



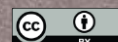
Department of  
Education

**Shaping the future**

# Merredin Residential College

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## Parent & Student Handbook



15 September 2021

























## **'Overnight leave'**

Students are permitted weekend overnight leave to return home or spend the weekend away from the college.

Students are permitted optional WEEKEND OVERNIGHT leave with a parent or a host (as approved by a parent) from after school Friday, to before school on Monday. This leave is to be arranged by Thursday morning (for catering purposes). For leave with anybody who is not a parent, confirmation is required from the parents via the REACH program.

Overnight leave on a school night is discouraged and generally will only be granted for school purposes or to stay with parents or immediate family.

## **STUDENT TRANSPORT**

### **Residential college vehicles**

Merredin Residential College maintains vehicles which supervisors use to transport students. Staff transporting students have appropriate driving licences and passenger transport driver (PTD) authorisations.

The College endeavors to meet student transport requirements in and around town where practical.

Students are expected to be responsible passengers at all times.

### **Private motor vehicles**

Your child is not permitted to travel in a private vehicle unless the driver is an approved host entered in REACH.

Your child will not travel in the personal private vehicle of a residential college staff member unless this is the best course of action in a medical emergency situation.

### **Student motor vehicles**

Only senior students (year 11 & 12) may have a car at the Residential College for limited transport needs, to go to and from home only. Parents must apply to the Residential College Manager to have a car at the Residential College. If approved, student cars will be parked at the Residential College at the car owners risk.

Student cars may be utilised to provide a lift for other students on the basis that the parents of both students' must provide written consent. Whilst the Residential College understands that occasionally one student providing a lift for another student may be necessary we discourage this action as much as possible.

# COLLEGE LIFE

## DAILY ROUTINE

- **6:45am to 7:20 - Breakfast**
- This time is used to wake up, have a shower and get dressed for school. You must be present for breakfast.
- 7:20 - 8:15am - Dorm inspection
- Students are to go to their dorms and finish cleaning their room and their dorm. Everyone has assigned duties.
- 8:30am - Off to school
- Students are to head off to school no later than this time.
- **3:00pm - Back to Residential College (Wednesday 2:30)**
- **Between 3:00pm - 5:30pm is free time for the students**
- **5:30pm - Dinner call**
- Dinner is at 5.30pm all students must attend.
- 7:00pm to 8:00pm – Study (Monday - Thursday) – Seasonal Changes
- Students are expected to do what homework they have.
- If they have no homework they are expected to study, which consists of revision and planning for future assignments or read a book.
- No devices are to be used during study unless it is study related. Devices used for anything other than study will be confiscated.
- 7:00pm to 8:00pm (Sunday) – Quiet Time
- This time is used for students to prepare for the week. Whether it is to clean rooms, organise uniforms or study/revision.
- (This applies to all students.)
- 8:00pm - Supper
- **9:00pm - Years 7 - 8 Lights Out**
- (Students are expected to already be in bed with the lights off by 9:00pm)
- 9:30pm - Junior Lights Out Year 9 - 10
- (Students are expected to already be in bed with the lights off by 9:30pm)
- 10:00pm - Seniors Lights Out
- (Sunday Night Lights Out is 9.30pm)
- Years 11 - 12
- (Students are expected to already be in bed with the lights off by 10:00pm.)

**Please note all students from 8:30pm this is quiet time**

**Fridays and Saturdays there is no study and lights out is 10:30pm for everyone. Wednesday, school finishes early at 2:30pm and students get town leave after returning to the Residential College. Some times and activities are subject to change.**

### **Bedrooms**

Students are expected to keep their room neat and tidy. College staff regularly inspect rooms to monitor this.

## Dress code

Students are expected to be dressed appropriately at all times.

## Meals

Merredin Residential College supports healthy eating. 'Eat Learn Thrive' is the health and wellbeing program at all Department of Education Residential Colleges. It is based on the Department's *Healthy Food and Drink in Public Schools Policy* and the 'traffic light' system of menu planning.

The college supports and will cater for any medically required or religious dietary requirements. The kitchen staff can also prepare vegetarian and gluten free options where required, so please advise us of any special dietary needs. Students can speak with college staff and the chef to suggest additions to the menu.



## Meal requirements outside of regular meal times

Fruit, water and hot drinks are available at any time.

Students can order a late, packed or early meal if they will not be present at a meal time (e.g. for sports training or medical appointments). In most instances staff will be able to arrange these meals, but students should plan ahead and notify staff if they need one.

## Personal food and snacks

Food snacks can be purchased or sent from home but for hygiene reasons are best kept in sealed containers. Energy drinks and chewing gum are banned from the college.

## Recreation and Social

We aim to provide a range of activities while also allowing for individual needs. Here are some of our facilities and activities on offer to our students.

