



**WICKHAM**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Cyclone Procedure Policy 2020

**CYCLONE PROCEDURES**

**CYCLONE WATCH/WARNING**

Children are to attend school as per normal.

**GENERAL ALERT**

During an alert period an assessment of conditions will be made by the Principal. Should there be a concern for the safety of staff, students and visitors, the Regional Executive Director will be contacted and a decision may be made to apply either immediately, or at a later time, either a Blue, Yellow or Red alert status. Parents and Carers will be kept informed via the school Facebook site, SMS and email. In the event the school is not open, communication will be via the school Facebook page and via the ABC Radio. The Cyclone Communication Tree will be used to communicate this to staff if not at school.

**BLUE ALERT**

The school will usually remain open.

**YELLOW ALERT**

**If a Yellow Alert is called before school:**

- Students do not come to school.
- Parents are informed of Yellow Alert by media (local radio as part of the standard SES message).
- Principal attends school to ensure good order before leaving (staff not required).
- Bus company informed of school closure.
- School site and resources made ready for cyclone.
- Duty of Care exists for any students present.

**If any students inadvertently attend school:**

- Parents are to be contacted to collect children.
- Students who are not catered for in this way must be supervised until an alternative Duty of Care can be assured (Department of Community Development or local Police may be of assistance in dealing with these children).

**If a Yellow Alert is called during the school day:**

- Students will not be sent home until instructions are received from parents.
- Parents are informed by media (local radio using normal SES Alert messages).
- **Yellow Alert before 12:00** – parents are encouraged to pick up students as soon as possible. The school will close at lunch time.
- **Yellow Alert after 12:00** – parents pick up students as soon as possible. The school will close at the usual time.

*The above does not preclude immediate closure in extenuating circumstances and if deemed necessary by the Cyclone Committee. (Students who are not catered for must be supervised until an alternative Duty of Care can be assured.) Department of Community Development or local Police may be of assistance in dealing with these children after school finishes or if the intensity of the cyclone escalates.*

**In the event that a Yellow Alert is called at or after 2.00pm**, schools will remain closed the following day.

**In the event that a Yellow Alert is called at or after 2.00pm but subsequently cancelled**, the Regional Director, in consultation with the Cyclone Committee, has the discretion to ensure that schools open the following day. It is expected that this will be a very rare occurrence and that the 2.00pm ruling will apply in most cases.

**Communication between the Regional Office (Regional Executive Director) and schools will continue to be the main source of providing up-to-date information on cyclone procedures for school Principals.**

### **RED ALERT**

- Schools will remain closed during a Red Alert.
- In the event that a Red Alert is proclaimed after 2.00pm, schools will remain closed the following day.
- In the event that a Red Alert is proclaimed at or after 2.00pm but subsequently cancelled, the Regional Director, in consultation with the Cyclone Committee, has the discretion to ensure that schools open the following day. It is expected that this will be a very rare occurrence and that the 2.00pm ruling will apply in most cases.

### **AFTER THE CYCLONE**

During the following day the school is closed, the Department of Housing and Works (DHW) will make every attempt to contact each Principal to do an external inspection for assessment and repair of serious damage. In the event a Principal is unavailable, DHW will proceed and then contact the Principal after the inspection.

If significant external damage is identified by DHW, it is likely there will be significant internal damage. In this case, a DHW person will accompany the Principal on an internal inspection. *These procedures may vary according to the isolation /remoteness of some school communities. It is strongly suggested that schools use the Principal's mobile phone as the direct means of contact to and from the Pilbara Education Regional Office (for alternative emergency contact phone numbers).*

### **AFTER ALERT IS LIFTED**

During Yellow and Red Alert the school remains closed. **Under no circumstances is anyone permitted onto school grounds. Even if an Alert is no longer in place, no one is permitted on school grounds until advised by the Principal** (who will receive an advice from the Regional Executive Director). Prior to advising that schools can open or staff can have access, a full risk assessment will be made which includes advice from a range of stakeholders e.g. Emergency, Police, local government, Main Roads Authority, Department of Education.

### **COMMUNICATION TO STAFF DURING A CYCLONE**

#### **On school site:**

In the event of a cyclone approaching and the possibility of an Alert being issued, a meeting will be called either before or after school. Processes for Blue Alert and in the event of Yellow or Red, will be clarified (as outlined above).

On the day the alert is issued, communication of the Alert and the action the school will be taking, will be shared via Connect, School Email and SMS. Staff will be familiar with the processes given the earlier meeting. A meeting will be called either before school, during school or after school to further clarify processes. This will include advice that the school will close in the event of a Yellow Alert.

#### **Off school site:**

When a Yellow or Red Alert is advised, all staff will be contacted initially via the Communication Tree to ensure that everyone is aware of the Alert and school processes.

Ongoing updates will then be via SMS and a whole staff email.

This could include:

- the Alert has been lifted but no one is allowed on school grounds until advised
- the school will continue to remain closed due to damage or potential risk
- staff are now permitted onto school grounds
- the school will be open as normal the following day
- there are flooding concerns and staff are to proceed with caution.