

Merredin Residential College

Parent & Student Handbook

2025



Merredin Residential College and its staff respectfully acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging.



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College Contact Details

MAIN COLLEGE PHONE LINE - 9041 7500 For all College phone contact



If your child does not have a mobile phone, you can contact them at the college on the following number:

College main line: 9041 7500 (to contact all staff and administration / manager)

College Male Supervisor: 0408 411 727

College Female Supervisor: 0438 020 411

Students are asked to remind family and friends that they are unavailable to receive incoming calls during meal times, study time or after lights out.



College Mailing Address: (Student or Staff Name)

Merredin Residential College PO BOX 138

MERREDIN, WA 6415



Supervisors – Merredin.SRC.Supervisors@education.wa.edu.au

(All leave and student matters)

Administration (only) - Merredin.ResCol@education.wa.edu.au

(All admin, fees, payments etc)



The college website

<https://www.education.wa.edu.au/web/merredinresidentialcollege/home>



Emergency contact

Students are discouraged from using their mobile phones after lights out. In case of emergency, please call the college supervisors on 0408 411 727 (Male Supervisor) or 0438 020 411 (Female Supervisor). A supervisor will then contact your child with minimum disruption to other students.

Department of Education

151 Royal Street

East Perth WA 6004 T: 9264 4111

W: www.education.wa.edu.au

Welcome to Merredin Residential College

Thank you for choosing Merredin Residential College for your child.

We look forward to working with you as we raise our boarders together and watch them grow over the years to come. All college staff are committed to providing a safe and caring environment to support your child in their personal development and education. We aim to provide a high-quality boarding service which is valued by you and your children. Your suggestions on how we can improve our service are always welcome.



About us

The Merredin Residential College is a part of the Department of Education and has been established to provide a boarding service for students from outlying locations who are being given opportunities by the Merredin College to complete their secondary education in Merredin. Merredin is located on Great Eastern Highway 268 kilometers east of Perth, 314 meters above sea level and is the most substantial settlement of the Eastern Wheatbelt. Merredin Residential College is situated a short walk away from Merredin College and within walking distance of all main town facilities.

Merredin first settled in 1889, it started as a bush shanty used by gold prospectors on their way from Perth to the Eastern Goldfields. In 1893 the railway line to the goldfields made it to Merredin and around the same time settlement of farmland began.

During World War II, the first Australian general field hospital was established in the town and the first government school hostel built in Western Australia, this eventually became known as Merredin Residential College.

The Residential College is available to male and female students ranging from Year 7 to Year 12 who are classified as isolated children.

Merredin Residential College is one of the finest boarding colleges for rural students with 72 bed accommodation facilities and boasts a new swimming pool, recreation shed (which is used for basketball and any indoor activities), tennis courts, computers, gym and teachers who give their time to assist the students with their schooling.

The Residential College provides a safe, homely environment where students attend a secondary education facility.

Our staff

Residential college staff comprise of a supervisory team and a support team, both of which report to the College Manager. The College Manager reports to the Manager Residential Colleges in the Department of Education in Perth.

Supervisory staff hold various qualifications including:

- Certificate IV in Community Services – Student Residential Care
- First Aid Certificate (including CPR)
- Aquatic Rescue for Group 3 Pool Award
- LR Class Driver's Licence with PTD

College governance

Merredin Residential College is governed by the *School Education Act 1999* and is administered by the Western Australian Department of Education. The College Manager works with staff to develop local processes in line with Department of Education policies and procedures.

All Department of Education policies can be viewed at www.det.wa.edu.au/policies.

LINC Committee

Supporting Merredin Residential College is our Local Input Networking and Communications (LINC) committee.

The purpose of the LINC committee is to enable parents and members of the community to provide input to the college manager regarding the operation and management of the college. Please speak with us if you would like to join this important advisory group.