Please note that charges may apply to some activities. We do not seek to profit from these events and your child's participation in any activity requiring payment is at your discretion.

The Residential College organizes numerous sporting, recreational and leisure activities for our students. We encourage students to participate in these activities to promote fitness, fun and social interaction. We also organise overnight camps, day outings, social events, shopping trips, Perth visits and in-house activities.

Some general points to consider;

Students can play for a sporting team or join a community club (See Agreements and Consents Form)

Permission is needed to participate in a range of Residential College organised outings and activities (see Agreements and Consents Form)

Any sporting fees and outings / activity costs will be the responsibility of the parent and student.

## Sport and hobbies

Students are encouraged to participate in a range of individual and team sports and hobbies according to their interests. We do this to promote fitness, fun and social interaction.

The college organises a wide variety of fun activities throughout the year.

Details of local sporting clubs and associations can be supplied by college staff if required.

Students will need to meet the cost of any membership fees, personal equipment and uniforms.

The college welcomes suggestions for activities from students and parents, and we will endeavor to accommodate all reasonable requests.

## Camps and outings

The college organises camps and outings throughout the year. These activities are voluntary and there is no obligation for your child to participate. You will be asked to provide written permission for your child to attend.



## Swimming pool and recreation room

The Residential College has a swimming pool for the use of our students. We also attend off campus swimming activities such as the local town pool, Adventure World and other water parks. Students can only attend outside water activities when accompanied by 2 qualified supervisors. (See Agreements and Consents Form.)

Staff are RLSS Aquatic Rescue and Resuscitation qualified.

Students are encouraged to make good use of college facilities. Students are expected to look after the equipment and observe the user requirements on display.



## Movies and Gaming

Gaming consoles are permitted at the college for use only on weekends. With permission, students may attend the cinema on weekends at their own cost to see approved films.

Students can also select films that they would like to have shown in-house.

All media (television, movies, computer games, DVDs, magazines etc.) accessed by your child whilst residing at Merredin Residential College will be consistent with Australian Government classification ratings for films and computer games.

The college permits content rated G, PG and M. All content remains at the discretion of college staff and will be removed or confiscated if it is deemed inappropriate. Material rated MA15+ does not reflect the values of Merredin Residential College and is banned.



## Visitors

To ensure the safety of all students, we ask that you enter and leave through reception and to register in the visitors' book.

Visitors **are not** permitted to enter student bedrooms/common rooms/units other than on approved dates and times – usually at the start and end of each term.

Students are welcome to invite their school friends to visit the college. Friends also are not permitted in bedrooms /common rooms/units and are required to follow staff instructions whilst on college grounds.

### **Visitors are welcome at the Residential College under the following conditions;**

- All invited visitors to the Residential College must first call in at the office, be introduced to supervisors and sign the Visitors Book.
- All visitors are expected to follow staff instructions.
- Visitors to the Residential College must use the designated areas and must leave the premises by 5.00pm.
- Under no circumstances are visitors allowed in the dorms.
- Parents are welcome to visit outside these times by contacting staff and informing them of their intended visit. (At no point are parents to go to the dorms without speaking to a supervisor first!)

## Chores

Students will be required to work as a team to assist around the college with simple duties such as:

- tidying common rooms or other sections of the college
- loading the dishwashers after meals
- simple gardening.

Assisting the cleaning, kitchen and grounds staff replicates what students may be expected to do at home. It encourages cooperation and provides some practical domestic skills for when they leave home.

## Laundry

The Residential College has a staff member who washes uniforms once a week and linen once a week. There are set days that students are expected to have their laundry done. Each dorm area has several washing machines for students to do their own laundry if needed. Students are expected to hangout their laundry as soon as possible after washing it. There are dryers available to be used on wet and rainy days. An iron and ironing board are available for use. A lost property bin is provided for students to look for missing clothes. ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING MUST HAVE THE STUDENTS NAME ON IT.

## Religious freedom

Under the *School Education Act 1999* the curriculum and teaching in government schools is not to promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect. We also adhere to this principle at Merredin Residential College.

The college supports students who wish to practice their beliefs. Staff will assist where possible for your child to attend any religious services and cultural events they choose.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Student health

Our staff care for your child's health and wellbeing and all supervisors have a First Aid Certificate. When we offer a place at the college we ask that you complete a *Student HealthCare Summary* form so that college staff have the knowledge to support the management of your child's health care needs.

### Unwell students

Students who are too sick to go to school will be confined to bed in the sick bay (if available) and will be excused from normal activities until they are well. College staff will contact you and your child's school to notify them of the absence. If a doctor's appointment is necessary, we will organise for this and notify you at the earliest convenience.

If your child contracts an infectious disease (e.g. chicken pox, measles) they may be required to return home until they are no longer contagious.

