

## **CPPS Code Red or Catastrophic Fire Danger Policy**

Schools and early childhood education services are assessed annually based on their risk of bushfire and grassfire in line with the Victorian Education Facility Bushfire Risk Methodology. **Chirnside Park Primary School is rated a Category 4 School considered to be at some risk of bushfire or grassfire.**

A Fire Danger rating of 'Code Red' is the highest level of rating in Victoria. It signals the worst conditions for grass or bushfires. A code red fire danger rating means if a fire were to start:

- It could be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving
- Fire services will find it difficult to extinguish
- There is a high likelihood that people in the path of a fire will be killed or seriously injured
- Many homes are likely to be destroyed - even the best prepared homes may not be safe
- Leaving the night before a Code Red Day or early in the morning of a Code Red Day is the safest option for survival

***Chirnside Park Primary School is identified on the Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR) as a Category 4 school and will be pre-emptively closed on days that are determined by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner as having a Code Red Fire Rating. For this reason, when a Victorian Code Red Fire Danger is declared in the immediate or surrounding areas, Chirnside Park Primary School will close.***

### **How much notice will be provided if CPPS will be closed?**

It is intended that families will be given as much notice as possible of a planned closure once an announcement is made by relevant authorities. However, if unexpected weather patterns are experienced, closures may happen at short notice. Wherever possible the final announcement will be made by school authorities no later than **1.00 p.m. the day before the planned school closure.** The school will communicate the details of the closure to our community via a Compass Push Notification and a separate Email. **Once the decision to close has been confirmed, there will be no change** regardless of improvements to weather conditions the following afternoon or overnight. This will help limit confusion and provide time for parents and guardians to make alternative care arrangements for their children.

### **What should my school age child do if school is closed?**

Families are encouraged to ensure that their bushfire survival plans include alternative care arrangements for children in the event of a planned closure. Given the expected severity of weather conditions, children should not be left unattended or under the supervision of older children.

**On average, how many days may Chirnside Park be likely to close due to Code Red Days?**

The exact number of days cannot be predicted; however, it should be noted that Code Red days are very rare.

**Can I keep my child away if I'm concerned about the risk of fires even if the school is open?**

Yes. If your family decides to enact its bushfire survival plan, the most appropriate place for your child may be with you and your family, and not at school. Please advise the school as soon as possible of your child's absence.

**Will school off-site activities (e.g. camps and excursions) continue to operate on high-bushfire risk days? What happens if my child's offsite activity is threatened by fire?**

Offsite activities in high bushfire risk areas, affected by a Code Red day will be cancelled or rescheduled. Chirnside Park Primary School will assess the likely threat of fire when organising offsite activities during the summer fire season.

**What else can I do?**

- Ensure Chirnside Park Primary School has your current contact and emergency details on Compass.
- Review and update your family bushfire survival plan
- Download the Vic Emergency Fires near me mobile App
- Stay up to date during periods of increased fire danger and when there is a bushfire in the local area

This policy will be endorsed annually by school council and updated as part of the schools Emergency Management Plan annually.