

BUSH FIRE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND EVACUATION PLAN

Name of facility:

Tharawal Public School
BUSHFIRE PRONE

Address

70 Gerald Road Illawong NSW 2234

Prepared by: Gerry O'Brien

Date: 10/02/2020

Updated: 10/02/2020



TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY

Facility Details

This plan is for: Tharawal Public School

and has been designed to assist management to protect life and property in the event of a bush fire. Tharawal Public School is listed on the NSW Schools in School Bush Fire Prone Area which means there is a risk that the school may be affected by bush fire, particularly during the spring and summer months.

This Plan outlines procedures for both **sheltering** (remaining on-site) and **evacuation** to enhance the protection of occupants from the threat of a bush fire.

The Primary Action to follow under normal bush fire conditions is to:

Shelter



Evacuate



Contact person: Gerry O'Brien

Position / role: Principal

Phone number (BH): 9543 5000

Phone number (AH): 0414 398 078

Type of facility: public school

Number of buildings: 8

Number of employees: 31

Number of occupants: .372 students + various volunteers

Students aged between 5 and 12 years – close supervision required

Number of occupants with support needs: 1 ie students/staff with disabilities

Provide description of support needs:

5 students with anaphylaxis.

29 students with severe asthma.

10 students with complex health care needs.

1 student with physical disability.

3 staff with physical disability/health care needs.

Schools consists of 8 buildings of brick constructions.

Roles & Responsibilities

The following outlines who has the responsibility of implementing the emergency procedures in the event of a bushfire.

Position	Name or person	Building/area of responsibility	Mobile phone number
Principal	Gerry O'Brien	Site Controller responsible for co-ordination of response procedures and chief communicator with Emergency Services and	0414 398 078
Assistant Principal	Julianne Paton	As above if principal is not available	0413 552 845
Assistant Principal	Nicole Sweetman (Rel)	a/a	0402 203 208
Assistant Principal	Rochelle O'Connor	a/a	0423 096 523

Emergency Contacts

Name of organisation	Office/contact	Phone Number
Emergency	Police, Ambulance, Fire	000
Illawong Rural Fire Service	Local Fire Control Centre	9543 0421
NSW Rural Fire Service	Bush Fire Information Line	1800 679 737 1800 NSW RFS
NSW Rural Fire Service	Website	www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
NSW Police Force	Sutherland LAC	9542 0899
State Emergency Service	Sutherland Area	13 25 00
Sutherland Shire Council	Sutherland	9710 0333
Sutherland Hospital	Caringbah	9540 7111
Safety & Security	State Office	1300 363 778
WHS Directorate	Director – to advise of temporary ceasing of	Email: bushfire@det.nsw.edu.au Phone: 9707 6404 or 9707 6227
Director, NSW Public Schools – Woronora Network	Miranda Jennifer French	9531 3900 0412 691 967

PREPARATION:

Before and at the commencement of the Bush Fire Danger Period, we will:

- a. Review and update the school's Emergency Management Plan that includes this Bushfire Management Plan. (Update ICE with reviewed documents).
- b. Liaise with emergency service agencies about emergency procedures and vegetation management in the vicinity of the school and any other issues that are appropriate.
- c. Communicate the school's bushfire preparedness arrangements (the Bushfire Plan) with school staff including their responsibilities at a staff meeting early October and January (Start of Term 4 and start of Term 1 each year)
- d. Communicate the school's bushfire preparedness arrangements with the school and student community (e.g. school newsletter or intranet)
Refer to NSW RFS My Fire Plan website to assist residents in preparing a bushfire survival plan for their own home.
- e. Communicate the school's bushfire preparedness arrangements with community users (sample letter on school letterhead)
- f. Review school's set-up for local notification system i.e. SMS messaging process and/or school website updates to communicate during emergency situation to parents (includes communication regarding short-term immediate ceasing operations or ceasing operations next day. *(see Annexure X Procedures to temporarily cease operations due to an emergency or potential emergency situation)*)
- g. Review staff completion of the e-safety Bush Fire module early October of each year.
- h. Test and verify fire protection systems (fire hydrants, evacuation alarms, fire extinguishers)
- i. Check emergency equipment and first aid resources are available and operational (battery radio, mobile telephone)
- j. Consult with the NSW RFS regarding our bush fire arrangements evacuation and a shelter in place option
- k. Provide updated Principal and Executive contact details including a mobile number for emergency contact after school hours to local Emergency Services and Police.
- l. Conduct practice fire evacuation drills
- m. Have firebreaks maintained and garden rubbish, native shrubs and tree branches kept well clear of buildings
- n. Arrange contractors to clear gutters of dry leaves and other debris around the site
- o. Lock away flammable items e.g. door mats and garbage skips
- p. Liaise with Asset Management Unit (AMU) regarding Asset Protection zones
- q. Contact off-site refuge (where applicable) i.e. school, community facilities for notification of potential use during a bushfire emergency
- r. Contact transport suppliers to confirm potential use during a bushfire emergency
- s. Have slabs of water and cups stored in the hall in case of bushfire emergency
- t. Send reminder of having an up to date bush fire plan and school procedures to community

