

# ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

BELLINGEN NSW 2454 AUSTRALIA

ABN 50 984 553 943

P.O. Box 326  
Park Street  
BELLINGEN N.S.W. 2454



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3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2016

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

We have not had a flood warning for quite some time so new parents and families will not be aware of the procedure. This letter outlines the current situation and includes some points to know if a need to evacuate the school actually eventuates.

The Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology has put out a flood watch for rivers and systems including the Bellinger Valley, Kalang and Coffs Harbour.

**Issued at 1:35 pm EST on Friday 3 June 2016**

[reissue] Note: This Flood Watch provides early advice for possible future flooding along all rivers, creeks and overland flow paths within a nominated valley.

An East Coast Low is forecast to develop off the coast near the New South Wales - Queensland border late on Saturday. The East Coast Low is expected to bring heavy rainfall to North East inland NSW and the NSW coast. In addition, King Tides will add to the risk of flooding in lower tidal areas. The East Coast Low is expected to move southwards during Sunday and Monday.

This forecast rainfall and high tides have the potential to cause flooding as well as local flash flooding from Saturday and into Sunday and Monday as the weather system moves South.

This Flood Watch is a "heads up" for possible future flooding along all rivers and creeks within a nominated valley and is NOT a Flood Warning

During periods of flood, none of our teachers can get to school if Waterfall Way between Raleigh and Bellingen and Lavender's Bridge is closed. Therefore it is possible that the school may be closed for the day. This will be announced on Facebook and Skoolbag. Please check that you have the Skoolbag app downloaded so you can check Alerts for this information especially if you aren't on Facebook.

The SES monitors the flood situation and makes the decision to call for the bus operators to pick up children early when a flood is imminent and road closures are to occur. At school our best indicators are the bus companies and we follow their information.

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If there is flooding imminent then the school advises parents arriving at school with children to take them home.

If a decision is made to close the school before the end of the school day each family will need to ensure that someone will be home or able to collect their child from school, this includes children going on their normal bus. Each family needs to have their own flood plan. If children are at school, parents will be sent an SMS requesting contact be made about how their child will be getting home. At this stage the best numbers to call or text are Lisa Doolan 0419271725 or Claire Mellon 0423379747. Please save these numbers so you have them for future reference. Replies to mobiles are preferable so we can keep a phone line open at school.

If students cannot be sent home they are to stay under the care of the skeleton staff.

If the SES advises that flooding is imminent and the early bus pickup procedure is introduced NO CHILD is to be evacuated from school without parents/guardians/emergency contact persons being contacted and replying. It is extremely important that every family maintains phone contact so that the school can inform them of evacuation.

The flood policy on the school website is very comprehensive and is a good point of reference for all school community members, although there have been changes to the roads since the last flood event.

If in any doubt or you have concerns keep your family at home

Yours sincerely,  
Claire Mellon  
Principal