



# YEAR 9 QUEST PARENT HANDBOOK

*Find Your Remarkable*





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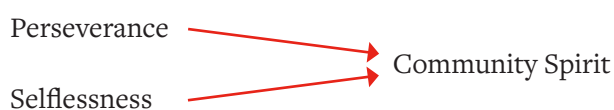
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# QUEST OVERVIEW

## Philosophy and Goals

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



<b>Perseverance</b>	Trying very hard, not giving up too soon and becoming more resilient.
<b>Selflessness</b>	Regularly acting for the benefit of others rather than self.
<b>Community Spirit</b>	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 skills needed to safely participate in the camp.

## Quest will also:

- Focus on building the self-compassion and confidence of our students
- Develop leadership skills
- Promote environmentally sustainable living
- Allow all students to experience success at their own pace
- Strive to ensure all students' mental and physical safety
- Give students time for reflection and spiritual development
- Be a fun and memorable experience
- Incorporate an integrated curriculum approach



## SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS

Medical information at the time of each excursion/event will be obtained from the current College records. **Please update through Consent2Go if there are any changes to the information provided at the beginning of the year.** 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 guideline, items and substances which students are not permitted to have on the College grounds are 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, smart watches, iPads, iPods, MP3 players etc.) at home. The impact of the learning experience will be enhanced without devices. Staff cannot guarantee against damage, moisture or theft.

Some areas that may need clarification:

- We encourage cameras on camp, 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.
- No more cash than the \$40 required for in transit meals and \$7 for laundry (in change)
- 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)
- Singlets, tank tops or crop tops are not permitted (sun safety/modesty)

### 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 6.30am sharp on Day 1 (be at the College by 6.00am) and return to the car park at 4.00pm - 4.30pm on Day 14.

Quest 1:	9JH & 9JP & 1/3 9RC	Saturday 11 October - Friday 24 October
Quest 2:	9SN & 9ORS & 1/3 9RC	Saturday 25 October - Friday 7 November
Quest 3:	9RR & 9MT & 1/3 9RC	Saturday 8 November - Friday 21 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 64 students.
- Five 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.
- Five Outdoor Education Instructors. Each will hold various instructional qualifications.
- 8 - 10 Outdoor Education University 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 12 seat minibuses and 4WD's.

## Shelter & Storage

In camp there is a large communal shelter, with a meeting hall and kitchen. 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.



# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## Food

Each tent group (3 – 4 students) is provided with cooking and food preparation equipment, including a 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 provide 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 generally not available.

## Pastoral Care & Behaviour Management

The camp's small group structure is designed to enhance the staff's ability to look after the social and emotional well being of the students. Each of the eight sub-groups, has at least one mentor.

The mentor accompanies the group on all 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. Each camp has a Woodcroft teacher in a chaplain/counsellor role. Student issues can be brought directly to this person 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 Head of Year 9 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 in the Grampians

## Communications

Specific protocols regarding communications to base camp and between groups in normal operations and emergencies are in place. Telephone communication is available at Happy Wanderer. At different times during the camp, students may be half a day from mobile phone contact, however satellite messaging devices are also in operation.





# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## 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 Activity 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. Local police have the responsibility for coordinating a response to any emergency incident in the Grampians.

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. This may result in an injured person being transferred to Melbourne.

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

Day 1	Students travel from Adelaide and settle into camp life
Days 2 - 9	Students complete a rotation of 8 activities
Days 10 - 13	Students undertake their final journey
Day 14	Packing up and travelling home

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

### BS - BUSHSKILLS

Involves basic campcraft training at the campground and a pack walk. Students will cook tea on light weight camp stoves that will be used on the final journey. Students will carry all their camping equipment. This session builds on the in-school training lessons and involves multiple groups at a time.

#### *Staffing*

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

### SN – SOLO NIGHT

This activity is done in conjunction with another 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 about 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*

A College staff member and a mentor per group.

#### *Transport*

Short vehicle transfer to solo night site, return for breakfast.

### R - ROCK CLIMBING

Introductory rock climbing and abseiling at Mt Arapiles. Climbing may also be at another venue. 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, that is managed by staff.

#### *Staffing*

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

#### *Transport*

One vehicle transports group to the 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.



# ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

## ON - ORIENTEERING/NAVIGATION

Two groups receive map and compass tuition. They also spend 1/2 a day completing a fixed rogaine course of 6 – 8 km; groups receive instructions on how to locate a series of checkpoints with map and compass.

### *Staffing*

One College staff member supported by a mentor.

### *Transport*

A vehicle transports group.

## BT – BIKE TOURING

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

### *Staffing*

One instructor supported by group mentor.

## KA - KAYAKING

One group paddles at Cherrypools or another location, 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. This may occur in conjunction with a land manager, such as Victoria Parks.

### *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 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 some 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. Modifications are possible for students with medical limitations.

Some groups will be bush camping for at least one night without toilet facilities.

### *Staffing*

Mentor and one other staff member per group.

# GEAR CHECKLIST

*Items marked with an asterisk (\*), more information can be found in our [Outdoor Education Equipment Overview Handbook \(click here to view\)](#).*

This list details the items which students should bring to camp in order to participate safely in the program. 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. **Please ensure you name ALL items that your child brings on Quest.**

## Clothing

- 2 – 3 pairs of track pants or leggings
- 5 t-shirts (must have elbow length sleeves and cover stomach, **no crop tops/singlets**)
- 3 long sleeved cotton shirts for sun safety (*shirts with collars are an advantage*)
- \*2 polar fleece tops
- \*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/rash vest 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!\*
- 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 (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 (separate medication requirements will be sent to families)
- Roll on insect repellent
- Elastic roller bandage
- 1 triangular bandage
-



# GEAR CHECKLIST

## 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 \$40 in cash for meals on both coach trips
- Students should also bring \$7.00 in \$1 and \$2 coins for laundry (just in case)

## 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 (optional)
- Wrist watch - cheap digital (**not** expensive - ie: smart watch, Apple, Fitbit etc)
- \*Knife, fork, spoon and mug (not china) - spoon must be metal, used to stir when cooking
- Whistle on a break-away lanyard
- \*20m of nylon cord
- ½ 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)  
Suggested: 1x sports bottle and 2x 1.5L empty carbonated drink bottles, as these are very strong.  
Hydration bladders with drink hose are **not permitted** due to leak risk
- \*One of the following options to carry their lunch (see page 13 of the Quest Parent Handbook for details):
  - Option 1: One container with at least three compartments
  - Option 2: One larger container and two smaller containers
  - Option 3: One larger container with two reusable snap lock bags that fit inside
- 1 packet of sweet biscuits (CONTAINING NO NUTS PLEASE) to be handed to staff before boarding coach (for communal suppers). Take biscuits that you like to eat (if you bring Arrowroots, that's what you'll get).
- Baby wipes/wet wipes (compostable type is preferred)- great for a shower alternative on the 4 day walk
- Small antibacterial gel eg: Aqium

# GEAR CHECKLIST

The College will provide:

- Tents
- Tables and chairs
- Food (apart from outward and return coach journey)
- Backpack for final journey
- 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 (that are 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 \$40 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.***



# QUEST DECLARES WAR ON WASTE

Australia is one of the most wasteful countries. On camp we will be focusing on reducing unnecessary packaging by making snacks from scratch and by purchasing food in bulk. This will have the added benefit of reducing the amount of processed food students consume.

Each morning at base camp students get their lunch and snacks from a subway style set up. Students generally get two fruits, two types of snacks and 1-2 sandwiches for lunch. **Students need to bring one of the following options to carry 2 sandwiches and two types of snacks on camp.**

Option 1: One container with at least three compartments.

Option 2: One sandwich sized container and two smaller containers.

Option 3: One larger container with two reusable snap lock bags that fit inside.

Please don't bring containers that are larger than the containers in the photos below as they will be too bulky to fit in students' day bags along with their other minimum kit items.

Students may want to bring beeswax wraps or other reusable sandwich wraps to keep sandwiches together. However a hard container is also necessary to make sure the lunch will not be crushed during activities.

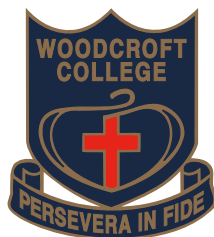




*We feel the best way to prepare our students for adult life is to help them experience some of its challenges in a controlled and safe environment.*







**WOODCROFT COLLEGE**

**An Independent Coeducational Anglican ELC - Year 12 School**

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