During the bushfire season including during periods of increased fire danger we will monitor information sources for bushfire conditions by:-

- a. Listening to the local radio station, TV and/or monitoring the NSW Rural Fire Service website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au for information on bush fire activity or fire danger ratings.
- b. Knowing the Fire Danger Ratings for the area
- c. Staying alert for warnings such as Bush Fire Alert Levels issued by the RFS

- d. Watching for signs of fire, especially smoke or the smell of smoke
- e. Calling the RFS Bush fire Information Line on 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)
- f. Contacting the WHS Directorate on 9707 6227 for information and support
- g. Downloading the free iPhone application from NSW Rural Fire Service – Fires Near Me NSW.
- h. Monitor Fires Near Me App/RFS Hotline/FB for updates – Principal/SAM/SAO
- i. Liaise with Menai High School
- j. Any RFS alert communication sent through to staff

During the bush fire danger period, the Bureau of Meteorology issues fire danger Ratings each afternoon for the following day

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

If evaluation of the safety of employees and occupants has determined that it would be safer for ALL persons to evacuate to a designated refuge and time permits. This evaluation will be in consultation

Designated assembly points

1. School Hall (assembly area 1)
2. Classrooms (assembly area 2)

Refuge (primary)

Name of venue (primary): Revesby Workers Club
 Address of venue: 2B Brett St, Revesby NSW 2212
 Nearest cross-street: The River Road, Revesby NSW 2212
 Phone number: 9772 2100

Transportation arrangements: Number of vehicles required: 7

Name of organisation providing transportation: Veolia Bus Company
 Contact phone number: 02 8700 0555
 Time required to have transportation available: 2 hours
 Estimated travelling time to destination: 20– 30 minutes

Refuge (alternate)

Name of venue (alternate): Penshurst West Public School
 Address of venue: Forest Road, Mortdale NSW 2223
 Nearest cross-street: Scott Street,
Contact Number: 9570 4602

Transportation arrangements: Number of vehicles required: 7

Name of organisation providing transportation: Veolia Bus Company
 Contact phone number: 02 8700 0555
 Time required to have transportation available: 2 hours
 Estimated travelling time to destination: 20- 30 minutes

RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Procedures in the event of a bushfire in the surrounding areas - EVACUATION

