance with the organisation's policy, Catholic Education SA will provide a safe workplace for all employees and the organisation shall as reasonably practicable ensure that all employees are safe from injury and risks to health in the event of a major bushfire





2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to provide a safe working environment through the provisions of systems and resources related to bushfire safety.

If the CEO receives information from authorities or a Department for Education (DfE) source regarding a specific bushfire threat to a school, the Principal will be contacted by the CEO to alert them of this threat. Enquiries during any heightened period of bushfire threat should be directed, in the first instance, to the Manager: System Safeguarding and Development.

3. FIRE DANGER RATINGS

Bushfire procedures are aligned with the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) which came into effect on 1 September 2022 as follows:

Category	General Advice	Action for schools
 CATASTROPHIC	<p>For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas</p> <p>If a fire starts and takes hold, lives are likely to be lost</p>	<p>SCHOOL CLOSURE and CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL BUS SERVICES for schools in the affected Fire Ban District which have an extreme, very high or high risk rating.</p>
 EXTREME	<p>Take action now to protect your life and property</p> <p>Fires will spread quickly and be extremely dangerous</p>	<p>Catholic Education SA to take advice of fire authorities for Adelaide Hills and other high-risk areas regarding potential for school closure.</p>
 HIGH	<p>Be ready to act</p> <p>Fires can be dangerous</p>	<p>SCHOOL OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply</p>
 MODERATE	<p>Plan and prepare</p> <p>Most fires can be controlled</p>	<p>SCHOOL OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply</p>

4. CATASTROPHIC FIRE DANGER

While only five Catholic schools have an extreme, very high or high risk rating (and subject to closure on days where there is a Catastrophic Fire Danger rating in their Fire District), all schools are required to follow the direction of authorities in the event that a school site is at risk of being affected by a bushfire, and additionally all schools need to consider the risks associated staff and student travel and school activities during the applicable Fire Danger Season.

4.1. School Bus Operations

On days of Catastrophic fire danger where a Catastrophic fire danger rating is forecast in a particular CFS Fire Ban District DfE school bus and taxi services travelling through the affected fire ban district will be cancelled. Catholic schools with services operated by other transport contractors should also cancel these services.

4.2. Travel/ Excursions/Camps

On days of Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger Camps and excursion planning must take careful account of contingency procedures during times of bushfire danger. Where possible avoid camp/excursion activities in bushfire prone areas during summer. Safer venues should be sought when it is feasible

If a bushfire is burning prior to departure and likely to threaten the intended campsite or excursion site or any return to the school, then the excursion/camp must be cancelled. The following strategies should be adopted by all schools if camps or excursions are conducted in bushfire prone areas during fire danger season:

- Travel through areas of high risk should not occur on days of Catastrophic fire danger in the specific Fire District and should be avoided on days of Extreme fire danger.
- In advance of departure – Inform the nearest CFS or MFS station of the dates the group will be in the area, identify nearby or campsite safe bushfire refuge locations, when seeking parental consent for the camp/excursion inform them of the procedures that will be adopted on Total Fire Ban days or in the event of a fire.
- Prior to and on arrival at the excursion/camp – Give instructions to all participants about fire precautions and procedures in the event of a fire, identify the alarm signal that will be used in the event of a fire and make known the assembly area on the hearing of the alarm, listen to CFS broadcasts or use the 24 hour information hotline: 1300 362 361.
- On declared Total Fire Ban days in the district and/or if a fire is burning – Cancel trips into bushfire-prone areas. If already on camp, maintain close contact with CFS, seek advice from emergency services on evacuation to a safe area, maintain close contact with the Principal and school.
- Communication – If a party deviates from an itinerary lodged with the school or relevant authorities, then these changes must be made known. Emergency services may need to respond in the case of an incident and this information is vital for the safety of staff and students.

