

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Bushfire Safety

For Your Information:

Balaklava High School is **NOT** a high-risk school
or in a recognised bushfire prone area.

Therefore school closures based on the predicted forecast *do not* apply to us.

However.....

**Our school and all school bus runs are located in the Mid North Fire Ban District
and therefore if a Catastrophic Day is declared in this district,
no buses will operate. The school remains open, however.**

Bus and Students, Policy and Procedures

1. Policy Statement

Balaklava High School is committed to providing and maintaining a safe work environment and therefore has developed procedures to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the safety of staff, students and visitors from risks of injury caused by bushfires.

The school therefore will adhere to relevant Department of Education and Children's Services policies and Occupational Health Safety and Welfare regulations and other relevant procedures local to our area and the surrounding areas where bushfires may be situated. This may include policies by the Wakefield Regional Council, other local councils through which our buses travel, the CFS or Fire Command Centre procedures, whenever necessary or practicable.

2. Procedures

Managers' Responsibilities

The principal, deputy and line managers responsible for induction will ensure that staff are aware of and adhere to this policy.

That the parents, students, bus drivers, Balaklava Community Children's Centre, Balaklava Primary School and Horizon Christian School are made aware of our policy and procedures and its implications. Adhering to this policy will support the safety of all students catching buses managed by Balaklava Primary School and who live outside the town area.

Bushfire in close proximity to the school.

Before allowing any students to leave our school in the event of a **known bushfire** nearby, although we are not identified as a bushfire risk school, the principal or deputy will ensure that an assessment of the risks associated to the students, staff and school community is undertaken and that reasonable steps are taken to control those risks. (Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control).

In the event of a **known bushfire**, all bus students who would normally travel into the affected area will be detained at school, preferably inside (eg Balaklava Community Library). The Parents/Caregivers and/or Emergency Contacts will be contacted *if at all possible* to let them know of this arrangement.

If notification about a fire comes after the bus has left, bus drivers will be notified not to leave students at their usual pickup/drop off spot, unless their adult caregiver or parent is present. However adults should not wait at a bus stop if there is a fire in the area, as children will not be left on their own but returned to school.

Parents/Caregivers volunteering in the CFS and who cannot pick up their children should notify the school to make alternative arrangements.

In the event buses encounter a **bush fire during their route**, drivers may choose to divert from their usual route and return to school. Where possible drivers will contact the school to notify of this change and likely route to be taken. Parents/Caregivers and/or Emergency Contacts will be contacted *if at all possible* to let them know which students have returned to school. Drivers should not drive through smoke if at all possible.

As instructed by the CFS, parents are strongly encouraged to listen to news bulletins for Fire Danger Index updates and to make arrangements for their children as necessary to avoid them being *at home alone if the index forecast is at Very High (25-49) or above*.

The SA Country Fire Service and Bureau of Meteorology cannot provide an earlier confirmation than from 4 pm on the day before a day of Catastrophic Bushfire weather conditions. It is therefore difficult for us to notify parents of students travelling on buses prior. The best advice for parents of bus travellers is to;

- Listen to ABC local radio or television news and weather.
- Check the Bureau of meteorology website (www.bom.gov.au) weather warnings.
- Check the Country Fire Service (CFS) website (http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/fire_restrictions/fire_bans.jsp)

Staff are expected to attend work if safe to drive. If not go to nearest DECD site. Principal needs to be informed of those staff affected and their intended actions.

Evaluation & Policy Review

The Balaklava High School Occupational Health and Safety Committee will conduct an annual review of systems and ensure that the staff and parents/caregivers, bus drivers and students are aware of these procedures and are in accordance with this policy.

APPENDIX 1 Balaklava High School Bushfire Safety, Bus and Student Policy and Procedures

Staff Responsible for Health and Safety Areas of the School

Staff in charge of particular areas (as specified below) will be responsible for the management of these procedures and communication with those below.

This includes hazard checks, action plans and action for these areas. They will also be responsible for maintaining Safe Operating Procedures and communication with parents, bus drivers, relevant schools and parent/caregivers and/or emergency contacts.

Staff designated to care for student after school hours in a safe area within the school, or nearby evacuation area, are also listed and will be made aware of their duties.

Area	Person Responsible
Evacuation area: Balaklava Community Library	Principal, Deputy Principal, other designated.
Communication with CFS and Fire Command Centre	Fire Warden, Principal.
Communication with parents/caregivers/contacts	Administrator, Office Staff.
Communication with other schools BCCC, BPS, Horizon	Principal, Deputy Principal.
Communication with bus drivers	Principal, Deputy Principal.
Communication with DECD	Principal, Deputy Principal.
Sending information home each year about this policy and procedures	Deputy Principal.

Parent Responsibility

Parents are responsible for keeping school updated with all current parent contact, **and** emergency contact, phone numbers and addresses.

**Balaklava High School and all bus runs are in the
Mid North Fire Ban District**

New Fire Danger Ratings

Category	Fire Danger Index	Action for schools and preschools
CATASTROPHIC (CODE RED)	100+	Closed: Schools and preschools in the affected Fire Ban District with an extreme, very high or high risk rating CANCELLED: School bus services travelling through the affected Fire Ban District
EXTREME	75-99	Department of Education & Children's Services to take advice of fire authorities for Adelaide Hills and other high risk areas regarding school closures
SEVERE	50-74	OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply
VERY HIGH	25-49	OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply
HIGH	12-24	OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply
LOW – MODERATE	0-11	OPEN: normal bushfire plan procedures apply