

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



4.33 Bushfire Emergency Plan

This Bushfire Emergency Plan is guided by the paramount consideration that children's safety, rights and best interests are upheld above all other considerations in all decisions, actions and practices.

This Bushfire Emergency Plan has been developed by Bermagui Preschool in consultation with the Approved Provider, the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person, educators and relevant emergency services.

Date Approved: August 2026

Review Date: August 2029

Aim

This Bushfire Emergency Plan outlines the actions to be taken before, during and after a bushfire emergency to protect the safety and wellbeing of children, educators, families and visitors.

Bermagui Preschool adopts a proactive "Leave Early" approach wherever possible and will follow the advice and directions of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS), NSW Police and other emergency services.

This Bushfire Emergency Plan should be read in conjunction with:

- Policy 4.16 Emergency Procedures (Evacuation and Lockdown)
- Policy 4.38 Potential Emergencies
- Emergency Evacuation Maps
- Emergency Contact Procedures

Monitoring Bushfire Conditions

During the bushfire season, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will:

- Monitor the Hazards Near Me NSW App.
- Monitor the NSW Rural Fire Service website.
- Monitor local ABC radio and official emergency broadcasts.
- Seek advice from the NSW Rural Fire Service where required.
- Monitor Fire Danger Ratings and Bush Fire Alerts throughout the day.
- Consider local weather conditions, road access and advice from emergency services when determining whether it is safe for the Preschool to operate.

Emergency Contacts

- Emergency Services (Fire, Police, Ambulance)
Triple Zero (000)
- NSW Rural Fire Service – Far South Coast District (Bega Fire Control Centre)
Phone: (02) 6494 7400

Fire Danger Ratings

Bermagui Preschool will monitor the Australian Fire Danger Rating System throughout the bushfire season. The Preschool will not operate on days where the Fire Danger Rating for the Bermagui Fire Weather District is:

- **Extreme**
- **Catastrophic**

The Preschool may also close where:

- advised by the NSW Rural Fire Service;
- advised by NSW Police or another emergency service;
- there is active fire activity that may impact the Preschool;
- road access becomes unsafe;
- essential services are disrupted; or
- the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person determines that operating safely is no longer possible.

Families will be notified of any closure as early as practicable.

Bush Fire Alerts

Advice

A fire has started. There is no immediate danger; however, the Preschool will continue monitoring official advice and local conditions.

Watch and Act

There is a heightened level of threat.

The Preschool will:

- closely monitor official advice;
- prepare for possible closure, lockdown or evacuation;
- notify families where practicable; and
- request the immediate collection of children where appropriate.

Emergency Warning

An Emergency Warning represents the highest level of bushfire alert. The Preschool will immediately implement this Bushfire Emergency Plan and follow the directions of emergency services.

Family Communication

Where bushfire conditions affect Preschool operations, families will be notified as early as practicable using available communication methods, including:

- HubHello
- SMS
- Telephone
- Email
- Other communication systems used by the Preschool.

The Preschool recognises that bushfire emergencies may result in power outages, mobile network congestion or failures, internet disruptions and other communication interruptions. Where usual communication methods are unavailable, educators will make every reasonable effort to communicate with families using any available means as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

Families are encouraged to:

- ensure their emergency contact details remain current;
- monitor HubHello for updates where available;
- monitor the Hazards Near Me NSW App;
- monitor the NSW Rural Fire Service website;
- monitor ABC Local Radio and official emergency broadcasts; and
- follow official emergency warnings and directions.

Bushfire Response During Preschool Hours

If a bushfire threatens the Preschool while children are attending, educators will immediately implement this Bushfire Emergency Plan.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will:

- Contact Triple Zero (000) where required.
- Consult with the NSW Rural Fire Service where practicable.
- Monitor official emergency information.
- Determine, in consultation with emergency services where possible, whether lockdown, evacuation or early closure provides the safest option.
- Maintain communication with families whenever it is safe and practicable to do so.
- Ensure children's safety remains the highest priority throughout the emergency.

Lockdown Procedure

Where remaining inside provides the safest option, educators will:

- Move all children indoors.
- Account for every child, educator and visitor.
- Close and secure all external doors and windows.
- Shut ventilation systems where appropriate.
- Place wet towels beneath external doors if recommended by emergency services.
- Keep children calm, reassured and engaged.
- Continue monitoring official emergency information.
- Remain inside until advised by emergency services that it is safe to leave.

Evacuation Procedure

Where evacuation is required, educators will:

- Account for every child, educator and visitor.
- Take attendance records.
- Take emergency contact records.
- Take children's medications.
- Take the first aid kit.
- Take the emergency backpack.
- Proceed to the designated assembly area or another location directed by emergency services.
- Maintain continuous supervision of children.
- Continue communication with emergency services and families whenever practicable.

Assembly Areas

Assembly Point 1

Bungaree Sandpit (Gate adjacent to Ambulance Station)

Assembly Point 2

Wooden Seat (Community Centre Car Park)

Assembly Point 3

An alternative location as directed by the NSW Rural Fire Service or other emergency services.

Emergency Relocation

Where emergency services determine that evacuation beyond the immediate assembly area is necessary, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will coordinate relocation.

Transport arrangements will be determined according to the safest available option and in consultation with emergency services where possible.

The Preschool will make every reasonable effort to notify families of children's location as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so, recognising that communication systems may be limited or unavailable during a bushfire emergency.

Emergency Equipment

The Preschool will ensure the following are readily available:

- Attendance records
- Emergency contact records
- Children's medications
- First aid kit
- Emergency backpack
- Mobile telephone
- Drinking water
- High-visibility vests (where required)

Practice and Review

The Preschool will:

- practise bushfire emergency procedures at least once every three months;
- include both evacuation and lockdown rehearsals;
- document and evaluate each rehearsal; and
- review this Bushfire Emergency Plan annually, following an emergency event or whenever changes to the Preschool environment or emergency advice occur.

Following a Bushfire Emergency

Following any bushfire emergency, the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person will:

- Account for all children, educators and visitors.
- Notify families as soon as practicable.
- Complete all required incident documentation.
- Notify the NSW Regulatory Authority where a serious incident has occurred in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations.
- Debrief with educators.
- Review the effectiveness of this Bushfire Emergency Plan.
- Implement improvements identified through the review process.

Resources

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- NSW Rural Fire Service
- Hazards Near Me NSW App
- NSW State Emergency Service (SES)
- Australian Fire Danger Rating System

Related Documentation

Related Policies

- 4.16 Emergency Procedures (Evacuation and Lockdown)
- 4.38 Potential Emergencies
- 4.12 Incident, Injury and Trauma
- 4.20 Workplace Health and Safety
- 4.32 First Aid

Related Documents

- Emergency Evacuation Maps
- Emergency Contact List
- Bushfire Risk Assessment
- Emergency Rehearsal Records
- Communication Records

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-November 2024

V2.0 – August 2026: Comprehensive review and update completed. The Bushfire Emergency Plan was revised to align with current NSW Rural Fire Service guidance, the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and the National Quality Standard. The review strengthened procedures for monitoring bushfire conditions, Fire Danger Ratings, emergency communication, lockdown and evacuation responses, family notification, emergency relocation, emergency rehearsals and post-incident review. The Plan also acknowledges that communication systems may be disrupted during bushfire emergencies and reinforces the Preschool's commitment to using all available communication methods to keep families informed whenever it is safe and practicable to do so.