



HEATHFIELD  
HIGH SCHOOL

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES POLICY AND BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN

CREATED: 2023  
LAST UPDATED / REVIEWED: 2025  
REVIEW DATE: 2026

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors to Heathfield High School during emergency events and bushfire events, and to provide a clear and coordinated response to any emergency or bushfire threat.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students, staff, and visitors at Heathfield High School.

## 3. Policy Statement

### Preparation and Planning

1. The school will continuously monitor Department for Education policy and procedure to ensure that our emergency procedures are in line with best practice.
2. The school will maintain an up-to-date Emergency Procedures and Bushfire Action Plan (BFAP) that is reviewed and updated annually.
3. The school will communicate the Emergency Procedures and BFAP to all staff, students, parents and visitors, and will include it as part of the induction process for new staff and students, as well as at the start of each year. These will be published on our website, via email, and communicated in person.
4. The Emergency Exit diagrams and Emergency Procedures will be prominently displayed in all teaching areas, offices and areas in which classes may be in attendance.
5. All staff will be issued with the staff Emergency Procedures at the beginning of each school year and whenever updated. This information includes the process for all incident management.
6. Teachers will use these documents and signs as a resource to inform students about the Emergency Procedures.
7. The school will conduct regular bushfire drills, lockdown and evacuation exercises in line with the Department for Education policy, to ensure that all staff and students are familiar with the procedures and know what to do in an emergency event.
8. The school will maintain a register of students and staff with specific needs, including any medical and mobility issues, and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to support these individuals in the event of an emergency.
9. The school will ensure that all necessary emergency equipment and resources are available on-site and that they are regularly inspected and maintained.
10. The school will maintain accurate attendance records of staff, students and visitors in order to appropriately account for all people on-site during an emergency.
11. Staff living in areas of risk will develop personal bushfire survival plans and advise the Principal if this may affect their ability to attend work on days of significant risk.

### Response to an event

1. If an emergency event is identified, the school will follow the procedures outlined in this document and accompanying emergency procedures and the BFAP.
2. The school will notify and communicate with the Department for Education and Emergency Services immediately, providing them with relevant information including the location of the school, the nature of the threat, and the number of students and staff on site.
3. The school will activate the emergency system where it is not auto-activated to alert staff, students, and visitors of the threat and to provide instructions on what to do.
4. The school will initiate the appropriate evacuation or lockdown procedures and ensure that all students, staff and visitors are accounted for.
5. The school will liaise with emergency services, DfE Security and Emergency Management, and provide any assistance required, such as access to water or shelter.

### **Recovery and Review**

1. The school will work with relevant authorities to assess the damage and safety risks following a bushfire event.
2. The school will provide support to students and staff who have been affected by the bushfire, including access to counseling services or other resources as required.
3. The school will review and evaluate the response to the bushfire event, including any lessons learned or areas for improvement identified.

## **4. Roles, Responsibilities and Delegations**

### **Incident Response Group**

The role of the Incident Response Group is to coordinate school procedures, parent communication and liaise with the police and emergency services.

Each member of this group has specific delegated leadership responsibilities during an emergency (listed in the staff procedures).

Each member of this group will carry a mobile phone to ensure regular contact can be made during an incident.

The team consists of the Principal, Executive Leadership, Business Leader, Facilities Manager, Executive Administration Manager, and Fire Warden.

### **Decision making responsibility in an emergency**

The responsibility for decision-making regarding the safety and movement of students and staff is the Principal's unless the State Coordinator (State Disaster Plan) intervenes directly or through an authorised officer whose authority to act has been established beyond reasonable doubt. (For the Critical Incident Process Emergency Services will assume responsibility upon arrival).

## **Responsibilities and Implementation**

The Principal, leaders, staff, visitors and students are required to implement this policy and supporting procedures and checklists to manage and reduce risk of injury during an emergency.

The Principal (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring all leaders, staff, visitors and students are fully informed of this policy and its requirements.

## **5. Implementation, Review and Adoption**

### **Implementation**

This policy will be implemented by the Heathfield High School Principal, in consultation with the school WHS committee and Governing Council.

### **Review**

Evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy and support documents will occur as a result of drills and consultation with staff, students and others associated with the effective management of emergency procedures at Heathfield High School.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually, or as required following a bushfire event or changes in legislation or best practice guidelines.