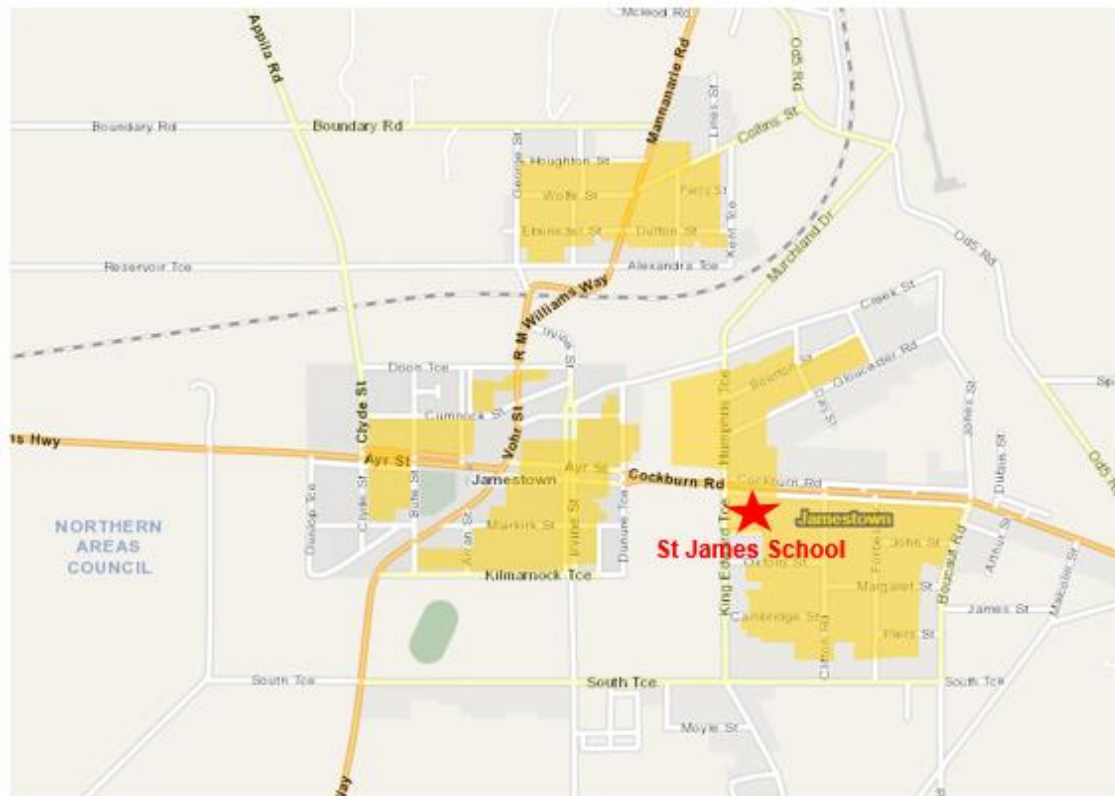
4.3. Arrangements for staff

The CFS recommends that community members living in bushfire prone areas, develop a personal bushfire survival plan. If such a plan impacts on a staff member's ability to attend, or remain at work, it should be made known in advance to the Principal. On days of temporary school closure due to Catastrophic Fire Danger, school staff are considered to be "working from home" and therefore expected to undertake any professional duties they can reasonably perform at home. On days when a school is open, staff members who are emergency service volunteers (CFS, SES) or whose family members or properties are affected by a bushfire, may be released from school duties (with pay) providing that such release does not compromise the school's duty of care to students or unduly disrupt the operations of the school. Staff members who decide to remain away from school due to bushfire risk, as distinct from an actual fire, should apply for special leave (without pay) in the usual way.

5. RISK RATING

Schools in Mt Barker, Stirling, Clare, Yorketown and Gladstone are the equivalent as those designated as R1/R2 by the Department for Education and are regarded as having a high, very high or extreme risk of bushfire on Catastrophic fire danger days in their Fire District.

St James School is located within the Bushfire Safer Places for Jamestown as identified by the CFS.



5.1. Actions in response to Catastrophic Fire Danger Day declared in advance of a school day

The CFS advises the CEO on the next day's Fire Danger Rating for each Fire Ban District at 4pm each day. Where a Catastrophic or Extreme Fire Danger rating is advised to the CEO as affecting the school on the next day, this will be advised to the Principal who will communicate that the school will be closed on the next day and that no one is to attend the site (including hirers and contractors, OSHC and other on-site services).

