



# YEAR 9 QUEST 2019

## *Parent Handbook*



CRICOS NO: 01645K

*Woodcroft College is vibrant, innovative and inclusive.  
It seeks to provide an excellent all-round education  
in a Christian environment.*

# School Philosophy

Woodcroft College is future-oriented, equipping students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to gain worthwhile employment, be responsible global citizens, and model their lives on Christian values and beliefs.

The curriculum is diverse and broadly based.

It is centred on the intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of students.

It encourages them to:

- Pursue academic excellence, yet caters for individual differences in learning styles and abilities.
- Strive in all areas of human endeavour from the subject-based disciplines to the arts, outdoor education, sports and leisure-time activities.
- Become confident, active, resilient, self-reliant and successful lifelong learners.
- Grow in faith through Religious and Values Education, corporate worship, and service to others in school, local community and international projects.

The curriculum, co-curriculum and pastoral care program have a global perspective, preparing students for citizenship in a democratic, multicultural society.

They are encouraged to:

- Be themselves, showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others.
- Appreciate social, religious and cultural differences.
- Grow in self-respect, taking responsibility for their own actions and conduct.
- Become leaders, experienced in decision-making.



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# Overview

## Philosophy and Goals:

The primary goal of Quest is to develop the following qualities in our students:



**Perseverance:** trying very hard, not giving up too soon and becoming more resilient.

**Selflessness:** regularly acting for the benefit of others rather than self.

**Community Spirit:** feeling a responsibility for the welfare of society.

These qualities will form the basis for debriefing and discussion after activities and during the daily group meeting. The name Quest was chosen as we would like the program to be viewed as a purposeful journey towards the development of these qualities. The program's method of achieving this goal rests on the principle of experiential learning:

*Tell me, and I will forget. Show me and I may remember.  
Involve me and I will understand.*

Confucius 450 BC

We do not view the activities students will be participating in as ends in themselves; that is, we do not think it is vital that all our students learn how to sleep in a tent, rock climb or solve initiative problems. But rather we see these experiences as effective vehicles to teach valuable lessons about life.

Put simply, if we are never given the opportunity to take a risk, it is difficult to learn how to make reasoned decisions about actions and their consequences. Or, if we never really have to work towards a common goal where perseverance, selflessness and community spirit are essential, how are students to learn how to work as part of a team?

We are not arguing that experiential learning in an outdoor context is the only way of achieving these goals; indeed, many of these life lessons are learnt by trial and error in the real world.

However, we feel that the kind of experiential learning program we have designed will allow our students to gain powerful insights and personal skills which in turn will strengthen and prepare them for the less controlled experiential learning environment of life. We feel that the best way to prepare our students for adult life is to help them experience some of its challenges in a controlled and safe environment. All activities will be supported by opportunities for staff to debrief with students and draw parallels with life experiences and skills.

Our program has, as its focus, a 14-day camp in the Grampians. This is seen as the pinnacle of the Middle School Outdoor Education Program. We feel this duration is necessary to allow students a period of adaptation and then a chance to enjoy a new lifestyle. The camp will be supported at school by lessons introducing some of the practical and social skills needed to safely participate in the camp.

## Quest will also:

- Focus on building the self-esteem and confidence of our students;
- Develop leadership skills;
- Promote environmentally sustainable living;
- Allow all students to experience success at their own pace and ability level while facing mental and physical challenges;
- Strive to ensure all students' mental and physical safety;
- Give students time for reflection and spiritual development;
- Cater for the needs of both genders and those with special needs;
- Be a fun and memorable experience; and
- Incorporate an integrated curriculum approach.

## Special Note to Parents

Medical information at the time of each excursion will be obtained from the current College records. **Please log on to the Community Portal and check medical and contact information, please update this as necessary to ensure staff are informed of your child's needs.** Medical conditions, and information, will be managed and administered in accordance with College policies and procedures as agreed to in the College Enrolment Agreement.

As a general guideline, items and substances which students are not permitted to have on the College grounds are also not permitted on camp. Prohibited items will be confiscated for the duration of the camp. These items will be returned via the Year Level Manager upon return to the College. To assist the College to meet the objectives of Quest, please ensure your child leaves all electronic devices (phones, iPads, iPods, MP3 players etc.) at home. The impact of the learning experience will be far more enhanced without such devices. Staff cannot guarantee against damage, moisture or theft.