Our code of conduct

The Residential College Code of Conduct (the Code), reproduced in the Appendix, sets out some simple expectations for students:

- In respect to self
- In respect to other students
- In respect to staff
- In respect to property.

When signing the Boarding Agreement for your child, you are undertaking that your child will comply with the Code.

When your child signs the Boarding Agreement, they agree they have read, understood and will follow the Code; and understand that there may be consequences for breaches.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

We are committed to the PBS program which supports the implementation of the Department of Education's *Student Behaviour in Public Schools Policy and Procedures*. Our goal is to create a safe, positive environment where students are engaged and successful.

Merredin Residential College use tokens as a way of recognizing positive behaviours from students that they can then use to claim a variety of different rewards.

Costs and Charges

Annual boarding fee

The annual boarding fee covers a student's bed, meals, facilities and pastoral care. It applies to all Department of Education Residential Colleges and is the same for all year levels.

Refer to our website <http://www.education.wa.edu.au/merredinresidentialcollege> for the latest information on costs and charges.

Security payment

A \$300 security payment is required to secure a place for your child. The security may be used to compensate the residential college for any outstanding costs or for repairing damage a student may cause to college property. At the completion of the Boarding Agreement the balance of the \$300 will be returned to you.

Other costs – individual services

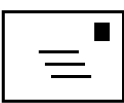
The residential college recovers the cost of providing individual services to students such as the purchase of required medications and participation in optional organised activities.

Payment

By accepting a place at the college and signing the Boarding Agreement you agree to:

- Pay the invoiced amount for accommodation and individual services each year.
- Complete required payments prior to the first day of term unless a prior arrangement or payment plan has been approved by the College Manager.
- Pay any outstanding amounts if the Boarding Agreement is terminated.

Payment options

			
in Person	by Phone	by Mail	via EFT
<i>cash, cheque, EFTPOS</i>	<i>credit card</i>	<i>cheque, money order</i>	<i>electronic bank transfer</i>
Merredin Residential College 39 – 49 Caw Street MERREDIN WA 6415	(08) 9041 7500 9 am -2 pm Monday to Thursday	Merredin Residential College PO Box 138 MERREDIN WA 6415	BSB: 066040 A/C: 19907531 Please use student name as the reference

Financial assistance and allowances

It is a condition of the Boarding Agreement that you assign to the residential college any subsidies or payments received to offset the charge for accommodation each year.

Please refer to the residential colleges website <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/residential-colleges> for the latest information on fees and allowances.

Learning support

The main reason a student boards with us is their desire to access a quality education. At Merredin Residential College we provide a number of supports to assist students to achieve their academic goals.

Homework and study

All students are expected to practice sound study habits and be respectful of other students' needs for a distraction free environment. The college study times are:

7.30pm – 8.30pm Monday - Wednesday

All students at the college are expected to work constructively during these study times and may need to dedicate extra effort outside of these times to complete all academic requirements. Students without set homework on any given day are required to remain focused during study time on revision tasks, recreational reading or writing activities of their choice.

Students without set homework on any given day are required to remain focused during study time on other tasks such as revision, recreational reading, writing, or other supervisor approved recreational activity of their choice.

Tutoring

Parents may organize private tutors if students are experiencing difficulties in certain subjects. All tutors must have a current Working with Children Check.

Supervisors are to be advised of private tutoring especially if it is off campus so that the supervision of study is not compromised. The schools may also assist with homework classes and exam preparation tutorials at different times of the year.

If students require additional help with their schooling, they should always avail themselves of the school programs on offer. If students are unable to attend these, or if what is offered by the school and college is not sufficient, you may consider engaging a private tutor.

Private tutoring costs are not covered by student boarding fees, but college staff will assist in finding a suitable place for private tutoring to occur.

Term 3 school holidays ATAR exams

Some ATAR exams take place during the Term 3 school holiday period. With sufficient advanced notice, we can remain open during this time to facilitate those students requiring accommodation in order to attend exams.

