

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS PROCEDURE

These procedures must be read in conjunction with *Temporary Closure of Schools Policy.*

1. Overview
	1. These procedures set out the processes to be followed when a decision is made to temporarily close a school when circumstances described in the Policy arise.
2. Rationale
	1. These procedures ensure a consistent, orderly process to the temporary closure of schools that protects the safety of individuals on school premises.
3. Procedures

Temporary closures

* 1. Approval for the temporary closure of a school in relation to school specific circumstances may be provided to a principal verbally by the appropriate School Network Leader.
	2. Written verification must be provided to the relevant principal by the School Network Leader within two working days.
	3. This documentation must be kept on file by both the principal and the School Network Leader.
	4. Directives regarding temporary school closures in prescribed circumstances are managed by an identified lead agency and schools are to refer to the *Incident/Emergency Management Framework*.

Consultation and communication

* 1. In the event of a temporary school closure, principals must:
* consult with the School Network Leader
* ensure parents of each child are notified. Notification may, in certain circumstances, include a written note to parents, visible signs at school entrances, social media, radio or television announcements and/or advertisements in newspapers.
* schools are not to rely solely on written notices or notification by social media.

Duty of care

* 1. When a school is closed at short notice (within one full working day), two staff members determined by the principal must remain at the school to provide care for students who remain at school or who may arrive after the temporary closure has commenced.
	2. Students must not be sent home without prior notice to parents

Record keeping

* 1. School rolls must be marked to reflect the schools status as temporarily closed.
	2. The circumstances of the temporary school closure must be documented and this information, together with the written authority to close the school, kept on an official school file.
1. Contact
	1. The Director, Governance and Assurance is responsible for this procedure.
	2. For support contact Governance and Assurance Branch on (02) 6207 1974.
2. Complaints
	1. Any concerns about the application of this procedure or the procedure itself, should be raised with:
* the school principal in the first instance;
* contact the Directorate’s Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429;
* online at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us>.
* see also the *Complaints Policy* on the Directorate’s website.
1. References
	1. **Definitions**
* **School:** includes ACT Public pre-schools, primary schools, high schools and colleges.
* **Critical Incident:** refers to any situation that poses an immediate threat to the safety of students and staff.
* **Emergency**: refers to an actual or imminent threat which requires a significant and coordinated Directorate response (e.g. pandemic, elevated fire danger).
* **Incident**: A localised event which can be dealt with by a business unit within normal operating resources (e.g. isolated report of notifiable diseases).
	1. **Related Policies and Documents**

In the event that a school is to be closed on a temporary basis the following protocols and plans may be utilised to assist with this course of action:

* *School Emergency Management Plans* - provide schools and the Directorate with site specific guidelines in relation to managing emergencies;
* *Bushfire Package*- *Temporary School Closure During an Elevated Fire Danger Rating* – provide schools and the Directorate with protocols to be implemented during bushfire season when an elevated fire danger rating is declared (posted on Index);
* The *Directorate Emergency/Incident Notification Framework* - provide schools and the Directorate with a framework and overview of roles and responsibilities involved with the notification of an emergency/incident and for any response /action if required.
* Emergency Control (Australian Standards AS 3745 – 2010)
* Industrial Action Affecting the Operation of Schools Policy
* Managing High Temperature in ACT Public Schools