### ***Some grey areas need clarification:***

- Cameras can be brought and are encouraged, as long as they are not also a phone or games/music device;
- Large knives are not permitted, nothing larger than a Swiss Army knife;
- No magazines of any sort;
- Make up is not permitted;
- Any personal items are brought at the students own risk. Staff cannot guarantee their safety against loss, damage or theft;
- No more cash than the \$30 required for in transit meals;
- No additional food is to be brought (food in tents is a temptation for vermin and native animals);
- Jeans are not permitted (very cold when wet); and
- Tank tops or crop tops are not permitted (sun safety).

### **Mad Hatters Instructions**

On one night of camp everyone is involved in a Games Night. This involves competing in 'minute to win it' type games. As part of this EVERYONE must come to group meetings with a creative hat. It is up to students whether they bring some materials from home to create the hat or make use of any recycling, equipment or natural objects available at camp. The hat is not to be bought, it is to be handmade and reflect the Quest program.





# Program Description

The program can be divided into two parts.

## 1. Camp preparation lessons taught in PE, MSR, Pastoral Care and Personal Development during Term 3.

Topics covered include:

Philosophy and Goals of the Program	Mountain bike lessons
Fitness	Minor First Aid
Expectations	Nutrition
Food preparation and cooking	Hygiene, personal/communal gear
Personal administration	

## 2. The camp experience: 14 days of adventure based experiential learning in the Grampians.

### Camp Dates & Times

All camps leave from the eastern car park at 6.30 am on Day 1 (**be at the College by 6.00 am**) and return to the car park at 5.00 - 5.30 pm on Day 14.

Quest 1: 9EF & 9DK	Saturday 12 October - Friday 25 October
Quest 2: 9ET & 9RY	Saturday 26 October - Friday 8 November
Quest 3: 9JA & 9MH	Saturday 9 November - Friday 22 November

### Location

The Happy Wanderer Campground, Northern Grampians (Northern Grampians Road, Wartook Valley, Victoria 3401). This facility provides toilets and showers while allowing camping in a bush setting. A school contact person has been designated for the whole of Quest. **If you need to contact the camp urgently, call the school contact person; Andrew Griffiths on 0400 053 685.**

### Group Composition

- Maximum of 60 students (two year 9 classes);
- 5 Woodcroft Staff per program. These include the three roles of: Camp Leader, Chaplain/Counsellor and Base Camp Manager. All Woodcroft staff will be Outdoor Education experienced, some holding a range of instructor qualifications;
- 5 Outdoor Education Instructors. Each will hold various instructional qualifications;
- 8 – 10 Outdoor Education teaching students acting as group mentors. A partnership has been developed with Flinders University for students doing the Outdoor Education subject to have the Year 9 camp as their final practical. The Flinders course is tailored to prepare students for the mentor role, with Woodcroft College staff being involved in some course delivery. Other Outdoor Education students may be recruited from Uni SA or TAFE;
- Each camp has a university mentor supervisor. This person is an Outdoor Education Lecturer at Flinders University.

### Transport

Transport from Adelaide is by coach. During the camp, transport is provided by Toyota Landcruiser Troop Carriers and Hiace Minibuses.

### Shelter & Storage

In camp there are two large communal shelters, an operations and food storage shelter (7 x 14 m) and a main shelter capable of seating the whole group (6 x 13 m). In camp, students are divided into eight mixed gender groups (7 – 8 students per group), each group has its own sleeping/cooking area with two 4 – 5 person canvas tents with covered awning. Mentor tents are located between the girls and boys tents.

## **Food**

Each tent group (3 – 4 students) is provided with cooking and food preparation equipment, including two burner stove, pots and pans and cutlery/crockery. Students are provided with ingredients on a daily basis to prepare breakfast and dinner. Lunch is made and distributed by the duty group. A standard menu exists for all camps and local suppliers deliver fresh produce.

A food storage system exists in the operations shelter along with fridges and a freezer.

## **Hygiene**

Students will be able to have a short hot shower on alternate days during the first ten days of the program.

During the final journey shower facilities are not available.

