



From the Principal

Congratulations to all Cycle 1, 2 and 3 children, Directors Assistants and Conrad for the great entertainment they provided last night! It was evident that the children enjoyed their singing, playing and drama, and the concert serves as an exciting reminder of the possibilities we will have as a school for our performing arts programs once our Multi- Purpose Hall is finished next year. Thanks particularly to all room staff and Conrad for working with the children to prepare their acts, and also to Dick for his help with transporting instruments and equipment to and from the hall.

Please note a reminder about two important information sessions scheduled for tomorrow and Monday evening 21 November, which is next week. It would be great to have as many people as possible attend, so that you are informed about both the Multi-purpose Hall project and also the need to update our Model Rules, which is a need that was noted by our auditor earlier in the year. I would like to thank both the members of the Building Sub-Committee and Model Rules Sub-Committee, for their thinking and considerable hours of work they have given to support the school.

Q&A - Multipurpose Hall - 17-November 08:30am - 10:00am in the Foyer

Penny Everingham (sub-committee chair) and Matt Saunders from the Multipurpose Hall sub-committee will be in the foyer for a Q&A on the Multipurpose Hall Project. A barista will be on hand to make this an informal session over coffee. If you are unable to make the date there will be Q&A Forms in the foyer next week.

Q&A - Constitutional Changes - 21-November, 6:30pm - 08:00pm in the Foyer

Dean Cleave-Smith (sub-committee chair), Lara Block and Bron Martin from the Model-Rules sub-committee will provide an overview of the drivers and outline the draft changes to our school's constitution (model-rules). This is the first of a series of consultative sessions around model-rule changes the school community will be asked to approve in the lead up to next year's AGM.

BARR

As we approach summer and the possibility of bush fires will once more be with our community, it is important to remind you that schools, kindergartens and child care facilities at the highest risk of fire danger are placed on the Department's **Bushfire At-Risk Register**. Inclusion on this register is a trigger for the school,

Full newsletter is distributed fortnightly with a brief memo in alternate weeks.

Important Dates coming up – please make sure you note the time changes

Multipurpose Hall Q&A

Thursday 18th November 8.30am to 10am

Constitutional Changes Q&A

Monday 21st November 6.30pm to 8pm

Grandparents Day

Wednesday 23rd November

Cycle 1 9am to 11.30am

Cycle 3 10am to 11am

Cycle 2 11am to 12pm

Schools as Neighbours BBQ at Beechworth Primary

Friday 25th November

kindergarten or child care facility to pre-emptively close on days declared Code Red in their Bureau of Meteorology district.

Beechworth Montessori School is on the [Bushfire-At-Risk Register \(BARR\)](#) which means as an organisation, we must pre-emptively close on days determined Code Red in their Bureau of Meteorology district by the Emergency Management Commissioner. All bus routes servicing closed schools are also cancelled on Code Red Days.

Our updated emergency management plan will be passed by the CoM this week, and uploaded onto the department's website, as we are listed on the Bushfire-At-Risk Register. It is requested that you make sure the school has your current contact details, including mobile phone numbers. Should we need to message you regarding Code Red, or other high risk bush fire considerations, depending on connectivity at the time, we will attempt to use multiple methods of communication to get a message to you, which may include email, school stream, and/or group texting or possibly phone trees. I would be interested in any feedback in regards to developing a phone tree, which some BARR schools use. Please let the office know, if **you would not** be comfortable, having your number listed on a class phone tree, which would be distributed by room in 2017 for contact details in an emergency,

Where possible, four to seven days notice of a planned closure will be provided; however, families need to expect that in some instances fewer than 4 days notice may be provided.

Once a Code Red day has been determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner this decision will not change – regardless of any changes in the weather forecast. This will help limit confusion and help your family plan for how your children will be cared for when their school, kindergarten or child care centre is closed.

Advice will be provided to you directly by us to confirm a Code Red Closure.

When we are closed due to a Code Red day determination, no staff will remain on site and our Educational Care Program will also not run.

In the event of a Code Red Closure, please consider and start planning for alternative care arrangements for your child/ren. The final decision to close the school will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. This decision will not change, irrespective of an improvement in the weather forecast. No child should be left at home alone or in the care of siblings on high-fire danger days.

Kind Regards, Bron Martin

Grandparents Day – please note time changes

Our annual Grandparents Day is next week on Wednesday 23rd November. We have had to change the original timings due to our Italian and Sport specialist classes on Wednesdays.

Cycle 1	9am to 11.30am
Cycle 3	10am to 11am
Cycle 2	11am to 12pm

Look out for the invitation in your parent pocket.