Additionally, school organised bus services are to be cancelled if they are scheduled to travel through the relevant fire ban district. The relevant Schools Performance Leader (SPL) and Principal are to remain in close contact, prior to, and during the declaration of the period of closure. Any relevant information provided to the CEO by DfE or CFS will be communicated to the Principal when it is available. Principals are to use their own local sources of information to be apprised of local conditions and keep the SPL and Manager: System Safeguarding and Development informed of any changed circumstances.

5.2. Actions in response to Catastrophic Fire Danger Day declared on a school day

Although Catastrophic days are usually made known in advance, it is possible for it to be declared or escalated on a day when staff and students are already on the way to, or present at school. In this case the Principal will liaise with the SPL and Manager: System Safeguarding regarding keeping the school open until such time as all students can be safely taken off site, if it is safe to do so by a parent/ caregiver. Any authority for an alternative adult to collect a child must be obtained in writing (eg. via email or text message). In some cases, the school may need to remain fully open until the end of a normal school day to ensure duty of care. The Principal will liaise with relevant bus services to ensure parents are fully aware of any transport changes.

The school will remain as a Bushfire Refuge for staff and students until such time as the safety of all students can be assured. Action plans should be developed to ensure the availability of staff to care for children. Advice from SAPOL and other authorities should, of course, be heeded on these occasions.

All extra-curricular activities (OSHC, sports, drama/music etc) should be cancelled and this action be communicated to all those affected. No school should cease or suspend operations without the approval of the relevant Director (or their delegate being an SPL or the Manager: System Safeguarding and Development or a Deputy/Assistant Director).

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. Regular review and testing of communications

Internal bells, alarms and warnings, external/internal communication systems, including pre-populated email, SMS, School App messaging etc will all be reviewed and tested twice per term in conjunction with regular drills. i.e emergency evacuation or fire drill testing.

6.2. School Bushfire Refuge Building

Identification of a school Bushfire Refuge building: a short-term shelter from immediate threatening effects of a bushfire (not to be confused with local Council 'last resort refuge'). At St James School, the Bushfire Refuge building is within the Learning Centre. This location has been chosen due to the construction of the building, emergency supplies and bathrooms.

This is located within the secondary building of the school and allows for access to bathrooms, first aid supplies and multiple entry/exit points.

6.3. Drills

Schools in High Fire Risk areas should practice at least once before fire season commences a "shelter in place" drill where students and staff assemble in the Bushfire Refuge building.

At St James School, two emergency drills are performed each term. One evacuation and one shelter in place. Prior to bush fire season (either the end of term 3 or beginning of term 4 depending on the years weather outlook) a Shelter in Place drill will be practiced where students and staff will assemble in the Bushfire Refuge building.

6.4. Emergency Contact Details

Up to date contact details of parent/s / caregivers will be kept in soft and hard copy format and will always be made available.

6.5. Vegetation Control

Annual examination and eradication of vegetation in September/October that may pose a hazard in a bushfire. This will include clearing gutters of accumulated debris.

6.6. Leadership Training

It is important to ensure that in the event the Principal is not on site, that designated senior leaders can effectively manage, and are familiar with the procedures in dealing with the emergency and understand that communication with the Principal and relevant SPL is mandatory during critical incidents.

6.7. Family Communication

Families will be made aware of the school's Bushfire Response Plan on a regular basis (at least prior to each Bushfire Season). This includes information on the methodology of communication to families in the event of school closure or transport cancellations.

6.8. Bus Companies

The school should establish clear communication protocols with bus companies and their drivers to understand how any cancellations or modifications to routes will impact on families of the school. The Bus Service should provide the school with evidence of its own policy and procedures.

6.9. School Holiday Periods

Some schools may operate Vacation Care or other on-site services in the holiday periods. The Principal must ensure all the normal protocols and procedures contained in this circular are applied and made known to those on the ground in these holiday periods. For instance, on Catastrophic days known in advance, all care/services must be cancelled. All site or building works must be cancelled etc.

