



Stage 1 – ‘Meeting the Mountains’ Information for Parents / Guardians

Your child will shortly be attending Wollangarra Outdoor Education Centre for a five-day camp, which we call a Stage 1 course.

During the course, your child will be staying at our Homestead in a relatively remote location in the Victorian mountains. Your child will travel further into the mountains for a three-day bushwalk. This can sound concerning for parents and guardians unfamiliar with the mountains, particularly if you are accustomed to being readily able to contact your child with a mobile telephone.

You will have read on our Application and Permission Form that your child will be participating in a number of outdoor activities that involve a degree of risk. Outdoor Education is deliberately challenging for young people. Your child will learn about how they respond to difficult conditions, physically uncomfortable conditions and teamwork through these experiences. Wollangarra believes these are important things for young people to learn about in a supported educational environment. Our remote locations are important in the delivery of these experiences.

During their time at Wollangarra, your child will rarely be in a location with mobile phone coverage. In fact, we ask young people to spend the week without their phones, watches or money. This is part of the education that Wollangarra delivers to young people. Just think - this could be the last week of your child's life during which they are not permanently attached to and seemingly dependent upon a mobile telephone. How many times have you wished that your child spent less time looking at a screen?

Wollangarra provides one of the few educational opportunities to demonstrate to your child that they can be without a mobile phone and still be safe, have fun, develop meaningful friendships with their peers and engage in positive activities. We ask that you support Wollangarra's approach to mobile phones and encourage your child to either leave their mobile phone at home, or hand it to Wollangarra at the start of the course. If possible, provide your child with a camera that is separate to their mobile phone.

It is important that you complete the Medical Form as thoroughly as possible. The information you provide to us is vital for our outdoor leaders to properly care for your child whilst they are on a Wollangarra course.

Please be assured that, should there be a medical emergency, we are fully equipped to contact emergency services and provide first aid in a wilderness setting. Our outdoor leaders are also trained to respond to other emergencies, such as fire or flood. Should you need to contact Wollangarra for good reason, you can telephone our Homestead and speak with our staff.

Please note that Wollangarra is a nut-free premises, and so we ask that you ensure that your child does not bring sweets or treats that contain nuts, as this may put another child at risk.

The Wollangarra program is designed to provide more than a basic outdoor education program. Wollangarra also educates young people about practical conservation and environmental sustainability. Our Stage 1 course is an introduction for young people to the natural environment, in particular, the mountain environment. Wollangarra conducts regular follow up programs for young people who wish to follow up their interest in conservation projects both in the mountains and at home. All young people are invited to participate in a follow up course (Stage 2 and 3) if they are interested. Even if your child does not return on a follow up course, they may be interested in investigating how they can reduce their ecological footprint through changes to their lifestyle. You can support your child's interest by discussing and sharing ideas with your child.

Further information about Wollangarra and our programs is available on our website. You are also welcome to contact the Directors should you have other questions or concerns about your child.

Thank you

Wollangarra Directors