Donations

We are looking for any donations of couches or comfortable chairs so that we can make a space for staff to be able to relax and take breaks from the business of the day to day requirements of their jobs.

Please let us know if you have anything that might suit.

Beechworth Netball Club

Seeking junior players, senior players and senior umpires (PAID). Enquires contact 0407906937.

Pre-season commences 6pm 24th November Baarmutha Park, Beechworth.

Junior training commences Thursday 24th Feb.

Contact sarah264@hotmail.com

Code Red Day FAQ

What is a planned closure?

Schools and education and care services (children's services) identified as being at the greatest risk of bushfires will be pre-emptively closed on days determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner as having a Code Red Fire Danger Rating.

Why are we pre-emptively closing schools and children's services?

The Department's priority is the safety of its staff, students and children. On a Code Red day all facilities on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will be closed.

Who makes the decision to close a school or children's service?

The decision to pre-emptively close schools and children's services is made by the Department, based on a Code Red day being determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner.

How will I know if my school or children's service is likely to close this fire season?

Schools and children's services considered to be at risk have been included on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register and informed of their status on the Register. Further information on the Register is available from this website.

How much notice will I have if my school or children's service is going to be closed?

It is intended that families will be provided with as much notice as possible of a planned closure. However, if unexpected weather patterns are experienced, closures may happen at short notice. The final decision to close a school or children's service will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. Schools and children's services are expected to communicate planned closures to families.

Families are encouraged to ensure that their bushfire survival plan always includes alternative care arrangements for children in the event of a planned closure. No child should be left at home alone or under the supervision of older children.

Who will tell me that my school, kindergarten, or child care centre will be closed?

You will be directly advised by your school or children's service. Information will also be published on this website.

What happens if the forecast changes?

If the Bureau of Meteorology downgrades the risk forecast in the days leading-up to a planned closure, the closure may be cancelled and the school or children's service will be allowed to remain open. The final decision to pre-emptively close a school or children's service will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. Once the decision to close has been confirmed, there will be no change – regardless of improvements to the 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 their 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 the weather conditions, children should not be left unattended or under the supervision of older children.

Is it likely that my school or children's service will be closed for consecutive days? If yes, how will I know?

It is possible that schools and children's services will be closed for consecutive days. Information about ongoing closures will be published on the Department's closures page. Where possible, schools and children's services will contact families directly to confirm their ongoing closure(s).

To get warnings and find out what's happening, listen to ABC local radio, call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667, go to cfa.vic.gov.au, and/or check the FireReady telephone application.

On average, how many days does the government predict that schools and children's services will need to close due to Code Red days?

While we cannot predict the exact number of days, it should be noted that there has not been a determined Code Red day since January 2010.

When my school or children's service is closed, will any staff remain on site?

No. The safety of staff and children is our main priority. Schools and children's services have been advised that no-one is to remain on site when their facility is closed due to high-bushfire danger risk.

Will there be times when my school is closed but another school not far away remains open?

Yes. If your school is on the Bushfire At-Risk Register then it will close on Code Red fire danger days. Schools not far away may remain open because they are not on the Bushfire At-Risk Register.

Does this also apply to children's services?

Children's services that are on the Bushfire At-Risk Register are required to close on Code Red fire danger days. However because such services are not owned or managed by the Department they may also decide to close on other high-risk days. Services are expected to advise all affected families of such decisions.

Can I keep my child away if I'm concerned about the risk of fires - even if my school or children's service remains 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 or in child care. You must advise your school or childcare provider as soon as possible of your child's absence.

My child travels by bus to school. Will bus routes be closed on Code Red days?

Similar to Code Red facilities that pre-emptively close on determined Code Red days, bus routes servicing these schools will also be cancelled on Code Red days. Bus routes from schools not on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register that enter high-risk areas will be pre-emptively closed as well.

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

Yes, off-site activities will continue throughout the year as they are an important part of school programs. However, off-site activities in high bushfire risk areas affected by a predicted Code Red day will be cancelled or rescheduled. Your school will assess the likely threat of fire when organising off-site activities during the summer fire season. If an off-site activity is threatened by fire, your school will enact its emergency management plan.

What have schools and children's services on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register done to prepare for the summer fire season?

Schools and children's services on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register have:

- Reviewed and updated their emergency management plans and submitted them to their region
- Held staff training sessions and drills with students and children
- Been offered training in emergency management planning
- Undertaken works, where required, around their facilities to manage vegetation

What else can I do?

- Ensure that your school or children's service has your current emergency contact details
- Review and update your family bushfire survival plan
- Keep in touch with your facility
- Look out for more information about activities your local community is planning
- Go to www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call 1800 240 667 for more information