



BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Maitland Lutheran School has policies and procedures in place to manage the threat of bushfire. We conduct evacuation drills each year to ensure appropriate procedures are in place for the safety of students, staff and others in the event of a bushfire. Schools in South Australia have been issued with a **site fire audit rating**. Our School has been assessed as **Medium Risk**.

In addition Australian fire services have agreed to the following Fire Danger Index ratings:-

CATEGORY	FIRE DANGER INDEX	ACTION
Catastrophic (Code Red)	100+	MLS REMAINS OPEN – Student attendance is at the discretion of the Parent/Caregiver. MLS and DECDs School Bus Services will be CANCELLED
Extreme	75-99	Open: Normal bushfire plan procedures apply
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

FIRE DANGER INDEX (FDI)

The Fire Danger Index (FDI) is not to be confused with the temperature of the day. The FDI is calculated on the basis of the degree to which vegetation has cured, the wind speed and the forecast temperature.

PLANNING AHEAD

It is essential that all families who live in bushfire prone areas have a bushfire action plan and that part of the plan needs to address what action will be taken when the School Bus Services are not operating. Possibilities may include taking the child(ren) to school by car, staying with a parent at home or at work, or making local arrangements with neighbours or friends. The CFS is very clear that for survival in a bushfire, leaving is the best option. The new fire danger index ratings have been introduced to make it easier for people to decide when to leave their home, particularly when there is a forecast of catastrophic fire danger. In such cases a bushfire action plan should include the need to leave the night before or the morning of such a day.

CATASTROPHIC (CODE RED) FDI 100+

When the following day is forecast to be Catastrophic Fire Danger on Yorke Peninsula before 2.30pm the school will notify parents by at least one of the following methods that school bus services will be cancelled.

- Notice sent home with children
- A SMS text message will be sent to all families
- The school Facebook page

The school will be on bushfire alert on days of extreme and severe fire danger. The school constantly checks for updates on Radio ABC AM 891, and the CFS website/text alerts. Staff are notified and teachers will discuss the situation with students.

The Principal will assess the risk for all excursions. It is highly likely they will be cancelled.

If there is a bushfire incident during the school day, we ask that parents do not travel to pick up their children until it is deemed safe. We do not want to put parents in a position of danger when they are safe on one side of the fire and the students are safe at school on the other side of the fire. We will keep students safe and comfortable at school for as long as is required should the need arise. Buses will not operate in the case of a bushfire until it is deemed safe by the CFS. Parents will be notified in this instance.

If there is a bushfire incident prior to the school day, parents determine whether they send their children to school or not. Sometimes the power can be interrupted during bushfires and mobile phone service can be affected. Please be reassured if you can't communicate with us, your child will be kept safe on our school site until you are able to reach us. We are unable to let friends collect your child if you haven't been able to contact the school to let us know.

MLS School Bus Services will be cancelled if there is a bushfire within 15 kilometres of any part of the route.

The Principal will endeavour to keep parents informed of school procedures via SMS text messages, and Facebook. The Principal is responsible for decision-making regarding the safety and movement of students, staff and all persons on the school site, unless Police and Emergency Services intervene directly, or through an authorised officer whose authority to act has been established beyond reasonable doubt.