## APPENDIX Associated Support Documents

Emergency Evacuation Procedures signage	Displayed in classrooms, offices corridors etc. Describes signals evacuation and lock down procedures.
Emergency Exit Diagrams	Exit Diagrams displayed with Emergency Procedures.
Emergency Evacuation Guide – for Staff	Issued to all staff at start of each year or at induction. Describes procedures and provides checklists in place for Bushfires, and evacuation assembly procedures.
Information for Parents and Caregivers	Information provided to parents and caregivers regarding Heathfield High School's bushfire and emergency planning.
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan	A template for staff and students to develop personal evacuation plans where standard evacuation plans present risks or hazards for people with specific needs.
Bushfire Response Plan 2023 – 2024 R1 and R2 sites	Stored locally and in Emergency Evacuation backpack
Annual Bushfire Preparedness Task List	Stored locally
Critical Incident Management Plan (CIMP)	Stored locally and in Emergency Evacuation backpack, refer to Department for Education critical incident documentation
Bushfire Recovery Plan	Updated annually Term 4

## HEATHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN

### INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Heathfield High School has very strict policies and procedures (in line with the Government of South Australia Bushfire Guide) 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.

Our shelter is the Mount Lofty Community Sports Centre, which is a large bushfire-ready building which will accommodate the full school. It contains girls and boys toilets, and showers. There is access to a canteen and a water supply, and it has easy access to Longwood Road and emergency vehicles. The school ensures sufficient potable water, medication, first aid, and supplies to ensure a safe shelter-in-place during an emergency event.

Schools in South Australia have been issued with a **site fire audit rating**. Heathfield High School has been assessed as **R1-Extreme to Very High-risk**.

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

CATEGORY	ACTION FOR SCHOOLS AND PRESCHOOLS
Catastrophic	<p><b>CLOSED:</b> In the Adelaide Hills on days of declared catastrophic Code Red bushfire weather, schools and preschools with a site fire audit rating of extreme, very high or high fire risk, will be closed. Any services operating from these sites will also be closed.</p> <p><b>CANCELLED:</b> School bus services will be will be cancelled.</p>
Extreme	<p>The Department for Education will take advice of fire authorities regarding possible school closures</p> <p>Camps and excursions will be risk-assessed and subsequent actions will be considered.</p>
High	Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply
Moderate	Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply

### 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 is closed. Possibilities may include staying with a parent at home or at work, local arrangements with neighbours or friends or taking the child to another school should this be required.

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.

## **SCHOOL CLOSURE: CATASTROPHIC FDI 100+**

Confirmation of the school closure will be provided after 4:30pm on the day before the closure (following CFS advice). Notice of confirmation will be available on

The school website [www.hhs.sa.edu.au](http://www.hhs.sa.edu.au)

The school telephone answering service (phone 8139 9300)

The Emergency Information Hotline (1800 000 279) will operate during days of catastrophic fire danger ratings or during an actual bushfire.

Media services e.g. Radio ABC AM 891, or CFS [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au) or CFS Bushfire Information Hotline 1300 362 361

An SMS will be sent to all families. School staff will attempt to make telephone contact with families who do not have mobile phone numbers currently in school records.

## **SCHOOL OPEN**

The school will be on bushfire alert on days of extreme fire danger.

The school monitors for updates on Radio ABC AM 891 and the CFS website.

Staff are notified and teachers will discuss the situation with students.

The Principal may decide to call a whole school assembly.

Any camps/excursions/local external activities or bushwalks are risk assessed in the context of the fire danger, with subsequent actions endorsed by the incident management group.

If the rating changes to catastrophic during the day, the school remains open but the school will convene the incident response group to assess risks and determine when and if an emergency response is required.

## **IN SHELTER TRIGGER**

It is the responsibility of the site's leadership to determine trigger points that will be used to determine when to respond to a potential or actual bushfire threat and enact our Bushfire Response Plan.

The following will trigger a shelter-in-place direction from site leadership;

Advice from the Security and Emergency Management unit to move to the bushfire shelter

Fire in close proximity (where fire is visible at Heathfield High School)

Emergency Warning from CFS

CFS 'watch and act' advice for any fire 10km away from the school

Direction from police or emergency services.

## **KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE**

There are processes in place to ensure that all students can be accounted for.

Once a shelter-in-place has been directed, parents may not collect their child(ren) from school until formal authorisation is provided. It is not safe to travel if the school is sheltering in place. Additionally, formal authorisation must be provided to the school by parents who make arrangements for other people to collect their child(ren). It may be necessary to delay school bus departures at the end of the day if the potential threat continues. The School will seek advice from the Police and Emergency Services, Security and Emergency Management unit, and the CFS about when it is safe to stop sheltering in place.

The Principal will endeavour to keep parents informed of school procedures via the official fire information radio station ABC AM 891, the Emergency Information Hotline (1800 000 279), school website: [www.hhs.sa.edu.au](http://www.hhs.sa.edu.au) and SMS text messages.

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.