Trigger	Action	Who
Imminent bush fire threat to the school – includes information on local events, smell of smoke, weather conditions likely to impact on fire events in the area – primary action to evacuate	Consult through NSW RFS Website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au , contact 1800 NSW RFS, check smart phone Fires Near Me application After consultation with emergency services & Director NSWPS, decision is made on action	Principal
	Inform staff of fire situation and liaise with MHS	Principal
	Alert staff to potential activation of procedures for safe movement of students with disabilities	Principal
	Consult with local Emergency Services, Director, Public Schools and WHS Directorate to determine action to be taken e.g. temporarily relocate or cease operations. (See Attachment 1)	Principal
	Check www.livetraffic.com.au for potential road closures or traffic restrictions (consider road blocks for parent pick up from school site or off site location)	Principal/SAM
	Prepare notifications (bulk SMS/Facebook) to parents/carers pending potential collecting of students by parents or evacuation activity if safe to do so and if advised.	Principal/SAM
	Contact community users and BASC to advise of ceasing of operations	Principal/SAM
	Contact cleaner and Cleaning company to advise of ceasing operations	Principal/SAM
	Continue to monitor situation and stay contactable with mobile phone at all times	Principal
	Implement transport arrangements – contact bus company	SAM
	Arrange initial collection of Emergency Kit contents: including:- First Aid Kit, Health Care Plans Epipens Asthma medication and prescribed medication, student class roll, visitors book, mobile phones, Bushfire Emergency Plan, pens, whistle or bell, workplace keys, torch radio and spare batteries for each, bottled water and plastic cups	SAM/First Aid Officer
	Collect rolls/class lists Staff lists, visitors book and emergency contacts list – staff and students	SAM
	Sound evacuation alarm	Principal/SAM
	Students, staff, visitors and contractors move to evacuation assembly point	Wardens/teachers
	Conduct roll call of all persons	Teachers/Principal
	Locate missing persons where possible or advise emergency services	Principal/Wardens
	Provide clear information on facts to all assembled persons	Principal
	Provide script for students Facebook/phone contact with parents where applicable	Principal
	Evacuation to offsite venue initiated	Principal
	On arrival at evacuation conduct roll call for all persons	Principal/teachers
	Report missing persons to Principal/emergency services	Principal
	Provide updates to Director, NSW Public Schools and WHS Directorate where possible	Principal

	Record release of students to parents	Principal/Teachers
	Contact parents where applicable	Principal/SAM
Emerging Bushfire Risk – decision to cease operations	After consultation with Emergency Services, school determines with Director Public School to temporarily cease operations for the day and/or the next day. Notification to WHS Directorate is made (email: bushfire@det.nsw.edu.au or call 9707 6404/6227	Principal
	Updates school website or bulk SMS or email with advice to parents to collect students as soon as possible.	Principal/SAM
	Student release to parents to be recorded	Teachers
	Evacuation to offsite venue initiated for remaining staff and students as per Evacuation Procedures	Principal
	Provide updates to Director, Public Schools and WHS Directorate on status of personnel on site.	Principal
Imminent bush fire threat to the school – primary action to “shelter in place”.	See Procedures for Shelter in place	Principal

SHELTERING PROCEDURES

If evaluation of the safety of employees and occupants has determined that it would be safer for ALL persons to shelter in a designated refuge.

The following are the designated refuges allocated within the premises.

Designated refuges

- a. School Hall

Procedure for sheltering during a bush fire emergency – SHELTER IN PLACE

Trigger	Action	Who Responsible
Imminent bush fire threat to the school – primary action to “shelter in place”.	After consultation with Emergency Services & Director NSW Public Schools, school determines cease operations and “Shelter in Place”. Notification to WHS Directorate is made. (See Attachments 1) Liaise with MHS	Principal
	Updates school website and/or send bulk SMS to parents/cares/next of kin to advise of school “shelter in place”.	SAM
	Contact community users and BASC to advise of ceasing of operations	Principal/SAM
	Continuous ringing of old school bell	SAM/SAO
	Collect Emergency Kit items including:- First Aid Kit, Health Care Plans Epipens, Asthma medication and prescribed medication, student class roll, visitors book, mobile phones, Bushfire Emergency Plan, pens, whistle or bell, workplace keys, torch, radio and spare batteries for each, bottled water and plastic cups	SAM/First Aid Officer
	Collect rolls/class lists Staff lists, visitors book and emergency contacts list – staff and students	SAM
	Students, staff, visitors and contractors move to “shelter in place” location.	Wardens
	Floor Wardens check that all classrooms and toilets are clear and close doors	wardens
	Shut off Gas and electrical mains	Wardens/GA
	Conduct roll call of students, staff, visitors and contractors	teachers
	Report missing persons to Chief Warden (Principal)	Wardens/teachers

