

Blue Mountains Steiner School

Policies and Procedures



Emergency Evacuation Fire Procedures

Emergency Response Team

The role is to coordinate school procedures, parent communication and liaison with the police and emergency services. They connect in person or through mobile phone calls. The team consists of Principal, Operations Officer and Council Chairperson. This team is responsible for the entire decision making, including staff roles and responsibilities.

Bushfire Refuge = Hazelbrook Uniting Church – Fredericka 0413742581 or Lesley – 0411 577 507

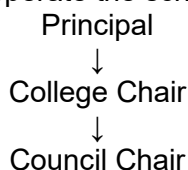
- ☐ Large bushfire-ready building which will accommodate full school
- ☐ Includes inside girls and boys toilets
- ☐ Access to kitchen and water supply
- Access to electricity for phone chargers
- ☐ Easy access to the Highway, public transport and emergency vehicles

Fire Ready Kit

The following items are stored in the School Office as part of the Evacuation procedure: radio / battery loud hailer with siren, towelling, riggers gloves, face mask and goggles, duct tape and plastic sheeting, street directory, torches, 12 bladders of 'long life' water, and disposable cups. First aid kit, medications, student attendance information, staff sign in / out, daily relief sheets, student contact information. This will be brought to the Hazelbrook Uniting Church at the time of the evacuation. The Kit will be checked every 3 months to ensure the contents are fresh and operational.

Procedure

NOTE: In the absence of the Principal, the College Chair will perform the duties of the Principal in consultation with the ER Team. In the absence of the Principal and the College Chair the Council Chairperson or designated council member will perform the duties. The Principal or College Chair must hand over the supervision of their class to another senior teacher to be able to perform the P's duties. Martin- our maintenance person and Fire Warden should be consulted for his expertise and will assess whether to operate the school's fire-fighting equipment.



Definitions:

BMSS: Blue Mountains Steiner School
P: Principal
RFS: Rural Fire Service
OO: Operation's Officer
CC: Council Chair/ College Chair
HUC: Hazelbrook Uniting Church
FW: Fire Warden
FC: Fire Chief. Designated person in charge from the fire dept.

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INFORMATION FOR STAFF, RELIEVING / STUDENT TEACHERS / SITE PERSONNEL / VISITORS

Blue Mountains Steiner School has very strict policies and procedures to manage the threat of bushfire.

We conduct evacuation drills each term to ensure appropriate procedures are in place for the safety of students, staff and others in the event of a bushfire.

Extreme: The Blue Mountains Steiner School will take advice from RFS, SES and AIS regarding possible school closures.

Severe - Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply

Very High - Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply

High - Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply

Low- Moderate - Open: normal bushfire plan procedures apply

NSW RFS KATOOMBA CONTACT - #47847444

SCHOOL CLOSURE: Catastrophic (Code Red)

In the event of a Catastrophic Fire Warning THE SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED. The school will also be CLOSED if the local RFS advise us to do so or if we are unable to meet staff ratios due to people needing to stay home to protect properties from bushfire and remain with their families. Confirmation of the school closure will be provided after 4:00pm on the day before the closure (following RFS advice).

Notice of confirmation will be available on -

☐ The school website www.bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

☐ A SMS text message will be sent to all staff and families on the advice of the Emergency Response Team. School staff will attempt to make telephone contact with families who do not have mobile phone numbers currently in school records.

- The school Facebook

☐ Media services e.g. RFS www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or RFS Twitter for minute by minute updates.

P needs to notify AIS and local RFS if the school is to be closed due to fire danger. This information will also then be posted on their websites.

The Pre-School director needs to notify NSW Govt. Education and Community Services.

HIGH FIRE DANGER DAY:

The school will be on bushfire alert on days when a total fire ban is in place for the Blue Mountains. Confirmation of the status of the fire danger will be confirmed by the Emergency Response Team before 8:30am, in reference to the RFS website and advice given.

