

Bush Fire Policy

NQS

QA2	2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
	2.3.3	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.

QA6	6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained.
	6.3.4	The service builds relationships and engages with their local community.

National Regulations

Reg	168(2)(e)	Policies and procedures in relation to emergency and evacuation
	97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
	98	Telephone or other communication equipment

EYLF

LO2	Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
	Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

LO4	Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials
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Aim

Our service aims to keep all children and educators safe at all times. Therefore, in the instance of a bush fire, the service will act at all times to protect the educators and children in line with recommendations and instructions from relevant emergency authorities.

Who is affected by this policy?

Children
Families
Educators



Wattle Early Childhood Centre

Community
Visitors

Implementation

As per the Royal Bushfire Commission Report, the service will prepare a Bushfire Action Plan should a bushfire effect the service's operations.

The aim of this Bushfire Action Plan is to outline the activities that educators, children, families and visitors to be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- On days of Total Fire Ban
- When there is a fire in the local district.
- When a bushfire is threatening or impacting the site.
- During a period of recovery if a bushfire impacts the service.

During peak bush fire seasons, such as Spring and Summer, educators will monitor the Fire Danger Rating daily. Should the Rating be above High, educators will monitor the situation in line with the process in our region, such as via the internet or radio.

Trees will be trimmed to a distance of 2m from the buildings. Educators will inspect the ground at the beginning of Spring and the owner/Nominated Supervisor will arrange for any lopping of branches if necessary. In line with this, gutters and roofs will be cleaned regularly and kept free of leaves. Also, tiles and paintwork on buildings will be kept well maintained. Please see Maintenance of Building and Equipment Policy for further details.

A Safe Refuge Kit will be organised and stored somewhere that is easily accessible. This kit will include:

- A copy of the Bushfire Action Plan
- Emergency Contact Details for each child.
- Child attendance registers.
- Emergency telephone numbers.
- Working torch and spare batteries
- First Aid Kit.
- Educators/Children Medications and Medical Register
- Drinking Water
- Nappies
- Blankets
- Towels
- Change Mat
- Gloves
- Nappy Wipes
- Sunscreen
- Masks or face washers which can be dampened to protect face or prevent smoke inhalation
- Non perishable food – (rice crackers, mountain bread etc)
- Formula

This Kit will be checked at the start of Spring for contents.

Very High, Severe or Extreme Fire Danger Ratings

On days where the Fire Danger Rating is Very High, Severe or Extreme, the service will inform families by posting a warning in the entrance/noticeboard.

Children will be transitioned throughout the day as per our usual practice.



Any educators who have planned to attend off-site training will stay at the service, and have their training cancelled/rescheduled.

The WHS Officer will ensure that all gates have access keys and ensure the locks are in working order.

All educators will monitor conditions when on duty outside. Educators will also ensure that no art and craft works, posters etc are hung outside and that garbage bins are emptied throughout the day.

Families will be required to provide a reliable contact number for the day and provide asthma medication if their child suffers from asthma.

The Nominated Supervisor/nominated educators will ensure that all outdoor taps are in working order with hoses attached and buckets placed beside each exterior tap.

The Nominated Supervisor/nominated educators will ensure that the outdoor dumpsters are closed at all times.

One nominated educator will ensure the mobile phone in the Kit is in full working order with a fully charged battery, and that the charger is put in the Kit. This kit will then be moved to the Educators Room for easy access. The Emergency Contact register and Daily Roll will be added to the Kit. The medical register for the day will also be added to the kit.

The WH&S Officer will ensure all hazards are removed from passages and walkways and nothing is blocking emergency exits.

Fire Reported in Local Area

The Nominated Supervisor will inform families and educators via a notice posted on the front door/foyer/noticeboard.

All nominated educators will be called together to discuss the situation and perform their duties.

The children will continue to be transitioned through their day with our usual transition method.

Any educators who have planned to attend off-site training will stay at the service, and have their training cancelled/rescheduled.

The WH&S Officer will ensure that all gates have access keys and ensure the locks are in working order.

All children's activities outside the building will be cancelled.

Educators, families and visitors to the service will be encouraged to reverse park their cars.

Families will be required to provide a reliable contact number for the day and provide asthma medication if their child suffers from asthma.

The Nominated Supervisor/nominated educators will ensure that all outdoor taps are in working order with hoses attached and buckets placed beside each exterior tap.

The Nominated Supervisor/nominated educators will ensure that the outdoor industrial dumpster is closed at all times.

One nominated educator will ensure a mobile phone is in the Kit and is in full working order with a fully charged battery, and that the charger is put in the Kit. This kit will then be moved to the Educators Room for easy access. The Emergency Contact register and Daily Roll will be added to the Kit. The medical register for the day will also be added to the kit



The WH&S Officer will ensure all hazards are removed from passages and walkways and nothing is blocking emergency exits.

The Nominated Supervisor will turn off any gas cylinders.

Nominated educators will back up all computer files.

The WH&S Officer will ensure that whistles are in place beside each portable fire extinguisher. These are to be used to notify everyone if a fire starts on site.

Educators will be diligent in ensuring children's personal items are placed in their bags when not in use.

Fire Reported in Immediate Vicinity or Directly Impacting the Service

The procedure above will be followed immediately. The centre's landline phone will be diverted to the mobile.

Educators will move all hoses inside building, and if the ability arises without putting any persons' at risk, persons at the Centre will attempt to hose down the building as much as practically possible. Educators will close all doors and windows

Educators will access the roof space every 10-20 minutes to check for spot fires.

The Nominated Supervisor will inform the owner/licensee of the situation and regularly keep them updated of the situation.

The Approved Provider will inform the Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) about the situation, advising the Licensing officer of the number of children affected, the educator ratios in place and any issues or injuries that have arisen.

Recovery after the Front has passed.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that no educators, family member, child or visitor associated with the service leaves the building until the situation is safe by members of the emergency services.

The Emergency Response Team, made up of members of educators, will assess the situation and if necessary make arrangements for the care of children for an extended period of time.

Educators at the service will stay on duty until all children have been collected or relief educators arrive.

Only a qualified educator will administer first aid should the situation arise.

The Nominated Supervisor will at all times work to keep the Approved Provider abreast of the situation. The Approved Provider will then advise CECA of the number of children affected, emergency educator ratios in place, any issues that arose and if possible the projected impact to the service.

The Emergency Response Team of nominated educators will continue to check the building and surrounds for 24 hours after the front has passed.

Relevant educators will undertake a debrief of the fire emergency situation and the procedures undertaken. Educators will be requested to review their own roles, responsibilities and preparation before and during the crisis. The policy will be reviewed to ascertain its effectiveness.

Nominated educators will arrange to have fire fighting equipment, warning system and Emergency Kits checked and readied for use again.

If necessary, Nominated Supervisor will arrange for relevant authorities to check the safety of the site.



Fees and Charges

Attendance fees for the day will still be charged. Should family member be unable to collect, or arrange collection of their children within one hour of the usual operation hours of the service, fees will apply as per our Arrival and Departure Policy.

CCB payments are available for up to 42 days in this circumstance. For further information on this please read:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Resources/Documents/FactSheets/CCFactSheet.pdf>

Sources

National Quality Standard
Education and Care Services National Regulations
The Bushfire Royal Commission Report
Early Years Learning Framework

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

Review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties.

Reviewed: September 2016

Date for next review: September 2017