	Locate missing persons where possible or advise emergency services	Principal/Wardens
	Provide clear information on facts to all assembled persons	Principal
	Provide script for student Facebook/phone contact with parents where applicable	Principal
	Advise cleaners and cleaning company of actions if possible	Principal/SAM
	Advise community users of actions if possible	Principal
	Turn off air conditioning	All staff
	Close doors, draw blinds and cover base of doors with wet fabric	Wardens/all staff
	If time/staff available roofs to be hosed down, check that taps are working and fill available containers with water.	GA
	Keep personnel hydrated, consider saturating clothing with water, cover as much exposed skin as possible with natural fibre fabric (where possible)	All staff
	Assemble persons away from part of the building which will be initially exposed to fire.	Wardens
	Continue to monitor bushfire situation and stay contactable with mobile phone/portable radio at all times.	Principal
	Provide updates to Director, Public Schools and WHS Directorate on status where possible.	Principal
	When the fire has passed and the threat from radiant heat has abated, all persons may move to the open area field away from the initial exposure area and a check is made of the buildings for outbreaks of fire	Principal in consultation with emergency services
	Conduct roll call of all persons	Teachers/Principal
	Provide updates to Director, Public Schools and WHS Directorate on status where possible	Principal
	Updates school website or bulk SMS or email with advice to parents to collect students	SAM
	Student release with parents to be recorded.	Teachers

After the bush fire event

- a. Principal decides when to re-open the workplace, in consultation with local emergency services, Director, Public Schools, WHS Directorate and Assets management Directorate
- b. Confirm with NSW Fire Brigade that utilities (water, electricity and gas) are safe to use.
- c. Advise the school community of plans to recommence operations (school website, email or text)
- d. Implement procedures to resume workplace activities including providing counselling and support to those affected by the incident



Fig. 10 Scale

June 2014

LEGEND	RESPONSIBILITIES	ACTIONS	RESTRICTIONS
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Zone 1	School	Maintain all trees by current practices	None
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Areas with no bushfire protection or environmental constraints

Zone 2A
Inner Protection Area (IPA);
surrounding buildings

- Remove well established structural buildings and garden trees
- Prune trees, shrubs and mossy ferns regularly, especially around roofs and windows
- Tree sampling and removal 2m-5m safe section from buildings

• No additional trees or shrubs to be planted

Site Boundary

SIGN OFF

Principal:
Phone:
Responsible Zone:
Signature:

AKU Contract:
Phone:
Responsible Zones:
Signature:

Date:

Attachment 1

Procedures to temporarily cease operations due to an emergency or potential emergency situation



Education

Procedures to temporarily cease operations due to an emergency or potential emergency situation



An emergency is defined as an event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment and which requires a significant or coordinated response. Some examples of emergencies or potential emergencies that may impact on NSW government schools are bushfires, fire, floods, or a major incident in the vicinity of the school such as a gas leak, power blackout, or other events which may have caused a significant impact on the operations of the school.

In the event of an emergency, schools should enact their *Emergency Management Plan*, which is inclusive of an evacuation plan and contact the emergency services immediately. In most cases, schools will be advised by emergency services of the appropriate action to take.

However, there may be occasions when the Principal or Director, Public Schools NSW has been advised of an emerging situation and determine that it is in the best interests of the safety of staff and students to temporarily cease operations at the school. In some cases this will relate to the operation of the school for the following day.

These major disruptions to the school will mean that the Principal, as the leader and manager of the school site, or Director, Public Schools NSW will make the decision that the school is either:

- Operational (this means that there are staff and students on site, albeit likely to be minimal);
or
- Non-operational (this means that there are no staff or students on site).

Where a school determines that a decision to temporarily cease operations is appropriate for any emergency situation, including natural disasters such as bushfire or flood, they must make contact with the Work, Health and Safety (WHS) Directorate to provide details. This will allow the Department to fulfil its obligations for advising the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) of any temporary closures during an emergency event.

V2: Updated September 2015

If a school cannot be contacted by telephone to confirm its status, the Director, Public Schools NSW must contact the WHS Directorate to arrange for the local emergency services to undertake a welfare check on the school. The school will be considered operational until confirmed by emergency services.

The following steps should be followed.

Step 1: Where a Principal has concerns about the viability of their school operating due to local circumstances, the Principal should consider available advice from emergency services and determine the best approach to take to ensure the health and safety of staff and students.