The school constantly checks radio RFS website and mobile phones for fire update messages. RFS and AIS send updates to the Principal's phone of severe fire warnings. Staff is notified (via whiteboard in staffroom) if a severe fire warning has been called.

Bushfire Action Plan Teacher Checklist should be on display in the classroom.

The Principal will assess the risk for all excursions. If the risk is high then it is likely that any planned excursions will be cancelled. Staff should not proceed without the Principal's approval or without the school mobile phone.

All students, staff and visitors must ensure they sign in / out to ensure that they are accounted for in case of an evacuation/ lockdown.

FIRE IN DISTRICT:

If the Bushfire Information and Warning Messages issued by the Police, RFS and Emergency Services advise potential threat to safety for students, the Principal will enact Emergency Evacuation to Hazelbrook Uniting Church using the emergency evacuation siren. Emergency procedures will then be implemented.

P will alert any volunteers and helpers on site of the situation.

The Principal will endeavour to keep parents informed of school procedures via the School website and SMS text messages.

FIRE IMPACTING ON SITE:

If there is a direct threat to the school (e.g. fire in a school building or adjoining bush areas, or as a result of a

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Bush-fire warning message given to advise that a bushfire in the district presents a direct threat to the school grounds and building(s) or any other emergency, the Principal will enact Emergency Evacuation to the Hazelbrook Uniting Church by using the emergency evacuation siren. Emergency procedures will then be implemented.

LOCK DOWN

The RFS may inform us that there is no time to act and it is necessary that we stay put at the school. Lock down procedures would then be put in place.

ALERT SIGNAL: an intermittent 'beep'

If you hear this alert signal, open your door and listen to instructions and prepare for evacuation. You will be advised on the PA system during the alert as to the safest evacuation assembly point.

LOCKDOWN SIGNAL: a 'whoop whoop' sound.

ALL CLEAR SIGNAL: '3 blasts' of the siren'.

Students and staff to return to classes as per normal.

(N.B. Following each 'evacuation / lock down drill' staff and students will be invited to contribute to a debriefing report.)

ADMINISTRATION CHECKLIST

FIRE BAN DAY / HIGH FIRE DANGER

(Where the specified person is not in the school the delegated person will assume responsibility for the duties described.)

1. Principal will notify all staff that it is a fire ban day / high fire danger by placing a notice on the board at Staff Room entrance.
2. Principal will assess risk and make final decision re excursions and bus.
3. Principal to check RFS, SES and AIS fire alerts regularly.
4. Principal to ensure that mobile phones are charged and ready for use.
5. Front Office staff to constantly monitor RFS website.
6. Front Office staff and teachers to monitor weather conditions whilst students are on breaks or undertaking outside activities.
7. Principal ensures Temporary Relieving Teachers have access to relevant information.
8. Front Office staff / Grounds Person to advise visitors and volunteers of the situation and emergency procedures.
9. Office staff to prepare two full sets of class lists.
10. Office or designated "back up" Front Office staff to have absentee information if required as well as late arrivals information.
11. Front Office staff to print a list of student / staff medical conditions and requirements. Prepare medications for transportation if required
12. Grounds Person / Fire Warden ensure that hose and knapsack are accessible and ready for use inside
13. Encourage staff to park cars / buses away from vegetation where possible.

FIRE IN DISTRICT

1. P to call together the site emergency response team and make a decision to stay or leave.
2. P to cancel all outdoor activities and excursions for students.
3. P to identify staff and students who live in the affected area.
4. Office Administration to ensure that school mobile phones are charged and ready for emergency use.
5. Office staff to ensure backup for all site computer records and to remove hard drive from site.
6. Prepare Bushfire Refuge (Hazelbrook Uniting Church) by ensuring contact has been made.
7. Grounds Person / Fire Warden to turn on sprinklers, prepare pump and where possible to dampen down the surrounds.
8. Grounds Person / Fire Warden to turn off all external gas cylinders,
9. Emergency Response Team to continually check RFS, AIS and DEET updates.
10. Principal to determine if it is safe for students to take outdoor recess and lunch breaks.
11. Principal contact with RFS, AIS, and Emergency Services, re matters such as school's procedures,

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school and public bus services re possible impacts on bus routes and holding students at school beyond normal dismissal time.