### Medical appointments

We work with all our families to help maintain the health of students. Please advise us if your child requires a medical appointment and we can make one for you.

All medical expenses remain the responsibility of parents. You may choose to take out insurance, including ambulance cover, for your child's health needs.

### Medication

With your written permission, college staff can administer medication to your child. We will give you a *Short/Long Term Medication* form upon accepting a place at the college seeking your approval.

Please inform the college of any medication being taken by your child. If your child requires short term medication, such as antibiotics or some other prescription, we will ask you to complete and sign an *Administration of Medication* form with the appropriate details. All medications brought into the college must be disclosed and given to college staff to be dispensed as required. They should be in the original packaging and clearly labelled with the student's name.

With your written permission and negotiation with residential college senior staff, senior students may self-administer their medication. You can authorise this on the *Administration of Medication* form.

All medication given to students is recorded. Prescription medications that students self-administer are also recorded in the event that information is required by a health practitioner.

Students may keep their asthma inhaler with them in their room.

### Mental Health

Our supervisors keep a close watch on all our students' mental health and we will speak with you if we have any reason to feel concerned about your child. We also have regular organised access to a school psychologist who works with students and staff to improve student wellbeing.

Mental Health concerns and needs are managed initially by staff and then supported throughout Psychologist or external allied health service. Students will also be counselled and supported by staff when needed.

Care is taken by staff to ensure that the college is a safe and comfortable place for students. We have zero tolerance to bullying and any instances will be dealt with in line with the College code of conduct.

### **Being homesick**

It is possible that students may become homesick when living away from home. Staff have a great deal of experience in assisting students and parents when students show signs of missing home. Homesickness can affect each student in different ways so there are several methods used by staff to support and care for students. Staff work with you to help your child with coping skills and to build resilience in living in a boarding community.

### **Emergencies and accidents**

The college maintains an Emergency and Critical Incident Management plan to guide all aspects of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. We regularly practice evacuation and lockdown drills.

### **Fire Safety**

Merredin Residential College is listed on the Department of Fire and Emergency Services Bushfire Zone Register. Accordingly, we have a separate and stand-alone bushfire plan and practice further evacuation drills during bushfire season.

The college has fire alarms, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and emergency evacuation plans. Students are trained in emergency evacuation procedures and practice evacuation drills regularly.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services may charge a fee to attend a premises in response to an alarm where there is no fire. Where it can be established a student has deliberately caused a false fire alarm, they may be asked to contribute to the costs of the callout.

## **PARENT CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

### ***Residential college concerns and complaints***

Merredin Residential College is committed to providing a high quality boarding service. We are always considering how to improve and we value your feedback.

If you have any concerns about our service or facilities, we want to know. The college manager is happy to speak with you at any time to hear your concerns or discuss a complaint. You can also talk about it with any member of staff. We also welcome positive feedback.

Queries, concerns and complaints are best managed at the college, in line with the Department of Education's Disputes and Complaints policy. If a satisfactory resolution has not been found after providing the College Manager with sufficient time and opportunity to address the matter, you may choose to make contact with the Manager Residential Colleges on 9264 4425 or [residential.colleges@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:residential.colleges@education.wa.edu.au).

### **Child protection concerns**

Merredin Residential College is committed to the care, safety and protection of all students. We provide protective behaviors awareness training to our students and our supervisors have undertaken training in child protection and are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse.

### ***Reporting a child protection incident or concern***

There are a number of avenues for communicating incidents or concerns:

- Inform the College Manager and/or the Manager Residential Colleges.
- Contact the Department of Education's Standards and Integrity Directorate on 9264 4740 or email [complaints@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:complaints@education.wa.edu.au).

# SAFETY AND WELFARE – FOR STUDENTS

## **The following sections are for students.**

At Merredin Residential College our supervisors are always on hand. You can talk with us about anything. We will listen and give you advice and support. If we think a matter needs to be discussed with others we might refer you to someone more qualified to provide specialised support. This might be the College Manager or school psychologist.

### **Your safety and the safety of others**

Firstly, you have the RIGHT to be safe and to feel safe at all times. If you have concerns or a complaint about what might be happening at the college, there are people who are able to help you.

### **Safety concerns may include things like:**

- inappropriate social approaches by a person to make friends with you or start a close relationship with you
- inappropriate touching by a person which makes you feel uncomfortable
- sexual talk, personal emails or personal contact via mobile phones or social media
- inappropriate physical handling (hitting, pushing, hugging).

You might also be concerned about similar behaviour towards someone else at the college. It's OK for you to make a complaint on behalf of another student and we encourage you to do so.