At this point advice can also be sought from the relevant state office area, e.g. School Safety and Security Response Unit, WHS Directorate, Asset Management School Operations and Performance Division.

Options that should be discussed include:

- Maintaining school operations or remaining at the school. Note: emergency services may issue a specific direction for a school to ‘shelter in place’ in an emergency e.g. a bushfire, as this is considered to be the safest place for staff and students to be at a given time;
- Temporarily ceasing school operations – meaning the school is non-operational (no staff or students on site); or
- Taking appropriate steps such as advising parents that they may wish to collect students if appropriate during the course of the day.

Step 2: Where a decision is made to temporarily cease operations, consider relocation options for staff and enact communication to the school community, including as much information as possible.

Step 3: Where possible¹, principals are required to notify the Director, Public Schools NSW and the School Operations and Performance Division of the decision to temporarily cease operations.

Principals are responsible for updating their school website to advise the school community whether the school is either;

- Operational (detailing the operational arrangements on site); or
- Non-operational (this means that no staff or students are on site)

The School Operations and Performance Division is responsible for liaising with Communication and Engagement Directorate to confirm which schools are operational / non-operational, where possible. The Department of Education School

¹ If the principal has no access to communication devices, the Director, Public Schools NSW should advise the WHS Directorate which will arrange for emergency services to undertake a welfare check of the school.

Safety website will then be updated by Communication and Engagement Directorate with this advice.

Where possible, principals must provide status reports at 8am each morning and 2pm each day. The status reports are to be provided to the School Operations and Performance Division (and Work Health and Safety Directorate, where appropriate as detailed below). The status report must detail if the school is:

- Operational (number of staff and students on site); or
- Non-operational (this means that no staff or students are on site)

All schools, including those that resume operation, must provide an update. When the decision to

temporarily cease school operations is made due to an

emergency involving a natural disaster, such as bushfire or flood, the WHS

Directorate must be advised by contacting the Group Director or Director on 0413 468 415 or 0459 847 649 as it is responsible for advising the State Emergency Operations Centre of any temporary closures during an emergency. The responsibility for contacting the WHS Directorate should be determined locally, taking into consideration the circumstances of the situation.

Step 4: School temporarily ceases operations. This action is normally taken for one school day only unless there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. flooding has isolated a location or the school is temporarily unsafe for use.

Step 5: Once it is deemed safe to resume operations, the Principal must notify the Office of Schools and advise the school community of return to normal operational services or alternative arrangements as soon as possible.