12. If situation continues beyond normal dismissal time, Principal or delegate to inform parents of school decision eg SMS text messages, website and through Facebook RFS to advise the best possible procedure.

FIRE IMPACTING ON SITE

1. School will be advised by the appropriate emergency evacuation signal. Emergency Evacuation Procedures to be followed by all students, staff and visitors.
6. P with Chief Fire Warden to assess possibility of combating fire, turning off power and fuel where possible, windows in classrooms.
7. Grounds Person / Fire Warden to turn on sprinklers and set up pump.
8. Staff to bring portable fire extinguishers from classrooms.
9. Use SMS text messaging system if possible to notify parents that students are moving to the Bushfire Refuge (Hazelbrook Uniting Church).
10. Principal and Senior Leader oversee procedures and liaise with Emergency Services on site.

EVACUATION

The **Office Staff** are to:

- a. Telephone 000;
- b. Sound the Emergency Alarm Fire Button (At the same time using the loud speaker to notify every one by verbal message of the need to evacuate. P will decide whether evacuating to “**BMSS Evacuation Area A**” or “**BMSS Relocation to Kindy**” (note there may also be a relocation to HUC);
- c. Call Hazelbrook Uniting Church (HUC) on Fredericka - #0413742581 or Lesley - #0411577507 to notify them of a need to use their hall if relocating;
- d. Check that every class in the school has heard the fire alarm.
- e. Take with him/her the master set of keys from the office – this includes the School minibus key as well as all items listed below in procedures 5 & 6;
- f. The **office staff** are to shut the office windows, lock the cash drawer, collect the rolls, all sign-in registers (teachers, volunteers & visitors), most recent parent phone list and first aid kit, mobile phones and charger, shut computers down (if time) leave a sign on the office door and make their way to the evacuation area.
- g. The Office Administrator (or office staff) will mark and keep other registers with them until back at school.
- h. Inform local emergency service that the school is being evacuated including how many people and where they are going.
- i. **Office staff** are to advise CS (Community Services) and inform parents as soon as practicable when an evacuation has taken place. Parents must not attempt to pick up children from the school as this could likely create an even more serious hazard due to traffic build up or blockage on the street. The street needs to be open to emergency vehicles and for evacuations/relocations.

The **teachers** are to:

- j. **Teachers** will evacuate all of their class to **assembly area A** (paved area outside the office) unless otherwise advised by the office staff as above.
- k. **Teachers** must **walk** their class to the assembly area quickly. The children need to be seated in their class groups in this area. Children are NOT to run ahead of the teacher.
- l. Teachers should also **close all doors and windows before leaving**. In the case where the fire is internal, shutting doors and windows may contain the fire to this room/building if it is not able to be extinguished with available extinguishers or fire blankets.
- m. **Teachers** need to take their keys with them.
- n. **Teachers** need to take mobile phone and charger if they have one.

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- o. **Teachers** are to ensure that all students have necessary medication with them, i/e asthma puffers/ preventers.
 - p. **Teachers** need to take their roll or class list with them. The teachers will mark their roll immediately. (Teachers will keep their rolls with them so that they can be used again if the children are evacuated. Rolls must be kept until the next day where they will be sent to the office as usual).
 - q. **Teachers** need to be aware of late arrivals to ensure when the roll is marked they are taken into account in the numbering off process.
 - r. **All belongings are to be left behind. All children are to be wearing something on their feet (if wearing inside shoes do not change shoes).**
2. **If a fire breaks out during playtime, the teachers on playground duty will assemble the children in the assembly area in class groups. Those teachers not on playground duty must make their way to the assembly area as quickly as possible to mark their rolls and account for all their students.**

The **P** needs to:

- a. The **P** should then check all buildings and rooms and ensure that no-one remains in any building. He/She is to turn off the mains and check all windows are shut.
- b. When the **P** has returned to the assembly area, **teachers** will report to the **P** if any children are not accounted for.
- c. If any children are unaccounted for the **P** is to notify the **Fire Chief**.
- d. The **P** is to notify teachers when it is safe to return to classrooms or if evacuation/relocation to HUC is needed.