### **Residential college student complaints**

T: 1800 011 114 (Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm)

E: [residentialstudentcomplaints@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:residentialstudentcomplaints@education.wa.edu.au)

W: [www.education.wa.edu.au/residential-college-student-complaints](http://www.education.wa.edu.au/residential-college-student-complaints)

When you call you will speak to someone trained in protective behaviours. They care and understand that you may feel a range of emotions about contacting them including anxiety, shame or relief. You can talk with them about yourself or someone else you are concerned about. You can remain anonymous but if you would like someone to get back to you, you will need to provide some contact details

If your complaint is urgent or is an emergency please call the Police, Crisis Care or Kids Helpline.

### **Police**

24 hours a day, seven days a week T: 131 444 (000 for emergencies) W: [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au)

When you call you will be asked to:

Press '1' for immediate police attendance

Press '2' for general information, or to report an incident that does not need immediate police attendance

Remember, if it's an emergency, immediately hang up and call 000.

## **Crisis Care**

24 hours a day, seven days a weekT: 9223 1111

T: 1800 199 008 (country free call)

T: 9325 1232 (TTY)

W: [www.dcp.wa.gov.au/crisisandemergency](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/crisisandemergency)

Crisis Care is a crisis information and counselling service of the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support for people needing urgent help.

Crisis Care can help when:

- you need immediate help with a serious problem
- you are concerned about your wellbeing or that of another person
- you are alone or afraid and urgently need to talk with someone
- you need counselling, information or other support.

## **Kids Helpline**

24 hours a day, seven days a weekT: 1800 55 1800

W: [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between five and 25.

- If you need to talk with someone immediately, the fastest way is to call and speak with a counsellor.
- If you're not sure about talking with someone on the phone, or you can't get to a phone,use the web or email service.
- Calls from mobile phones, landlines and payphones are free if you are calling from within Australia.

You can talk with Kids Helpline about anything including:

- relationships with your family, boyfriend or girlfriend
- a friend who needs help
- school or study worries
- how you are feeling, such as angry, sad or confused.

## **Your health and wellbeing concerns**

It's OK to have concerns about what might happen at school or where you are living during the school year. We understand there might be times when you want help so please use thehelplines listed here.

### **School concerns**

If you have concerns about school such as homework, school activities or other students you can talk with your parents or carers or with school staff such as:

- your teachers
- school psychologist
- school nurse
- school chaplain
- any other staff member.

## Residential college concerns

Raise any concerns about the Residential College – e.g. facilities; meals; leave arrangements – with college staff. Discuss your concerns with other students to see what they think.

### You can take your concerns to:

- any member of staff including the College Manager
- your parents/carers
- the Residential college student complaints line.

## Residential college student complaints

T: 1800 011 114 (Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm)

E: [residentialstudentcomplaints@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:residentialstudentcomplaints@education.wa.edu.au)

W: [www.education.wa.edu.au/residential-college-student-complaints](http://www.education.wa.edu.au/residential-college-student-complaints)

## Anti-bullying policy

Merredin Residential College does not tolerate bullying in any form. We are committed to providing you with a safe and caring environment where you feel happy and safe. Whenever you have concerns about feeling unsafe or threatened we encourage you to speak to staff.



## Suggestions

If there is anything we can do better, please let us know. You can raise your suggestions with your student leaders or any member of staff at any time.

## APPENDIX: RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1 AUTHORITY

The Code of Conduct (the Code) is issued and published pursuant to section 213J of the *School Education Act 1999*.

### 2 PURPOSE

The Boarding Agreement provides that the student must obey the Code. The purpose of the Code is to set out the required standard of conduct to be observed by a student while boarding at a residential college. Students who breach the Code may be subject to disciplinary action. The college manager can suspend or terminate a boarding agreement for substantial breaches of the Code.

### 3 SCOPE

This Code applies to all students who board at a residential college.

### 4 CONDUCT IN RESPECT TO SELF

Students will:

- act with proper regard for their safety, education, welfare and health (mental and physical);
- conduct themselves in a respectful, responsible and lawful manner;
- behave in a way that upholds the values, integrity and reputation of the residential college; and
- accept responsibility for their actions.

### 5 CONDUCT IN RESPECT TO OTHER STUDENTS

Students will:

- treat other students with respect, dignity, courtesy, honesty and fairness and with proper regard for others' rights, safety and welfare;
- live in harmony with other students and respect others' views and opinions;
- respect the privacy of others; and
- report a breach of the Code to appropriate staff.

### 6 CONDUCT IN RESPECT TO STAFF

Students will:

- treat staff with respect, dignity, courtesy, honesty and fairness and with proper regard for their rights, safety and welfare;
- respect their property, views and opinions; and
- comply with any reasonable request of a staff member.

### 7 CONDUCT IN RESPECT TO PROPERTY

Students will:

- treat residential college property and facilities with respect; and
- treat staff and fellow students' property with respect.