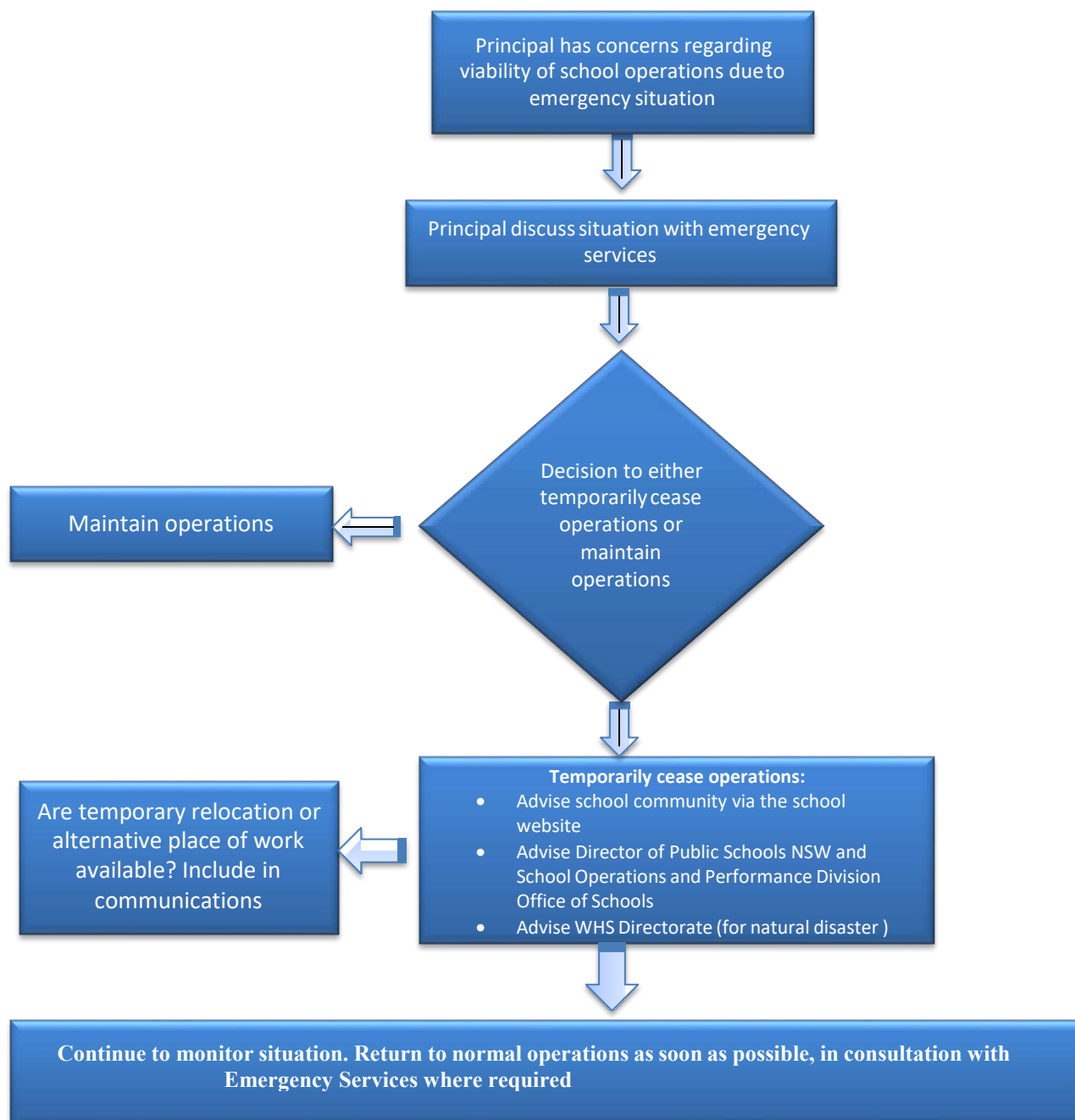
Appendices:

A. Protocols flowchart

B. Sample Communication for schools



Appendix A: Protocols Flowchart



Appendix B: Sample communication for schools

Text, email or bulletin



Short term-immediate ceasing operations

Dear parent or caregiver,

Due to an emerging situation, (*briefly describe*) In order to ensure the safety of staff and students, it has been decided that the school will be temporarily ceasing operations for today, effective (*e.g. immediately, from 1pm*). You are asked to make arrangements to have your child collected from school as soon as possible.

Please be assured that your child is in no danger and will remain under supervision until you arrive.

Please confirm with a staff member when you collect your child.

Please advise me urgently if you are unable to collect your child from school and we will discuss making alternative supervision arrangements.

Please refer to our website at: _____ for up to date information. The school will recommence operations tomorrow morning unless other advice is issued.

School temporarily ceasing operations next day

Dear parent or caregiver,

As you may be aware, there is currently an emergency situation in our community involving (*describe situation briefly*).

