



PC009	Bushfire Management Policy
<b>Purpose</b>	This policy regulates management of bushfire hazards.
<b>Authority</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW); Fire and Emergency Services; Principal
<b>Policy</b>	JCSA recognises that bushfires may pose a serious threat to its staff and students, particularly when they are on excursions in remote, bushfire-prone areas. This Bushfire Management Policy seeks to promote safe practices for staff and students regarding reasonably expected/foreseeable bushfire threats.
<b>Delegation</b>	Principal
<b>Related Policies</b>	Camps and Excursions (I002) Emergency, Crisis and Critical Incidents (PC005) Risk Management (PC008)
<b>Date approved</b>	November 2014, November 2017, October 2019
<b>Next Review Due</b>	September 2023
<b>Review Authority</b>	Governance
<b>Keywords</b>	Threat; bushfire; risk
<b>Authorised by:</b>	
<b>Chairman</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Author/Reviewer:</b>	Pete Witten – April 2019



## PC009

# Bushfire Management Procedure

### Procedures:

The Department of Education's document titled "*Principals Guide to Bushfire*" (November 2012) provides valuable information in regards to bushfire preparation and response. Whilst not 100% applicable for JCSA, this document provides very good documentation and guidance for staff and management at JCSA.

### Duty of Care

Teachers and schools owe it to the students under their supervision to take reasonable care for the safety of these students. The school will respond to all or any elements of foreseeable risk and take reasonable steps to ensure that the health of the student is not put at risk.

### Parental Responsibility

If an unforeseen event occurs which increases the risk of bushfire to any staff or students, concerned parents are encouraged to contact the school to ensure that staff / management are aware.

In the event of a Bushfire emergency in the school's locality, parents will be notified by the school if a Temporary School Closure, or other action, is to take place.

Parents to refer further enquiries to DFES.

### School's Responsibility

Although the JCSA building and grounds are not located in an area of significant risk, we are still located within a region that may be classified as a "bushfire prone area".

Incorporating key bushfire messages into the curriculum may assist in educating students on the risks and management options in regards to bushfire.

Bushfire preparation and response checklists are available in the "*Principals Guide to Bushfire*".

In the unlikely event of a bushfire threatening the JCSA building and grounds, staff and students are to evacuate the site as per the current evacuation procedures.

In the event of bushfire "watch and act" and "emergency" warnings covering the homes or route homes of students while they are at school, the school will respond in the following way:

- Students who walked/cycled, etc. to school are not allowed to go home. Parents are asked to pick up their child/ren or provide an alternative.
- Parents of students who caught a bus are asked if the bus route is still open, and, if it isn't, to pick up their child/ren or provide an alternative.

Advice from Emergency Services overrides the above response.

### Risk Assessment

The existing Emergency, Crisis and Critical Incidents Policy establishes guidelines for the identification, assessment and solution of perceived risks in the context of the school environment. This includes assessing potential risks, assessing student capabilities, the qualifications of staff/helpers, transport etc. See the *Emergency, Crisis and Critical Incidents Policy* for more detail.



The level of risk of exposure to bushfire for JCSA staff, students, buildings or grounds is considered to be “low”. JCSA is located in an urban/suburban area which is devoid of native vegetation. Several small pockets of vegetated parklands are located with 1km of the school, but are also considered to be low risk. Approximately 77 Hectares of undeveloped “future urban” zoned land is located over 1km east of JCSA. However, this is separated by a very dense residential development which would considerably slow any possible fire threat and therefore also deem this to be low risk.

Numerous excursion destinations may at certain times present a “Extreme Bushfire Hazard” risk due to their location, density of bush and lack of access due to being in areas where there is literally one road in and out. Refer to the Excursions Policy and Procedure for excursion requirements.

### **Excursions**

As per the “*Excursion and Water Based Activities*” policy, prior planning is an essential component of a successful and safe activity or excursion. Part of this planning may include preliminary visits and a risk assessment. Staff and students should be adequately prepared before the excursion.

Staff are to take the following measures in the days prior to undertaking an excursion:

- Monitor weather forecasts and determine expected temperatures and wind speed/direction could attribute to risk in the specified destination. Consultation with DFES, Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and location specific Bush Fire Brigade (as per City of Albany contact details available at [www.albany.wa.gov.au](http://www.albany.wa.gov.au)) is recommended.
- Consider alternative options for excursion destinations, especially in the possible event of having to cancel.
- Ensure that they have means to monitor bushfire activity and weather alerts (local media - especially ABC Local Radio; FESA - 1300 657 209 or [www.fesa.wa.gov.au](http://www.fesa.wa.gov.au).) when at the excursion site.
- Ensure they have resources to contact AJCS or emergency services if/as required.

### **Recommended references**

Department of Education: [www.det.wa.edu.au](http://www.det.wa.edu.au) , specifically “*The Principals Guide to Bushfire*”, as updated November 2012.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services: [www.dfes.wa.gov.au](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au) or Phone 9845 5000

City of Albany, Volunteer Bushfire Brigades: [www.albany.wa.gov.au](http://www.albany.wa.gov.au) or Phone 9841 9349

Further information may be sought from the Department of Education, Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the City of Albany’s Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades.
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