7. EVACUATION DIAGRAM

The Evacuation Diagram defines the emergency and evacuation information specifically related to this site. It provides a pictorial representation of the floor area and other relevant emergency response information including the location of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and hose reels.

Evacuation Diagrams will be documented, maintained and displayed in the workplace following *Catholic Church Endowment Society Inc. (CCES) Emergency Management Procedure (10)*.

A copy of the site Evacuation Diagram is attached to this plan as Appendix 1.

8. EVACUATION DRILLS

The Worksite is responsible for ensuring evacuation drills are conducted and that outcomes are documented. Refer **Emergency Management Procedure (10)**.

9. COMMUNICATION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Emergency Management Plan will be communicated to workers, contractors and visitors in the following ways:

- Site Induction
- Display of Evacuation Diagrams and Emergency Contacts on the Noticeboard; and
- Emailed to all staff

At least one printed copy shall be available on site and located in the staff kitchen.

10. MAINTENANCE AND TESTING OF FIRE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Maintenance and testing of all fire detection systems, smoke and heat alarms, fire alarm monitoring systems and fire blankets shall be conducted in accordance with AS / NZS 1851 *Routine Service of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment* and be undertaken by suitably qualified personnel at regular intervals. Refer to **Emergency Management Procedure (10)**.

Records of all testing and maintenance will be kept.

11. DISTRIBUTION OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

At a minimum, a copy of the site Emergency Management Plan shall be provided to each member of the Emergency Control Organisation including the worksites Risk / WHS Coordinator.

12. REVIEW

A review of the Emergency Management Plan including the Emergency Response Procedures will be undertaken by the Emergency Control Organisation / WHS Committee immediately after any incident including evacuation drills. A formal review will also be conducted annually.

The Emergency Management Plan is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of approval.

BUSHFIRE

WHEN AN EMERGENCY IS DECLARED

Under normal circumstances, evacuation should take place only at the direction of the Chief Warden in consultation with person in charge of the Bush Fire Brigade. If a firefighter or a police officer tells everyone to evacuate you must obey the order. As a general rule no workers member (or any other person) should remain, once asked to leave the area. In some circumstances and, in the absence of advice to the contrary, the Chief Warden should make immediate arrangements to evacuate to a place of safety. The worksite if in a deemed high risk bush fire area must have a specific Bushfire Policy implemented.

Worksites should:

- listen to the radio for information on the approaching fire (talkback radio stations and the ABC) and do not call emergency services for updates;
- only call 000 if a fire is seen with no fire trucks in attendance;
- if possible arrange for the hosing down of the roofs, walls and open areas especially on the side facing the fire-front and leave sprinklers on;
- if possible arrange for down pipes to be plugged and roof gutters filled with water, using hoses;
- fill sinks and all available containers with water for extinguishing small fires and to use as drinking water;
- if there is a swimming pool or water tank in the grounds, tie a towel around the letterbox or at the gate to let authorities know where to find water (there is also a static water supply plaque available from the local fire station).

AS THE BUSHFIRE APPROACHES

If the organised movement of people etc. to a place of safety is **impossible**, or early evacuation advice is not issued and **workers and others are trapped**, movement to a safe refuge should occur.

A safe refuge is a building with characteristics that make it resistant to fire. Typically these would include:

- solid construction;
- under-floor area fully enclosed and spark proof;
- doors and windows which are in good condition and seal well to exclude sparks;
- all exposed timberwork, such as window frames, smooth and well painted so that flying embers will fall off rather than lodge on the timber;
- no overhanging trees to fill gutters with leaves;
- shrubs, trees and flammable groundcover vegetation kept well clear of the building, with surrounding grass short and green;
- roof cladding of sheet construction in good condition and firmly fixed with no gaps, so as to exclude flying sparks;
- roof space insulated with non-flammable batts;
- ceiling lining of a non-flammable sheet material.