## **Pastoral Care & Behaviour Management**

The camp's small group structure is designed to enhance the staff's ability to look after the emotional and social well being of the students. Each of the 8 sub-groups, consisting of 7-8 students (mixed gender), is mentored by at least one Outdoor Education teaching student.

The mentor accompanies the group on all its activities and stays in a tent located between the girls and boys sleeping tents. The mentor is able to monitor the welfare of each group member and act as a first point of contact for any problems. Each camp has a Woodcroft teacher in a chaplain/counsellor role. Student problems can be brought directly to this person or feedback via the mentor. Students may receive counselling or be given time out from their group's activities. The program is flexible and a group or a student's itinerary can be changed.

All normal school rules apply on camp. Students whose behaviour is unsafe or contrary to school rules could be excluded from their group's program for a day. More serious behaviour issues will be dealt with via consultation between the camp leader, the Year 9 Year Level Manager and the Head of Middle School. In the event of a serious behaviour issue, a student could be sent home from camp; this would require a parent to collect them from the Happy Wanderer.

## **Communications**

Specific protocols regarding communications to base camp and between groups in normal operations and emergencies are described in the Quest Staff Manual. Hard-line telephone communication is available at The Happy Wanderer Campground. At different times during the camp, students may be half a day from mobile or hard-line phone contact.

## **Activities**

Activities are organised in line with the Woodcroft College Outdoor Education Operations Manual. Specific guidelines for each activity listed will be detailed in the Quest Staff Manual, along with an explanation of the specific personal development goals of the activity and a framework for the introduction and debriefing of the activity.

## **Emergency Response**

Specific emergency response and bad weather contingency plans have been developed for each activity. These are detailed in the Quest Staff Manual. Halls Gap Police have the responsibility for coordinating a response to any emergency incident in the Grampians National Park. Emergency calls from the Grampians area are transferred to either the Police or Ambulance emergency call centres located in Ballarat. A Halls Gap Police member is then contacted and will attend the scene along with other emergency services.

Response time will vary dependent on location, but as a general rule police or ambulance should be at the nearest vehicle access point in 30 minutes or less. Ambulances are despatched from Stawell or Horsham. These are not 4WD vehicles. Police or SES vehicles will be used to access 4WD roads. In addition, it is Rural Ambulance Victoria's standard operating procedure that, upon receipt of an injured person call from within the Grampians National Park, an air ambulance helicopter, based at Bendigo, about a 45 minute flight from the Grampians, be dispatched.

Base camp is located at Wartook, which is in the Horsham Police response zone. However, in general Halls Gap Police will respond because of the distance from Horsham.

## Program Timetable

On day 1, students travel from Adelaide and settle into camp life.

On days 2 to 9, students complete a rotation of 8 activities.

On days 10 to 13, students undertake their final journey.

Day 14 is spent packing up and travelling home.

## Activity Descriptions

### **BS - BUSHSKILLS**

Involves basic campcraft training at The Happy Wanderer Campground and a pack walk out of base camp for 6 - 10 km in the surrounding area. The campground is in natural bush near base camp and has no facilities. Students will set up camp and cook tea. Students will carry all their camping equipment. Food will be prepared on Trangia stoves. This session builds on the in-school training lessons and involves four groups at a time; this facilitates a preparatory night out in the first few days of the program.

#### **Staffing**

Woodcroft bushwalking leader as senior instructor, supported by group mentors.

### **R - ROCK CLIMBING**

Introductory rock climbing and abseiling at Summerday Valley (Mt Stayplton) and a walk to explore Hollow Mountain and view Taipan Wall. Climbing may also be at another venue within the Grampians or surrounds. One group of students (7-8) participates. Rock climbing is conducted with a top rope system. Students belay one another. The main belayer is backed up by a second. Abseiling is conducted with a safety rope. The walk to Hollow Mountain involves some rock scrambling.

#### **Staffing**

Climbing instructor (could be College staff) as senior instructor; group mentor as assistant.

#### **Transport**

One vehicle transports group to Mt. Stayplton or other climbing venue.

### **DG - DUTY GROUP**

One group rostered per day has various responsibilities in base camp, e.g. food preparation, cleaning, laundry, cooking.

#### **Staffing**

Base Camp Manager supervises, supported by group mentor.