Transport

If a full evacuation to Hazelbrook Uniting Church (HUC) is needed then the minibus should be used to do this. (If the minibus is to be driven by a teacher, another teacher will be given supervision of the driver's class). The evacuation will start with the youngest children first. If the minibus is not available children will be transported using staff vehicles. No permission for this is necessary as it is an emergency situation.

Rather than keeping children waiting for the minibus or staff vehicles, the older children will be directed by **P** and their class teacher to start walking.

Late evacuation is extremely dangerous. A decision to relocate to the Kindy/Boronia building may be made if the threat from bushfire or fire is immediate. This could happen, for instance, if a fire was to start in the bush or valleys near by the school. Given enough time the School's first aim is to evacuate swiftly to HUC.

3. **At Hazelbrook Uniting Church:**

- a. **P** needs to liaise with the Church warden.
- b. **P** needs to liaise with the FC.
- c. **P** needs to liaise with BMSS staff to ensure that everyone knows what is happening.
- d. **Office Staff** need to ensure that all parents are aware of the evacuation and can arrange for the pick-up of their child from HUC once it is safe to do so.
- e. **Teachers** need to ensure that their class are accounted for and looked after.
- f. **Teachers** need to communicate appropriate information to their class about what is happening and when they will be safe to leave.
- g. **P** teachers and office staff need to remain at HUC until every child has been picked up by a parent. (**Teachers** need to record who the child has been picked up by and at what time).
- h. **P** needs to communicate with AIS, DEET and Emergency Services to advise them that all children have been picked up safely.

WHILE BUSHFIRE FRONT IS APPROACHING OR PASSING AND LOCKDOWN IS NECESSARY

P makes the decision to stay at school.

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Teachers take their classes to Kindy

1. Grounds Person / Fire Warden sets up pump to keep the Kindy room saturated. Close windows and eventually doors. Staff to stand by with fire extinguishers
2. Encourage calm, quiet, restrict movement; seat all students/ staff on floor (easier to see them; less likely to faint) away from windows where possible.
3. Isolate any hysterical children (or adults) if possible to office area or designated First Aid area.
4. Use water spray if heat excessive or sparks enter; if smoke excessive, issue towelling to support breathing.
5. Provide regular and appropriate updates to students and staff.

AFTER FIRE FRONT HAS PASSED

1. Principal authorises unlocking of door(s) in preparation for exit after the fire has passed.
2. When Emergency Services and / or Principal decide that the fire front has passed and that the outdoor areas are safer and more comfortable, authorise exit from Kindy. Take First Aid kit and class lists.
3. Principal to regularly advise AIS/DEET of the current situation.
4. School to send SMS text message to parents that the fire front has passed and that students have been accommodated in appropriate location.
5. Student health and well-being will be assessed by teachers and further support eg First Aid or counselling to be administered where appropriate.
6. When deemed appropriate the Principal to advise parents by SMS text that students may be collected from school OR it may be possible to advise parents by text message that school bus will resume for transporting students home. This will be dependent on advice from the relevant authorities.
7. Nominated staff will remain on duty until all students are collected from the school by parents.
8. Incident report form to be written up immediately and filed.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

School website: www.bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

Blue Mountains Steiner School has very strict policies and procedures (in line with AIS and RFS recommendations) to manage the threat of bushfire.

We conduct evacuation drills each year to ensure appropriate procedures are in place for the safety of students, staff and others in the event of a bushfire.