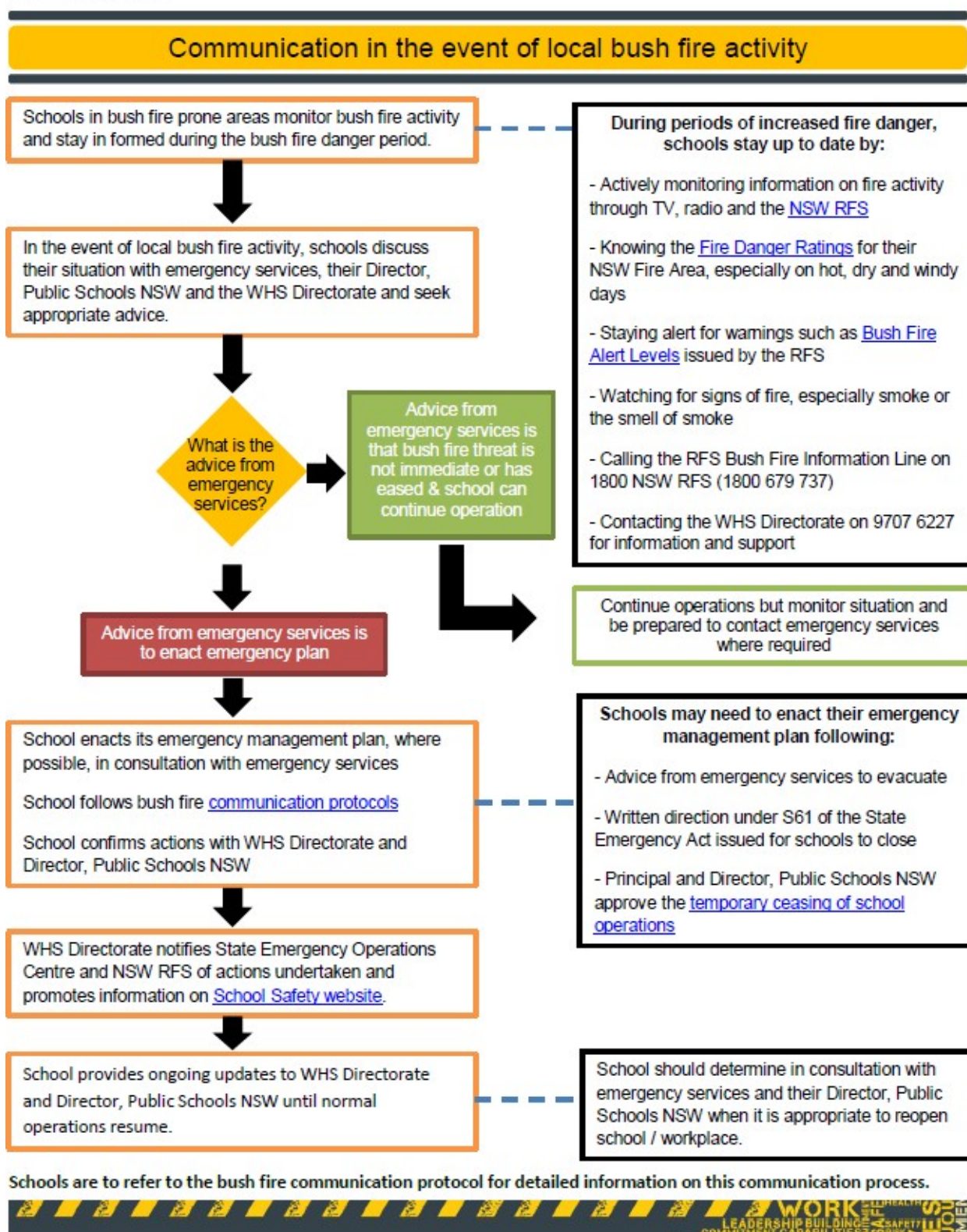
To ensure the safety of staff and students, a decision has been made that our school will not be operating on (*include day, date or time*).

There will be no staff on site tomorrow. Please ensure that you put supervision arrangements in place for your child tomorrow.

Please refer to our website at: _____ for up to date information. The school will recommence operations on (*include day and date*) unless other advice is issued.

Attachment 5

Communication in the event of local bush fire activity



[RECOMMEND SCHOOLS USE THEIR LETTERHEAD]

THIS LETTER IS ONLY FOR SCHOOLS THAT ARE IN BUSH FIRE PRONE AREAS

SAMPLE LETTER TO COMMUNITY USERS

[Name, organisation, address]

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE BUSH FIRE SEASON

Dear [Name]

I am writing to advise you that our school has been identified as a being in a bush fire prone area.

As a community user of our facilities, it is important that you are aware of and implement appropriate emergency planning and response planning in accordance with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

It is important that you undertake appropriate planning and monitor bushfire conditions during the bush fire season and be ready to act where required. If there is bush fire activity in the vicinity of the school you should ring 000 and seek advice.

The Rural Fire Service website provides a range of useful information at:
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

Further information can also be found at NSW Public Schools safety website: <http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-us/news-at-det/bushfire-safety>

Yours sincerely

[Include name and signature of principal]