**Happy Little Butterfly**

**Early Learning Centre**

# Bushfire Response Policy

**Aim**

Happy Little Butterfly always aims to keep all children and educators safe. Therefore, in the instance of a bush fire, the service will always act to protect the educators and children in line with recommendations and instructions from relevant emergency authorities.

**Legislative Requirements**

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

**Who is affected by this policy?**

Child

Staff

Management

Visitors

**Implementation**

Under the following circumstances:

- On days of Total Fire Ban

- When there is a fire in the local district.

- When a bushfire is threatening or impacting the site.

- During a period of recovery if a bushfire impacts the service

- During peak bush fire seasons, such as Summer

* Staff at the centre will monitor the Fire Danger Rating daily. Should the Rating by above High, educators will monitor the situation in line with the process in our region, such as via the internet, NSW Rural Fire Service app or radio, to keep aware of the situation.
* Trees will be trimmed to a distance of 2m from the buildings. Educators will inspect the grounds at the beginning of Spring and the Owner/Nominated Supervisor will arrange for any lopping of branches if necessary.
* In line with this, gutters and roofs will regularly be cleaned and kept free of leaves.
* Emergency Backpack will be organised and stored somewhere that is easily accessible. This kit will include:

- A copy of the Bushfire Action Plan

- Emergency Contact Details for each child.

- Child attendance registers.

- Emergency telephone numbers.

- First Aid Kit.

- Cups

- Nappies

- Gloves

- Nappy Wipes

This Kit will be checked at the start of Spring for contents. Nominated/Certified Supervisor to provide mobile phone.

**Very High, Severe, Extreme or Catastrophic Fire Danger Ratings**

* On days where the Fire Danger Rating is Very High, Severe, Extreme or Catastrophic, the service will inform families by posting a warning on the gate, on social media and through the Appsessment App.
* Children will be transitioned throughout the day as per our usual practice.
* Any educators who are planned to attend off-site training will stay at the service, and have their training cancelled/rescheduled.
* All educators will monitor conditions when on duty outside. Educators will also ensure that no art and craft works, posters etc are hung outside and that garbage bins are emptied throughout the day.
* Family members will be required to provide a reliable contact number for the day and families are required to provide the service with their child’s asthma medication for the day.
* The supervising educator will keep a mobile phone on them at all times to receive alerts and contact parents should a fire start in the area.
* The Emergency Contact register and Daily Roll will be added to the Kit.
* Staff at the centre will ensure that all hazards are removed from passages and walkways and nothing is blocking emergency exits.

**Establishing threat Status**

In the event of a bushfire, natural disaster or other emergency that could occur during business hours at Happy Little Butterfly Early Learning Centre, the following procedure will be followed:

* The staff member, upon hearing the potential danger, will immediately contact Management at the centre. Should managers not be on site they can be contacted via mobile phone.
* Management will confirm the nature of the event by contacting the relevant agency (NSW Rural Fire Service, Department of Education, Fire Brigade and other local emergency services) and evaluate the possible threat to centre staff and users.
* Centre Management, in consultation with each other, will then determine if the nature of the incident is considered a possible, potential or direct threat.

**Possible Threat**

* This incident/event is not deemed a direct and immediate threat, however may warrant careful monitoring;
* Centre Management will continue to monitor events and remain in contact with the relevant agency until the threat has passed or the centre closes at 6pm.

**Potential Threat**

* The incident/event is of an uncertain or potentially hazardous nature to centre staff and those signed in at the centre according to the relevant agency/agencies.
* Centre Management will continue to monitor events and remain in contact with the relevant agency or agencies until the threat has passed or the centre closes at 6pm.
* Centre Management will endeavour to contact all parents who are signed into the centre to update them and ensure that they will be able to pick their children up.
* If there is an issue with a parent returning to pick up a child (ie. The usual route to the centre is closed due to fire) Management will ask the parent to nominate another parent to pick up their child from the centre should the centre have to close and parents are asked to pick up their children.

**Direct Threat**

* If Management decide, based on the available information from the agency/agencies, that the threat is likely to, or has a high likelihood of impacting centre staff and users, management will:
* Establish communications between the agency/agencies and the centre via phone, email or web updates and ensure that these communications are continually updated to all staff and parents.
* Meet with all nominated educators to discuss the situation and perform their duties.
* The children will continue to be transitioned through their day with our usual transition method.
* All excursions if planned will be cancelled.
* Contact Campbelltown Public School to see the Department of Education’s stance on the issue and whether a school closure has been authorised.
* If a school closure has been authorised, the centre will also close, ensuring that all parents are notified the day before (If possible).

**Event occurring which allows for parental pickup**

* If the centre is open and the event occurs during business hours AND time is permitted, Management will issue a notice of closure effective immediately. Parents will be notified to collect their children.
* Should parents not be able to collect their children, the nominated emergency contact on the Happy Little Butterfly enrolment form will pick up the child.
* Should parents not be contactable by the time the centre closes, an executive decision will be made in line with nominated emergency contact information and current information available from the relevant agency/agencies.
* Should the emergency contact not be available, known relatives will then be contacted to endeavour to collect the child.
* Should this not be successful, The Department of Education and/or Police will be contacted for further advice.
* The decision to reopen will mirror the Department of Education New South Wales decision.
* The Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider will inform the Regulatory Authority to inform them of the number of children affected, the educator ratios in place and any issues or injuries that have arisen.

**Event occurring which does not allow for parental pickup**

* If a bushfire event occurs during business hours AND time DOES NOT permit parents to pick up their children, Management will issue a notice of closure effective immediately. Children will may be moved to Campbelltown Public School or evacuation will be arranged with local emergency services and parents will be notified.
* Children from the centre, along with childcare staff, will evacuate the centre and walk the children to the school if safe to do so.
* Staff will ensure that a roll call is performed on exit of the centre, arrival at the school, entry onto the busses and other appropriate times during the day.
* Staff will ensure that the emergency backpack is taken (Children’s personal possessions may be left behind)
* Children will remain with childcare staff, who will use the directives of the Department of Education and other relevant agencies as appropriate, ensuring that duty of care obligations continue to be undertaken.
* Staff will remain in contact with parents provided that mobile phone reception is available and it is safe to do so.
* The Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider will inform the Regulatory Authority to inform them of the number of children affected, the educator ratios in place and any issues or injuries that have arisen.
* Relevant educators will undertake a debriefing of the fire emergency situation and the procedures undertaken. Educators will be requested to review their own roles, responsibilities and preparation before and during the crisis.

**The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.**

**Sources**

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017

NSW Rural Fire Service 2018

Department of Education 2017

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

**Originated: September 2019 Date for next review: September 2020**