St Jakobi Lutheran School

Bush Fire Policy

St Jakobi Lutheran School exists to support families who are seeking a Christ Centered education for their children. It also acts as an out-reach agency of the Lyndoch Lutheran Parish.

Our primary aim is to cater for each individual child in our care so that they might reach their full potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We believe that each child is a unique and precious gift from God that has been entrusted to us for their education, in partnership with the child’s principle caregivers.

A primary responsibility we have is to ensure that the children in our care are kept safe. The following protocols aim to ensure that safety is not compromised should the school be attacked by a bush fire, or the ember attack from a nearby bushfire.

AIM: This plan is drawn up with the focus of maintaining the safety of the St Jakobi School Community – students, staff and families, in the event of the school being threatened by a bushfire.
St Jakobi’s Bushfire Action Plan

**On Catastrophic Days**

In line with the fire rating given to other local places of education (Williamstown Primary, Lyndoch Primary, Lyndoch Valley Family Centre as found on the DECS website) and due to being in the Mt Lofty district, St Jakobi is seen as a school in a high risk area. It will therefore close on days declared as Catastrophic by the CFS. CFS/DECS notify of Catastrophic fire rating at 4 – 4:30pm on the day prior. St Jakobi administration will therefore notify parents by SMS phone message service that afternoon, immediately following confirmation of the Catastrophic rating and to advise that the school be closed. It is parent’s responsibility to make alternative arrangements for their children. Please be advised that CFS has requested, and the school does not advocate, that children of any age be left home alone if school closures occur, due to the high risk this poses.

Whilst a school such as Faith may be open on a catastrophic day, no buses will be permitted to travel through areas of high fire risk eg Lyndoch, Williamstown, Mt Pleasant, Birdwood etc.

Parents are expected to make use of the CFS website themselves to stay up to date with notifications of school closure on www.cfs.org.au. Click on “Warnings” or news and media for up-to-date information on any current fires.

As per DECD policy, in the rare event a day is changed to Catastrophic on the morning of the day, the school will remain open, but an SMS text will be sent to request families to make alternative arrangements and not bring children to school.

**St Jakobi may also close on an Extreme day.**

A closure on an Extreme day would occur due to a combination of the following:

- Williamstown Primary is required to close ie. their risk is seen as significant.
- We have had several days of hot weather in a row and the risks have become greater.
- Thunderstorms with lightning strikes are forecast
- Local fires are burning that may negatively affect the availability of the local CFS.
- There are significant fires in other areas, to which our local CFS members may have been deployed, reducing the amount available to defend us in the event of a fire.

Parents would be notified of closure in the usual way, via an SMS text. Parents have the option of keeping their children home on Extreme days if they so choose, particularly those who would need to drive through high risk areas to get to school.
On Severe and Extreme rated days

School Administration will use both CFS website [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au) and 891 ABC radio for updates on a battery operated transistor or car radio to monitor CFS website regularly throughout day and track any bushfire activity.

Preparations for a fire will be put in place by the beginning of the school day at the latest. Preparations include:
- All school bags to be moved inside the classrooms.
- All moveable furniture, bins etc to be moved away from the outside of classrooms to open spaces.
- Large containers of waters will be placed strategically around the school and buckets, mops, hoses and protective clothing will be placed in the Library.
- Supply of extra water bottles taken to the Library
- Phones, radio, parent contact book, map of school layout to be gathered together and placed in a designated, easy to access area.

On receiving a “Bushfire Advice Message”
- The school will continue to monitor the situation and ensure above preparations and equipment are in place.
- Alert teaching staff
- Ensure student drink bottles are filled and regular toilet breaks given.