In this situation the following precautions should be taken:

- move everybody inside and direct workers and others to remain calm within the building;
- assemble on the lower floor in the case of multi-storey premises (never remain in a room with no outside exit);
- workers and others should be assembled clear of windows and away from the part of the building which will be initially exposed to the fire-front;
- isolate gas and oil at mains switches;
- if possible isolate electricity in all but the refuge area of the workplace;
- disconnect all hoses and store them inside close to exit point, to prevent fire damage;
- connect a hose to an inside tap if possible;
- turn off air conditioning;
- close all windows and draw blinds, if fitted;

- close all doors and place wet towels or blankets at the base;
- everyone should remain inside until the main fire-front has passed (usually 10 - 20 minutes) - statistics show that where all of the above precautions were taken, people who remained inside buildings survived.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN THE FIRE COMES

- radiant heat, even in areas well back from the flames (do not remove clothing – it is the only thing that will protect skin from embers and heat);
- sparks and embers flying through the air, as well as thick smoke and loud noises;
- thirst (it is advisable to drink plenty of water).

AFTER THE FIRE-FRONT HAS PASSED

- workers and others should leave the building in an orderly manner and assemble in a safe area, nominated by the Chief Warden and away from the premises;
- hoses should be re-connected and a check for spot fires near or on the worksite building (including the roof cavity) should be made;
- attempts should be made to extinguish parts of the building which have been ignited, provided it is safe to do so.

Appendix 1- Evacuation Diagram

The Learning Centre is the shelter in place location.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

R REMOVE → REMOVE ALL OCCUPANTS AND STAFF AWAY FROM THE DANGER. DO NOT BLOCK EXIT OR EXIT ROUTES.

A ALERT → ALERT THE FIRE SERVICE. TELEPHONE "000". NOTIFY THE WARDEN OR CHIEF WARDEN AND PEOPLE AROUND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IF POSSIBLE RAISE AN ALARM TO NOTIFY OTHERS.

C CONTAIN → CONTAIN THE DANGER (FIRE) WHERE POSSIBLE TO DO SO, WHERE SAFE TO DO SO AND IF TRAINED TO DO SO, FOR e.g. CLOSE DOORS AND WINDOWS, SELECT AND USE CORRECT EXTINGUISHER OR IF AVAILABLE USE FIRE HOSE REEL etc.

E EVACUATE → FOLLOW (CHIEF) WARDEN'S INSTRUCTION, USE FIRE STAIRS WHERE AVAILABLE, TAKE NEAREST AND SAFEST EXIT, DO NOT USE LIFT, EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY, SAFELY AND DO NOT RUN. GO TO THE ASSEMBLY AREA.

EVACUATION DIAGRAM

NAME: **ST JAMES SCHOOL**
ADDRESS: 1 KING EDWARD TERRACE, JAMESTOWN SA 5491
LEARNING CENTRE

N

EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY AREA

LEGEND

ABE Powder Extinguisher	Water Extinguisher	Fire Blanket	Fire Hydrant	Automated External Defibrillator	Evacuation Route	Emergency Exit	Assembly Area

NOT TO SCALE

SALES, SERVICES & REFILLING
A to Z
FIRE PROTECTION
0414 389 102 - 8251 7297
CYLINDER TEST STATION 768, PROUDLY SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
Date Prepared: 17-Jan-2023
To be printed in A3 size Validity 5 years

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Appendix 2: - Student Collection Protocol

The site leader has the primary responsibility for duty of care of students and therefore should be able to account for them at all times. It is essential that parents or caregivers have a reliable and open line of communication with the school on a day-to-day basis as well as in emergency situations. It is also essential that parents provide up-to-date emergency contact information and formally notify administration of any changes.

Communications should not be dependent on a single mode as the power supply, internet, telephone or mobile phone connectivity may be affected during an emergency. Similarly, school methodology for recording student presence/absence, cannot rely solely on electronic means as these may be affected or inaccessible when in shelter-in-place.

The school's driving priority that influences action in emergency procedures is the immediate and ongoing safety of students and staff in their care.

