FLOOD PLAN

Background
Floods in Macksville are unpredictable and there is no particular pattern related to onset, duration nor time of the year. The elements of the plan address safety in the following contexts:

- Advice to parents and students prior to the start of a school day.
- Advice to parents and students about the ongoing status of school.
- Evacuation procedures during a school day.

Advice to parents and students prior to the start of a school day
Accurate information is critical when an assessment of flood impact has to be made. Schools have no more information than is available to the public. Parents are always advised to check flood warnings, SES bulletins and road closure information. Parents are often best placed to make an assessment of their particular location. If in doubt keep your children home.

Announcements of the school’s capacity to run classes normally or with reduced staff will be made available on ABC radio from 6.30 am. Parents may ring the school. Please note that the information from the school will duplicate those details and availability of staff to answer phones will be limited.

Advice to parents and students about the ongoing status of the school
Speculation in flood times is a normal feature of flood life. Schools are not any more informed about river levels than the community in general.

Floods never happen at convenient times. The school will be guided by advice from Council, SES and RTA. When possible that advice will be communicated at the end of a school day. If a flood escalates outside school hours ABC radio will be the only official source of media release. The Principal will be the only person to authorise information about conditions where applicable.

Evacuation procedures during a school day
Generally, certain areas around Macksville flood more rapidly than other areas. If buses advise an early departure and if there is sufficient warning, staff will assembly the relevant students from class.

If there is insufficient warning or there are multiple evacuations then an assembly bell will be sounded. Students will be briefed and advised to remain on standby if there are further road closures.
If a student is concerned that there may be no one at home, parents or emergency contacts will be phoned by the student or a staff representative. Where contact is not possible and the Principal considers it as an emergency situation, he will organise alternative accommodation if necessary. That contingency is rare and can be avoided if parents are mindful of pending river rises and have their own communication strategy in place.

Paul Holding
Principal
3 June 2010