

Planned Closure/Relocation of Schools due to a Bushfire

The Department of Education (the Department) is concerned to maximise the safety of its students, and staff. **St Marys District School** has been added to the Bushfire Ready Register. Inclusion on this register means that the school may be required to invoke a closure/relocation on a day where a Severe or above Fire Danger Rating (FDR) has been declared for St Marys. At these ratings, it means that if a fire starts, it may become uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving.

When given advance warning by TFS that a Severe FDR has been forecast for a given day, the Principal may direct the pre-emptive closure/relocation of **St Marys District School**. Once the decision is taken, you will be informed of the possible planned closure/relocation by a letter sent home with your child. Parents of students absent on the day this letter is sent home will be contacted by telephone, so please ensure the school has up to date contact details for you.

In the intervening period between the declaration of the pre-emptive closure/relocation and the day of planned closure/relocation, DoE Facility Services staff will monitor weather patterns to stay informed of any change to the forecast for the declared day. The final decision to pre-emptively close/relocate the school will be confirmed by the Principal with the Department no later than 1.30 pm on the day before the declared day. If the forecast changes after that deadline, the closure/relocation will stand, regardless of improvements to the weather conditions later in the afternoon of the day before the declared day or overnight. The intention is to limit confusion or uncertainty for parents and to allow you ample time to make alternative child care arrangements.

Parents will be advised of the confirmation of closure/relocation, or its reversal, by a note sent home with your child on the day before the planned closure/relocation. Again, parents of students absent on this day will be contacted by telephone.

It is anticipated that the school will only be required to close for a single day at a time, but this will depend on the weather. **You will receive an SMS to advise you whether the site will reopen the day after the planned closure/relocation, or whether it will remain closed.** The school website will contain a notice to advise you of the current status of the school closure/relocation and when it is expected to reopen.

I ask that you monitor local media for current information about fire danger ratings and notification of schools reopening. Staying tuned to ABC Local Radio in your locality is advisable. You can also check with TFS on 1800 000 699 or www.tas.fire.gov.au. If any of the options listed above for finding out when to send your child back to school will prove problematic, please contact the school to arrange for us to phone you to advise you when the site will reopen.

Please contact the school on 0363723900 if you have any questions about planned closures/relocation during the bushfire season.

Carolyn Watson

Principal