### **I - INITIATIVES**

Two groups play various initiative games at The Happy Wanderer Campground. While one group is completing the initiatives, the other is in Wartook State Forest (1 km from base camp) being trained for the solo night. This involves sleeping site selection, shelter building and some solo time.

#### **Staffing**

One senior staff member and an Outdoor Instructor supported by two mentors.



### **SN – SOLO NIGHT**

This activity is located in Wartook State Forest, a few kilometres from The Happy Wanderer Campground. Students have had a preparatory session on their initiative day to introduce this activity. Students are provided with a thermos meal to eat while at their shelter. They are issued with tarps and other materials to construct their shelter. Each shelter is at least 100m from the next. The staff tent and vehicle are located in the centre. Once shelters are complete, students have quiet reflection time. Students then go to their shelters and spend the night alone.

#### **Staffing**

Two College staff supported by two mentors.

#### **Transport**

Leave The Happy Wanderer Campground on foot, vehicles transport all participants back to The Happy Wanderer Campground after breakfast.

### **ON - ORIENTEERING/NAVIGATION (BLACK RANGE/WARTOOK)**

Two groups are driven over to the location for map and compass tuition. The afternoon is spent completing a fixed rogaine course of 6 – 8 km; groups compete to locate a series of checkpoints with map and compass.

#### **Staffing**

One College staff member supported by two mentors.

#### **Transport**

Two vehicles transport groups. One vehicle remains for safety.

### **BT – BIKE TOURING**

The bike route includes dirt roads, sealed roads and dedicated shared use trails. There is a possibility of swimming at a rockpool at the lunch stop.

#### **Staffing**

One instructor supported by group mentor.

### **C - CANOEING**

One group canoes on Green Lake or at Cherry Pool, depending on the weather.

#### **Staffing**

One instructor supported by group mentor.

#### **Transport**

The canoeing group is transported to the paddling location by Minibus. The vehicle remains there for safety.

### **ER – ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION**

Two groups are involved in land care work for a day e.g. tree planting, weed removal, path building and maintenance.

#### **Staffing**

College staff, local land care group representative, supported by two mentors.

#### **Transport**

Two vehicles transport groups. One vehicle remains for safety.



## **FINAL JOURNEY**

All eight groups are out for three nights bush walking throughout the Northern and Southern Grampians.

Routes are pre-determined and camp grounds are, for the most part, set. Routes are set so groups are not walking together but may share campgrounds.

Routes will be selected according to group strengths/weaknesses. A variety of routes are available in terms of difficulty. Students will walk at least 10 km per day carrying all food, water and equipment. Groups will be bush camping for at least one night without toilet facilities.

### **Staffing**

Mentor and one other staff member per group.



# Gear Checklist

Students may bring two bags to camp:

- ☐ A suitcase measuring no more than 70 cm in length (the longest edge);
- ☐ A comfortable supportive sports backpack (size - approx 35-40 litres). Able to contain lunch, snacks, water, first aid kit, rain jacket and jumper whilst on activities e.g. mountain biking

## Important

Due to the activities undertaken clothing can become extremely dirty and may become damaged. It is advisable to use old clothing and not expensive fashion garments. Clothing must be practical for activities undertaken and sun safe.

## CLOTHING:

- ☐ 2 – 3 pairs of track pants or leggings
  - ☐ 5 T-shirts (must have elbow length sleeves and cover stomach, no crop tops / singlets)
  - ☐ Cotton T shirts with collars are an advantage.
  - ☐ 3 long sleeved cotton shirts for sun safety
  - ☐ 2 warm jumpers (wool or fleece)
  - ☐ 2 sets Thermals – long sleeve top and bottoms
  - ☐ 14 pairs of underwear
  - ☐ 9 pairs socks (lightweight sports)
  - ☐ 5 pairs thick socks e.g. Explorer
  - ☐ Bathers – bikinis are not permissible, shorts and T shirt can be used
  - ☐ 2 pairs of shorts – not overly brief as need to be appropriate length for vigorous activity and rock climbing.
  - ☐ 1 wide brimmed College hat
  - ☐ Comfortable boots/shoes for trekking (ankle support preferred). Do not bring skate shoes or slip-on canvas shoes). A sole with aggressive grip is required. Break them in well before camp!!\*
  - ☐ Leather work gloves, long pants and sturdy footwear (as above, not runners) – required for Environmental Restoration (this is a Government requirement as students will be Conservation Volunteers for Parks Victoria)
  - ☐ 2 towels
  - ☐ Old runners to get wet for canoeing, they need some grip.
  - ☐ 1 beanie and gloves
- \*Do not bring new footwear which has not been worn in.**

## PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT:

- ☐ Sun screen
- ☐ Blister kit (Elastoplast sticky tape, a 5cm square piece of foam that can be shaped to go around a blister, gauze, 2-3 antiseptic wipes)
- ☐ Broad non-stretch elastoplast sticky tape
- ☐ Band-aids
- ☐ Any prescribed medication (describe use on medical form)
- ☐ Roll on insect repellent
- ☐ 2 elastic roller bandages
- ☐ 1 triangular bandage

## SLEEPING GEAR:

- ☐ Will be used trekking on the 4 day walk - keep as small as possible
- ☐ Sleeping bag (-5 rated (ensure this rating is from a reputable manufacturer), low bulk, small in size when in bag) + compression sack
- ☐ Closed cell foam or self-inflating sleeping mat (low bulk, small in size when folded)
- ☐ Sleeping bag liner - cotton (can make out of old sheet) or synthetic.
- ☐ Used for cleanliness, added warmth or as a sheet when hot.
- ☐ One pillow (take on coach) plus a spare pillow case

**CASH:**

Students should not bring more than \$30 in cash for meals on each coach trip.

Students should also bring \$7:00 in \$1 and \$2 coins for laundry (in case laundry needs to be done)

**OTHER ITEMS:**

- ☐ Quest Journal + 5 x pen/pencil
- ☐ Small head torch and spare batteries (2-3 sets)
- ☐ Small folding blade pocket knife e.g. Swiss army knife, Leatherman style – Do not bring a sheath knife
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Wrist Watch - digital
- ☐ Knife, Fork, Spoon and Mug (not china)
- ☐ Whistle on a neck cord
- ☐ 20m of nylon blind cord
- ☐ 1/2 a roll of toilet paper – for Final Journey
- ☐ 6 heavy-duty garbage bags (Glad Tough) + 1 Orange Thick Garbage Bag (used for waterproofing)
- ☐ Toiletries (roll on deodorant, no aerosols and no make-up)
- ☐ Feminine Hygiene Kit (Zip lock bags, brown paper bags, sanitary items, tissues, pain relief and body wipes) - Always have the 'just in case' pack
- ☐ 2 tea towels
- ☐ Water bottles to hold 4.5 litres.(max. size per bottle 1.5 litres) or Water/wine Bladder of 4 litres with tough protective cover (homemade or can purchase from outdoor shop) 1litre wide mouth water bottle
- ☐ 1 plastic lunch box – appropriate size to hold 2 x sandwiches, snacks and fruit for the day.
- ☐ 1 packet of sweet biscuits (CONTAINING NO NUTS PLEASE) to be handed to staff before boarding coach (for communal suppers). Take biscuits you like to eat.
- ☐ Baby Wipes/Wet Wipes pack of 20 x 2 - Are great for 4 day walk and daily lunch hand cleaning
- ☐ Small Antibacterial Gel eg: Aqium

The College will provide:

- tents;
- tables and chairs;
- food (apart from outward and return coach journey);
- backpack;
- waterproof Jacket;
- cooking equipment (including matches or lighters);
- all activity related equipment.

As a general guideline, items and substances which students are not permitted to have on the College grounds are also not permitted on camp.

To assist the College to meet the objectives of Quest, please ensure your child leaves all electronic devices and magazines at home. The impact of the camp learning experience will be far more enhanced without these. Staff cannot guarantee the items' safety against damage, moisture or theft.

Some grey areas that may need clarification:

- No electronic appliances are permitted;
- Cameras (not part of a smart phone or game device) can be brought and are encouraged
- Large knives are not permitted, nothing larger than a Swiss Army knife.
- Make up is not permitted;
- No more cash than the \$30 stipulated previously;
- No additional food is to be brought (food in tents is a temptation for vermin and native animals);
- Jeans are not permitted (very cold when wet);
- Tank tops or crop tops are not permitted (sun safety / modesty).

**Prohibited items will be confiscated for the duration of the camp. They will be returned via the Year Level Manager at the College.**



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