On receiving a “Watch and Act” message
- Staff, students and others currently on school grounds will be moved to the Library.
- Take student drink bottles.
- If time, Admin staff to put a message on the answering machine before vacating building.
- Admin staff to bring a copy of map of layout of school, water supply and areas of storage of flammable materials/chemicals for CFS plus transistor radio and parent contact book and phone.
- If time, use hoses/buckets/sprinklers to wet Library area, particularly side facing fire front, and other areas of school.
- Take class rolls and cordless phones/mobiles phones into the Library.
- Staff to move shelving to provide extra protection for students.
- Remain calm, reassure students and encourage calmness from them.

On receiving a “Bushfire Emergency Warning” message
- Keep children away from windows, which may break with exposure to extreme heat.
- Monitor the building for evidence of entry of fire.
• If a fire has passed through the area Principal and 4 designated school staff will, as deemed appropriate in regards to safety, leave the Library with buckets and protective clothing to put out spot fires that may have developed. Remaining staff are to stay inside the Library with the students.

• All persons will remain in the Library until it is deemed safe by Principal (or next in authority) to exit the building/emergency services give a directive to leave.

On days of Extreme or Severe fire risk days Office staff will ring the Bushfire Information Hotline between 2 -2:30 pm and check the CFS website for an update on possible local fires. A decision regarding the bus run will be made at this time.

**OHSC**

If a fire occurs before or after school, the above procedures will be complied with. All people on the school grounds will be expected to comply with the directive to remain in the Library if there is any imminent danger. OHSC register will be used instead of roll books. School staff will put out spot fires if needed; OHSC staff will remain with the students. OHSC staff to set up communication with CFS/ambulance as applicable as soon as possible, and as soon as possible thereafter contact parents.

**After fire front passes**

Principal and 4 designated teachers to monitor grounds for embers and spot fires etc
Admin staff to set up communication with CFS/Ambulance as applicable, and as soon as possible after this with parents. Parents will be encouraged not to travel through high fire risk areas to collect students. Staff will remain on duty until such a time as all students can be safely picked up.

When / if CFS arrives, provide info to CFS re layout of school, water supply, storage of flammable chemicals etc

**Travel Arrangements**

Should a fire be reported within a 30km radius of St Jakobi School, the school bus will not operate towards fire alert areas, especially in the afternoon.

Students will be kept at the school if a bush fire is within a 25km radius of the school and they will be cared for by teaching staff until they are collected at whatever time is possible. Parents/caregivers/drivers are advised that they should not attempt to collect students, thereby putting themselves at risk, and that students will be properly cared for in a safe environment at the school.
St Jakobi will comply with all directives made by CFS or other emergency services as they arise; this means that arrangements made during a time of emergency can change rapidly. Every endeavor will be made to keep the lines of communication open wherever possible.

Parents will only be able to take their children from the school once they have notified their child’s class teacher/OSCH supervisor. Prior permission must be given by parents for students to go home with someone other than their parents/caregivers.
BUSHFIRE INCIDENT PROCEDURE


KEEP ALL STUDENTS, STAFF AND VISITORS SAFE – The LIBRARY is the safer place. Ensure all people on site are in there.

COMMUNICATE – Take the contact books, phones, radio. Try to let the community know we are safe and secure.

PRESERVE - Preserve life in the first instance. When this is secure, preserve buildings after the front has passed and deal with ember attacks.

Police
Williamstown 85 246288
Nuriootpa 85 686620

Ambulance 000

Fire
Emergency 000

CFS Region 2 Willaston (08) 8522 6088
Fire Ban Hotline 1300 362 361

Discussed with and approved by Mr Kies Captain of Lyndoch CFS January, 2014.
Bush Fire Action Plan 2013 – Authorisation to Collect Students

In the event of a bush fire I .......................................................... (parent/caregiver name)

Give permission for my child/ren listed below;

..........................................................(child’s name)..............................................(year)

..........................................................(child’s name) ..............................................(year)

..........................................................(child’s name) ..............................................(year)

..........................................................(child’s name) ..............................................(year)

To be collected from St Jakobi by: .......................................................... (Name)

Parent/Caregiver Name: ..........................................................................................

Signed: .................................................. Date:...................................