



Leaders in Early Childhood Education

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Dear Parents

Re: Procedures for the Bushfire Season 2021– Hepburn Kindergarten

This letter is to remind parents of the procedure the Hepburn Kindergarten will follow during the summer months in relation to Bushfire Risk Management.

It has been standard practice for a number of years now for Children's Services – and schools – identified as being at high fire risk will be closed on days declared by the fire authorities to be Code Red.

As the Hepburn Kindergarten has been identified as being in a very high fire risk area, the Kindergarten will be closed on all Total Fire Ban Days. This decision has been taken by the ECKA Board of Management in the interests of the safety and wellbeing of all the children, families and staff attending the Hepburn Kindergarten.

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to three days notice of a planned closure. We will contact you directly by letter with advice on planned closures and will confirm the decision to close by 12 noon the day before the planned closure. Where it is not practical to confirm the closure in writing, you will be contacted via telephone. **For this reason it is essential that you ensure that the staff at the Hepburn Kindergarten have your current telephone contact details.**

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child.

No staff will remain on site when the facility is closed by the threat of fire. A sign will be displayed on the kindergarten door to explain that the service is closed due to the declaration of a Total Fire Ban for that day.

On days such as these, families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival plan. On all days of high fire risk, children should never be left at home in the care of older children.

In the event of an emergency your kindergarten will respond in accordance with current emergency management procedures, which includes the requirement to follow direction from fire authorities. A current Emergency Management Plan is located at the kindergarten.

What you can do.

Make sure your family's bushfire plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangement in the event that your kindergarten is closed. **Please make sure kindergarten staff have your current**

contact details, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading both kindergarten and ECKA newsletters, and speaking to your kindergarten staff.

If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.

For up-to-date information on this year's fire season see:

- VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
- <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
- Facebook (facebook.com/cfavic)
- Twitter (twitter.com/CFA_Updates)
- ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters

Finally, if at any time you have concerns about sending your child to kindergarten on a high fire danger day that has not been declared a Total Fire Ban day, please remember that you are able to keep your child at home with you. There is no obligation for you to send your child to kindergarten if you are uneasy about the weather conditions on the day. However, please ensure you do let the staff at your kindergarten know if your child will not be attending kindergarten on any given day.

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to your kindergarten teacher or contact myself on 5339 5055, or 0400 089 143.

Thank-you for your cooperation and understanding.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Geurts

CEO