A modified boarding service is offered with fewer staff than normal, with the expectation that Year 12 students will demonstrate high levels of responsibility and self-management.

Please let our staff know as soon as possible should your child require this service.

Computers and Internet Access

Computers

Students are encouraged to bring their personal computers (Laptops only) to the Residential College. Students' usage of computers (any/all) are restricted to certain times of the day and to set locations only. If a student does not have a computer, then they are welcome to use a Residential College computer for their study needs. Any person using ANY computer at the Residential College must first read and sign the computer contract. Inappropriate use of a computer will see it being confiscated. (See Agreements and Consents Form for signing.)

Internet Use

Students are not to attempt to access inappropriate Internet sites at any time. Any student found accessing inappropriate sites will be banned from using the Residential College computers or if using their own computer, will have their computer confiscated for a period of time with the parents being informed. (See Agreements and Consents Form for signing.)

Internet Access and Provision

The Residential College will provide a number of computers that are connected to the internet for study and other permitted purposes only. We also have new laptops that are only provided during in study time. These will be signed out and they responsibility will be on the student to care for each unit.

Homework and assignment needs will have priority over general internet access needs. Free Wi-Fi is also provided daily for students to access. (See Agreements and Consents Form for signing.)

College internet is set up for students to be able to study and research their required schoolwork.

There is also scope for students to use the network for reasonable personal use. Students are discouraged from using the college network for online gaming and/or streaming which may slow user speeds for others.

To access college internet, you and your child will sign an online services acceptable use agreement setting out rules surrounding Department of Education-provided online services.

Extended school absences

We provide a boarding service so that students can attend school. If your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time, they will be required to return home until they are able to resume their schooling.

Reasons that students may be absent from school and required to return home include:

- They have been suspended from school
- They have an infectious disease such as flu or COVID-19
- Long-term illness/injury

If you are unable to collect your child, we encourage you to have a local contact or guardian available to do so.

Students absent from school for short periods of time due to illness will be confined to bed.

What your child needs to bring

The Essentials

- Uniforms are per Merredin College regulations (Ph: 9041 7520)
 - 5 school uniforms
 - 1 school sports uniform
- Appropriate closed in Black lace up footwear.
- All students are required to bring a quantity of appropriate casual clothing and footwear also suitable swimwear (Must have rashie or shirt when swimming).

Bedding and Towels

- 2 sheet sets for king size single bed
- 2 pillow cases
- 1 king size single doona or quilt and cover
- 1 pillow
- 2 bath towels
- 1 beach towel

Miscellaneous

- 1 School Bag
- Lunch Box
- Stationery (pens, pencils, writing paper etc)
- Medical kit (bandaids, bandage etc)
- Sewing kit (needles, pins, thread, scissors etc)
- Personal laundry washing basket, Liquid detergent, pegs
- Coat hangers
- Personal toiletries
- Bathrobe
- 1 x Mobile phone
- Laptop
- Alarm Clock

Personal computers

Computer access has become an integral part of schooling and a personal device is a great idea. Please check with your child's school to see what type of device they recommend.

If your child brings their personal device to the residential college please ensure all appropriate cabling, any required adaptors and USB devices are included.

Mobile phones

Personal devices are primarily for study purposes and are not to be used after lights out. Mobile phones are not to be used at meal times, during study or after lights out.

Students can have one (1) mobile phone at the Residential College and are only allowed to have a phone on accepting the conditions of use. Inappropriate use of a mobile phone such as harassing calls, text, explicit images, filming of students or staff, etc. will result in the phone being confiscated for up to a month or being sent home permanently. Phones will need to be handed in at lights out each night. Senior students are given the privilege of keeping their phones overnight, however if they are found to be using their phone inappropriately that privilege will be revoked. If your Child's Mobile Phone is confiscated at school, the Residential College Staff will not retrieve it for them, this will be your responsibility. (See Agreements and Consents Form for signing.)

