



31/01/2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the school year. It has been a very different beginning to the year and I thought it most important to contact you regarding the situation we have here in Canberra at this time

As you would be aware the recent fire activity in the ACT region is predicted to escalate over the weekend. In the event that we need to communicate with you should the school be impacted in any way we ask you to monitor the following:

- Schoolzine (SZapp) If you do not have this app, instruction on how to get it on your phone are attached.
- School Facebook page – *St Thomas the Apostle Kambah*
- School website (Please be aware, there may be a time delay in getting information uploaded to the site)
- Email

There will also be information on the following places

- CE website homepage – [www.cg.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cg.catholic.edu.au)
- CE Instagram - ceoacg
- CE Facebook - @ceocg

Please be assured, that as a school, we have everything in place for the safety of our students and staff should we need to have a school evacuation in the following days, our procedures will be as follows.

## **St Thomas the Apostle**

### **BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION**

In the case of a bushfire, the school will be monitoring the ACT Emergency Services website along with the NSW RFS app. The Catholic Education Office will be in regular contact if and when warnings come in and are to be actioned.

We will follow these Emergency Procedures should the situation escalate.

- Students and teachers will remain in classrooms with the doors and windows shut.

- Parents will be informed of what the situation is and updated regularly. This will be via the school szapp, email and Facebook. The front office will be continually manned to take calls. (but please consult the above sources for information before calling)
- Until an Evacuation is called by Emergency Services school will continue as normal. Parents may wish to pick up their children and if this is the case, students will be called to the front office via the phone to come down with their bag. These children will signed out and office staff will keep a list of the classes that children have left from. If an evacuation is called, and/or an emergency situation arises, children will be brought to the hall. Teachers will take their roll and mark off students as they are collected.
- Should the situation escalate, and the urgent need for the school to be evacuated occurs, we will take advice from CE. The first request would be from the school to have a bus come to take remaining students. If this isn't able to happen, staff under the direction of emergency services will be responsible for taking the remaining children in their cars to a 'safe' place designated by emergency services. Parents will be made aware via the szapp and Facebook as to where this place will be. It will be at a place that is well clear of the danger area of the bushfire.
- Staff will remain with the children until they are all collected by parents, carers or guardian.

We will have an evacuation drill on Monday at 10:40am, so please let your child / children know that is happening. This is to make sure that we can do this calmly and should the situation arise that we have a real evacuation, they will know what is happening and will not be anxious.

We continue to keep all of our community in our prayers. We also pray for and thank our wonderful emergency services and RFS personnel who are working tirelessly to protect our communities.

We are looking forward to welcoming the students back to school on Monday. We hope and pray that it will happen without incident.

God Bless

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ursula Jamieson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'U' at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

Principal