Fire Danger Index (FDI)

In NSW we use the Fire Danger Index. The Fire Danger Index (FDI) is not to be confused with the temperature of the day. The FDI is calculated on the basis of the degree to which vegetation has cured, the wind speed, and the forecast temperature.

In the event of a Catastrophic Fire Warning THE SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED. The school will also be CLOSED if the local RFS advise us to do so or if we are unable to meet staff ratios due to people needing to stay home to protect properties and remain with their families.

Planning ahead

It is essential that all families who live in bushfire prone areas have a bushfire action plan and that part of the plan needs to address what action will be taken when the school is closed. Possibilities include staying with a parent at home or at work, local arrangements with neighbours or friends or taking the child to another school should this be required.

The RFS is very clear that for survival in a bushfire, leaving is the best option. The new fire danger index ratings have been introduced to make it easier for people to decide when to leave their home, particularly when there is a forecast of catastrophic fire danger. In such cases a bushfire action plan should include the need to leave the night before or the morning of such a day.

BUS PROCEDURES FOR BUSHFIRES

PRE BUSHFIRE SEASON PLANNING

- ☐ Meet with the school bus driver at start of term 1 and 4 each year. Ensure bushfire procedures are understood and meet current circumstances.
- ☐ A copy of the Bus Procedures for Bushfires to be stored in the driver's folder.
- ☐ Emergency pull off areas identified on Bus Run Plan and stored in driver's folder.

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- ☐ Carry out emergency bushfire procedures drill with students and driver of each bus.
- ☐ Woollen blankets and 15L of water (to be changed regularly) are kept on the bus.

Scheduled school buses will not run on 'Catastrophic' Fire Ban Days as the School will be closed. On days where the School is open and the rating changes to 'Catastrophic' during the day school buses may operate as normal after consulting with Emergency Services. Parents will be notified and students will be supervised at school until buses can run or students are collected by the parents.

FIRE IN DISTRICT

If a bushfire is reported in the area during the day the Principal will contact the local Emergency Services (RFS) to determine if any roads normally travelled by school buses are closed or affected. Any bus runs affected will not leave the school until the roads are declared safe by the emergency authorities. Parents will be notified and students will be supervised at school until buses can run or students are collected by the parents.

FIRE IMPACTING ON ROUTE

If, during a bus run, a bushfire is noted by the bus driver and there is concern that it may affect the route ahead, then the bus driver:

- ☐ has the authority to abandon the bus run & return to school.
- ☐ should, if safe, drive to one of the pre-planned emergency pull off areas and put emergency procedures on the bus into place.
- ☐ must contact the school by mobile phone and advise the Principal of the decision taken.

WHILE BUSHFIRE FRONT IS APPROACHING OR PASSING

If the bus is overtaken by a fire unexpectedly and threatened by flame, ash, embers or thick smoke the driver should:

- ☐ pull up in a safe location in the middle of the road in an open area with no overhanging trees and as little road side vegetation as possible, ensure lights and hazard lights are on, close all windows and air vents, turn off the air conditioner and leave the engine running.
- ☐ The bus driver is to instruct students to get down as low as possible (on the floor) and cover students with woollen blankets.
- ☐ When safe to do so, contact the school via mobile phone etc. & advise the Principal of the situation.

AFTER THE FIRE FRONT HAS PASSED

Once the fire front has passed, the driver:

- ☐ is to keep the students as calm as possible by reassuring them.
- ☐ is to get out & check the bus for any damage (can use the extinguisher to put out any smouldering embers etc.).
- ☐ must decide whether to get the students out of the bus & get them to a safe spot away from burning trees etc., or to drive away from the fire.
- ☐ is to contact the school advising the Principal of the current situation.

Under no circumstances is the bus driver &/or any staff member on board expected to put themselves at further risk to save/protect property i.e. the bus. The safety of students, passengers & the bus driver is paramount.