Students are to provide their mobile phone number to staff and enter the college phone number into their contacts list.

Insurance

The Department of Education does not have insurance cover for student property that is lost, stolen or damaged.

Security

Please ensure your child's personal property including clothing and bedding is clearly and permanently labeled or marked for easy identification.

The college will take all practical precautions to care for your child's personal belongings and retrieve lost or stolen items, but accepts no responsibility for any items that are damaged or lost.

The Residential College will take all practical precautions to care for students' personal belongings. The Residential College provides a safe in each student's room. Students are encouraged to utilise these for securing valuable items. There is a safe in the staff office for larger sums of money, however we discourage bringing large sums of money to the Residential College unless necessary.

Parents and students need to seriously consider what items are brought to the Residential College and what items are best left at home.

Bicycles, scooters and skateboards

Parents' written permission is required to have a bicycle, scooter or skateboard at the college. Staff will advise when and where they may be used on college grounds.

Inappropriate items

Students are not to bring offensive material into the residential college. Neither are they to display inappropriate material in their room. If in doubt, students can check with college staff who will indicate if it is acceptable. College staff may confiscate items deemed offensive, inappropriate or in poor taste, and students will be asked to take the item home.

Student room searches

To ensure the health and safety of students, residential college staff may search student rooms if they have a reasonable suspicion that:

- A student is at risk of self-harm.
- Dangerous or banned items or illegal substances may have been brought into the residential college.
- A student may be in possession of stolen property.
- Or any other reason where the college manager has sufficient reason to do so.

Any items confiscated will be given to you or returned to your child to take home, unless it has been delivered into the custody of the Police.

Student mail

We will contact you if your child receives a package that we believe looks suspicious or may contain contraband. We may ask your child to open the package in front of a staff member, or give the unopened package to you. We will never open student mail.



Leave arrangements

A record of students' whereabouts is maintained at all times. When leaving the college, all students must **'sign out'** in the appropriate way and **'sign in'** on returning.

Leave while under college care

Different leave arrangements enable students to participate in a range of sporting, and social activities held outside school hours and away from the residential college.

Leaving residential college grounds

Except when leaving to attend school, students must receive permission from a supervisor before leaving the residential college grounds.

The college manager may revoke approval to leave the college grounds for disciplinary reasons.



'Town leave'

With your permission, students will be given leave on set days each week.

Certain conditions apply and students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when intown.

- Students are provided with set days that they can go to town dependent upon their year group. All leave concludes at 4.00pm for juniors and 5.00pm for seniors (Wednesday) and 12 noon Saturdays.
- Additional Town leave during the week is not encouraged. However, where students consider they have a valid reason, permission is to be sought from a supervisor.
- As a privilege year 12 students are given greater flexibility with more leave allowances.
- Students can only take town leave in twos or more.
- After approval is given, departing students must check themselves out with the supervisor and the REACH program and on return, check back in with the supervisor and the REACH program.
- Initial parental consent will be required as part of their application. (See Agreements and Consents Form for signing).

There is no direct supervision during this leave and students are expected to be an ambassador of the residential college and behave in line with the Code of Conduct.

Casual Employment Leave

After consultation between parents, the student and the College Manager, your child may be given leave to undertake casual employment. College staff will endeavor to assist with transportation needs, but as this may not always be possible students are encouraged to organise their own transportation to and from their workplace.

Leave under another's care

Students are entitled to seven-day care throughout the school term. However, we do support and encourage students to spend time with family and friends wherever possible.

College staff have a duty of care to protect students from risk of harm. In consultation with you, we may refuse a leave request, or refuse to release a student where leave has previously been approved, if we consider the host may pose a risk to your child.

If your child is unable to return on schedule, please contact college staff to let them know when they will be returning.

REACH boarding school system

Merredin Residential College uses REACH boarding school software.

REACH is designed to make leave requests and other residential college procedures accurate, easy to use and always available.