Guidelines:

- The school has a system in place to record children's attendance in a timely and accurate manner on a daily basis
- The school has a system that provides for up to date records of contact information and of nominated or otherwise approved persons for collection on a daily basis. This information is part of the kit, and forms the backbone of the collection protocol before or after an emergency;
- The school will communicate via their usual whole school communications methods, any update as necessary or appropriate, or practical - during an emergency activation, ongoing shelter, or external evacuation.
- The school communicates regularly throughout the year to families that the General Advice is: Parents and caregivers will not ordinarily be directed to collect children during an active emergency situation.
- If not possible or necessary during an activation, parents will normally be advised, post event, that an emergency activation or drill occurred on a given day.

Student Collection Protocol:

- Parents may collect their child from school in response to changed CFS warnings. eg: 'extreme' changed to 'catastrophic' by CFS during the day, unless Shelter in Place protocols are in play;
- All student collections must take place at the front office by authorised persons only, using the usual sign out process;
- The school will not fetch and release children during an active evacuation. Anyone on the property during an emergency procedure may have to include themselves in the evacuation/shelter in place protocol and remain on site.
- If signage is posted on the gates and the access/egress is no longer stationed by a staff member, parents must NOT COME ON SITE, until the 'all clear' is signalled.
If bushfire is threatening the near vicinity and shelter-in place procedures have been activated at school, children will not be relinquished.
- A student collection protocol will be set-up as part of the "All Clear" post-incident conclusion activities. It is essential that children are released into that care of authorized persons in an orderly manner and all departures recorded. Children cannot go home with other persons without prior and sighted written consent, or via text message.

Appendix 3: - Essential Items Supply Plan

During an emergency, utilities such as power, water supply and communications may be affected. Maintaining a stock of items at the SIP location as well as in your Warden's kit may assist in alleviating trauma experienced by the occupants and aid the recovery process after an event.

Some items for inclusion are:

√	ITEMS	Checked or Replacement date	Sign Initials
	Back-up charged Mobile Phone		
	Spare batteries for all devices		
	First Aid Kits including guidebook and asthma kit		
	Toiletries (soap, handwash, alcohol wipes, toilet paper, tissues, sanitary products)		
	Bottled/boxed drinking water		
	Wool blankets		
	Candles with matches		
	Dust masks, plastic sheeting and duct tape (for Shelter-In-Place)		
	Children's Activities (board games, colouring in books and pencils, toys, etc)		
	Whistle (to signal for help)		
	Notebook & Pen		
	Emergency Medication Kit [EpiPen, Asmol, Zyrtec, Panadol]		
	RECORD COMMENTS re: activity usage/adapt for next event		

Appendix 4: Emergency Procedure Checklist

This is a useful guide for the mandatory response officer to undertake a site self-audit on the minimal requirements for actions taken in response or in anticipation of an emergency event. Your site may have additional steps or delegated duties to others. Please list as appropriate for your context.

Actions	Yes	No
Establish an Operations Area within the Control Centre (SIP, Evacuation site etc) to manage, supervise and monitor the operations		
Have a working and charged mobile telephone and emergency contact lists (already programmed in phone AND as hard copy)		
Have site map/area map detailing safest possible exits from the building(s) or away from site		
Have a first aid kit and other necessary emergency supplies (refer to other appendices)		
Have an Additional Assistance Register		
Have a list of staff who are senior first aid trained		
Ensure Roll calls completed, occupants accounted for and all areas evacuated		
Ensure utilities, (power, water, gas) are attended to as applicable		
Ensure availability of emergency power supply is applicable		
Ensure availability of emergency supplies (drinking water, food, essentials)		
Ensure availability of emergency sanitary set-up if required (kitty-litter or camping toilet)		
Prepare set-up to facilitate student collection protocol		
Maintain a log of events, notes and instructions		
Manage, supervise and monitor operations		
Report/Consult on situation, control progress and emerging risks		
Ensure safety through event and record incidents/accidents		
Post event de-brief – record and report on consequences, recommendations		
Adjust procedural documents accordingly		