BUSHFIRE PREPARATION / GROUNDS / HAZARD PLAN

- ☐ Emergency Response Team has been established and members instructed on their roles and responsibilities.
- ☐ Bushfire Action Plan has been developed.
- ☐ Regular emergency bushfire drills are carried out by students and staff.

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- ☐ All staff and regular visitors have received pre fire season updates and instruction about the contents and requirements of the Blue Mountains Steiner School Bushfire Action Plan.
- ☐ Staff have been allocated roles and responsibilities at the various stages of the Bushfire Action Plan.
- ☐ Fire Warden / Grounds Person and staff instructed in the operation of pump, sprinklers and hoses.
- ☐ Bushfire Hazard Management Plan developed: Dense undergrowth cleared, as well as overhanging branches from classrooms and power lines.
- ☐ Ongoing preventative maintenance to clear flammable debris, roof gutters, branches overhanging buildings and sheds, dry grass and vegetation cleared to the boundaries, fuel reduction zone around the site to best possible assist our school.
 - . Verandahs to be cleared.
 - . Clutter and storage to be removed from underneath buildings if posing a fire risk.

BUSHFIRE RECOVERY PLAN

1. Ensure no one leaves the Bushfire Refuge (Hazelbrook Uniting Church) until the situation is assessed to be safe by the Principal or as advised by the Emergency Services.
2. Make preparations to care for students for an extended period of time.
3. Nominated staff members will remain on duty until all students are collected from the school.
4. Principal will endeavour to coordinate appropriate use of resources to meet student and staff immediate and extended needs e.g. food, water
5. Principal will delegate staff to check for and treat any injuries
6. Principal to liaise with Emergency Services.
7. Principal to advise AIS, DEET and RFS of the current situation.
8. Principal to refer media enquiries to the Council Chairperson.
9. Principal to coordinate for students to be collected by families at safe location when the situation has been declared safe. Record name of students and authorised person collecting them as they leave.
10. All staff undertake assigned roles and responsibilities
11. Principal to coordinate debrief of situation and processes when appropriate including a review of the effectiveness of staff instruction undertaken in the light of the experience
12. Principal to seek support from counsellors and social workers when appropriate
13. Fire Warden to ensure fire fighting systems checked and readied for use again
14. Office Administrator to replenish Fire Ready Kit
15. Principal to ensure appropriate authorities assess the safety of site buildings once the area is declared safe
16. Principal to complete the relevant AIS report.

Related policies:

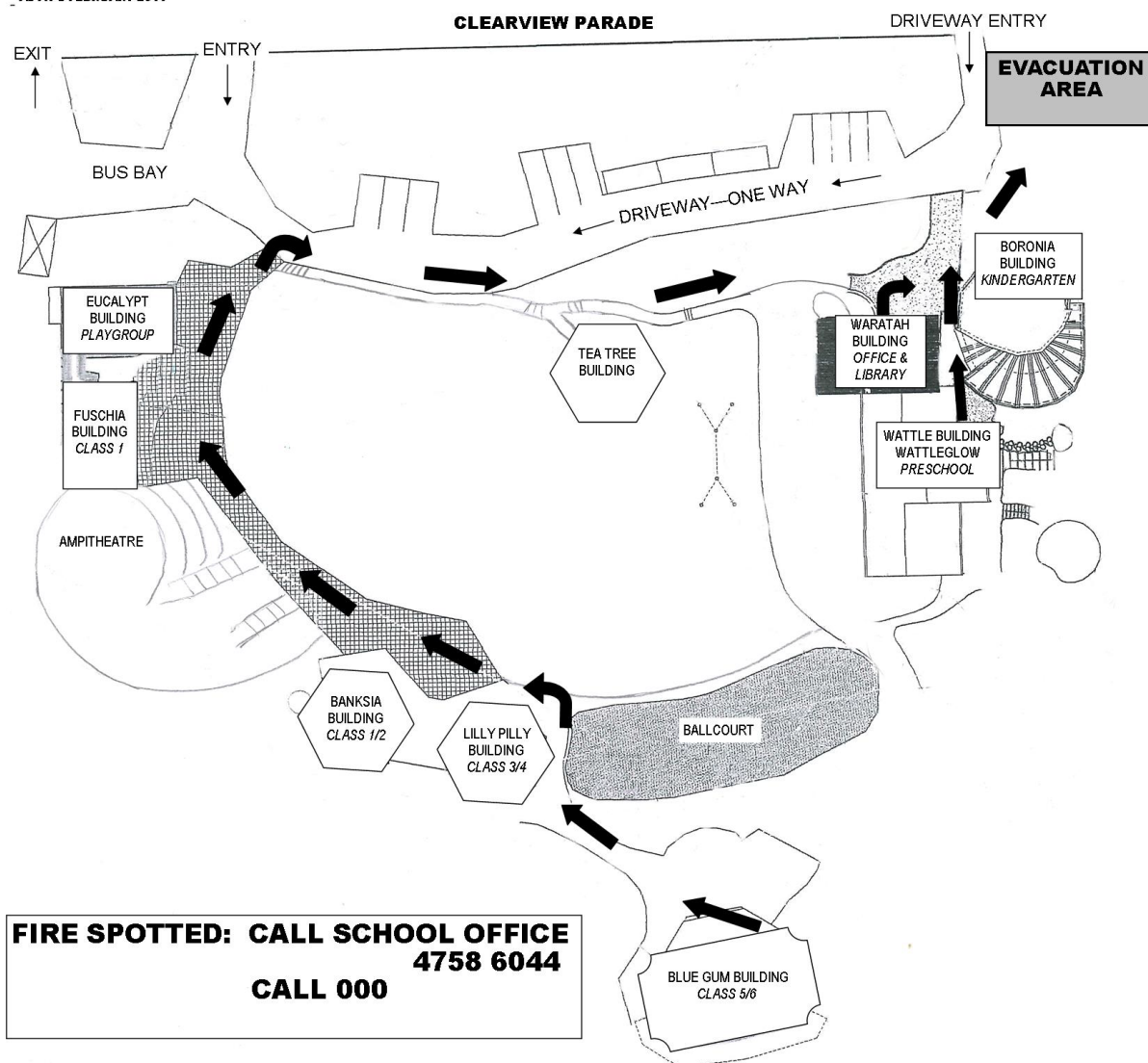
Policy 9. Blue Mtns Steiner Wattle Glow Pre-School Fire and Emergency Evacuation Policy.
Quality Are 2: Children's Health and Safety.

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FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

AS AT 3 FEBRUARY 2019



**FIRE SPOTTED: CALL SCHOOL OFFICE
4758 6044
CALL 000**

FIRE ALERT: INTERMITTENT BEEP + announcement advising assembly area: "BMSS Evacuation Area"

TEACHERS line up **CHILDREN** outside room ready to evacuate—keep shoes on and all belongings left behind
TEACHERS close and lock all doors and windows before leaving and take keys and roll (if not already at office)

IF INTERNAL FIRE may be able to be extinguished with available fire extinguisher/fire blanket

TEACHERS walk class in lines to assembly area quickly—no children running ahead of teacher

TEACHERS seat children in class groups at/in assembly area and check roll

TEACHERS report any missing children to P / Fire Duty Officer (FDO)

AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS from P / FDO before going back to class or relocation off site to Hazelbrook Public School

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Evaluation of emergency evacuation practice

Date of emergency practice:
Time:
Name of individual alerting staff to emergency (e.g. fire)
Specify what kind of emergency and location on premises: Fire Lockdown other emergency.... Please specify_____
Staff present:
Amount of time taken to evacuate the premises:
Were all staff accounted for:
Were all children accounted for: Names of children absent:
Were there any difficulties evacuating children? Were there any difficulties getting children to evacuation area? Were there ways of improving?
Future action plan Who is implementing this action plan? How & when?