



Bushfire Preparedness Policy

PURPOSE

To ensure the safety of the staff and students at Maldon Primary School in the event of a Code Red fire danger day.

POLICY

In the event of a forecasted Code Red day by the Bureau of Meteorology for our school's district, Department of Education and Training policies and procedures will be adhered to.

Schools that have been identified as being at high fire risk and on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/bushfirerisk.aspx#subM> will close on days determined Code Red by the Emergency Management Commissioner. **Maldon Primary School has been identified as being one of those at high bushfire risk and will close on Code Red fire danger days.**

Where possible, four to seven days notice of a planned closure will be provided through a uEducateUs notification. Parents and carers should expect that in some instances fewer than four days notice may be provided.

A Code Red day will be determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00pm the day before the potential closure. Once we are advised of the confirmation of the Code Red day, we will provide parents with advice of the school closure before the end of the school day. This advice will be in the form of a uEducateUs notification and/or a paper note sent home with students. Closure information will also be published on the Education Department website <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx>

Once a Code Red day has been determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner this decision will not change – regardless of any changes in the weather forecast. This will help limit confusion and help your family plan for how your children will be cared for when their school or early childhood service is closed.

It is also important to note that:

- No staff will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Code Red day.
- Before-school and after-school care will also be cancelled on these days.
- The school bus route will be cancelled on Code Red days in both Mount Alexander and Greater Bendigo Shire as the route goes through both shires.

School camps/excursions/off-site activities will be cancelled, postponed, or relocated if a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined for the Bureau of Meteorology district in which the camp/excursion/off-site activity is located or if faced with the threat of bushfire. Off-site activities include any activity undertaken by staff/students away from their normal school facility. This can include camps, excursions, sporting activities and training or conferences for staff.

On Code Red days, families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – on such days children should never be left at home or in the care of older children.

As part of preparing our school for potential hazards such as fire, the school's Emergency Management Plan will be regularly updated in accordance with DET guidelines, ensuring that we are prepared in the event of a bushfire.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in August 2020 and will be reviewed in August 2021.