At the beginning of your child's residency at the college they will be assigned a profile on REACH and shown how to use the system.

Parents also will be assigned a profile which will allow you to log into the portal and arrange for and approve your child's leave. You may choose to download the REACH app which provides similar functionality.

If you have any issues or queries about REACH, please don't hesitate to contact college staff or the REACH support team at www.reachboarding.com.

Sign out ('host') list; You can add any number of trusted people ('hosts') into REACH that your child may go on leave with.

Leave requests

Leave requests are fully automated in REACH and can be generated by students, parents or hosts. Once submitted a sequence of permissions is required from all leave participants (student, host, parent and college staff) to approve the leave.

All leave requests must be submitted at least 24 hours prior to time of leave. For weekend leave, all requests must be in by Thursday morning.

Any material change to any of the leave details (e.g. a different host or change of date) will reset the permissions sequence. This is a security measure to ensure you approve the actual leave request and prevents subsequent changes.

‘Day leave’

Students can go on day leave on the weekend and at various times during the week. Students can take day leave on the weekend or after school during the week.

Students must return on that day by 5pm unless prearranged. All other conditions as stated under “Overnight leave” apply to day leave.

‘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 7:20am - Breakfast**
- This time is used to wake up, have a shower, get dressed for school and have breakfast. You must be present for breakfast.
- **7:30 - 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 - 5:45pm is free time for the students
- **5:45pm to 6:20pm - Dinner**
- All students must attend.
- **7:30pm to 8:30pm – Study (Monday - Wednesday) – 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.
- **7:30pm to 8:30pm (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.)
- **9:00pm - Years 7 - 8 Lights Out**
(Students are expected to already be in bed with the lights off by 9:00pm)
- **9:30pm - Year 9 - 10 Lights Out**
(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 7:30pm this is quiet time.

Fridays and Saturdays there is no study and lights out is 10:00pm 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 fully dressed at all times throughout the college. Students should be mindful that CCTV is situated throughout the college, and that in some instances a supervisor of different gender may need to access their dormitory.

Meals

Merredin Residential College supports healthy eating. 'FreshSNAP' is the healthy eating program at all Department of Education Residential Colleges. It is in line with the Department's Healthy Food and Drink in Public Schools Policy.

The college supports and will cater for any medically required or religious dietary requirements. 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

Personal gaming consoles are not permitted at the college. 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+ will not be displayed in the college.

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. 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 hang out 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 Health Care 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.

For the protection of all students and staff, any child with symptoms of an infectious disease (e.g. COVID-19, influenza, chicken pox, measles) or anything of a viral nature, must return home until they are no longer contagious. If your child is not able to attend school because they are unwell, then they will be required to return home.

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

If your child requires medication as a short or long-term measure, please tell the college staff prior to your child starting their boarding journey.

The administration of medication carries inherent risk so to help make this practice as safe as possible we ask that all medications be provided to the college in a webster pack. Your chemist will be able to do this.

'All medications' include any prescribed drug or medication, but also those that are available over the counter. Some examples are Ritalin or other drugs used to treat ADD/ADHD, anti-anxiety medications, melatonin, antibiotics, birth control, herbal remedies, iron tablets and hay fever/allergy relief.

Students are not permitted to keep any medications in their rooms, and/or self-administer any medications except an asthma inhaler. You may provide the college with pain relief such as Panadol or Nurofen for your child if you wish and our staff will safely store this for them to provide as needed.

Please contact the college if you have any questions about medications.

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 through our Psychologist or external allied health service. Students will also be counseled 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 call out.

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.

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.



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: complaints@education.wa.edu.au

W: 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

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 week

T: 9223 1111

T: 1800 199 008 (country free call)

T: 9325 1232 (TTY)

W: 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 week

T: 1800 55 1800

W: 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 the helplines 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: complaints@education.wa.edu.au

W: 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.