

Merredin Residential College

Parent & Student Handbook

2026



**Merredin Residential College and its staff
respectfully acknowledge the Njaki Njaki Nyoongar people
who are the traditional custodians of the Central Wheatbelt land
on which our students live and are educated.**

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



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Contact Details

Merredin Residential College
39-49 Caw Street
Merredin WA 6415

Supervisors

Main Telephone: (08) 9041 7500
 Male Mobile: 0408 411 727
 Female Mobile: 0438 020 411
 Email: Merredin.SRC.Supervisors@education.wa.edu.au

Administration and finance

Telephone: (08) 9041 7500
 Email: merredin.rescol@education.wa.edu.au
 Website: <https://www.education.wa.edu/merredinresidentialcollege>

Mail:
 Merredin Residential College
 PO Box 138
 Merredin WA 6415

Department of Education

151 Royal Street
 East Perth WA 6004
 T: 9264 4111
 W: www.education.wa.edu.au

Inward telephone

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

Male supervisor's mobile: 0408 411 727
 Female supervisor's mobile: 0438 020 411

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

Inward mail

You can send mail to your child at the College's postal address above.

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.

Welcome to Merredin Residential College

Thank you for choosing Merredin Residential College for your child.

We look forward to working with you to support our students 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 education and personal development.

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 and gym.

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)
- Surf Rescue Certificate
- Aquatic Rescue for Group 3 Pool Award
- LR Class Driver's Licence with passenger transport driver (PTD) authorisation.

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.

Local Input Networking and Communications (LINC) Committee

Supporting Merredin Residential College is our local input networking and communications (LINC) committee. Membership is comprised of parent, community member and staff representatives.

The functions of the LINC committee are set through legislation and include the provision of advice 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) Program

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.

The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Program rewards positive behaviour at the College. The objective is to reward often and advise the student of the behaviour being recognised. The philosophy behind the PBS Program is that when students are rewarded for positive behaviour, negative behaviours will be reduced.

Merredin Residential College use tokens as a way of recognising positive behaviours displayed by students who can then use their tokens to claim a variety of 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



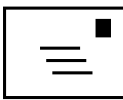

The residential college recovers the cost of providing individual services to students such as the purchase of required medications and participation in optional organised activities.

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

 <p>in Person</p> <p><i>cash, cheque, EFTPOS</i></p> <p>Merredin Residential College 39 – 49 Caw Street MERREDIN WA 6415</p>	 <p>by Phone</p> <p><i>credit card</i></p> <p>(08) 9041 7500</p> <p>8 am - 2 pm Monday to Friday</p>	 <p>by Mail</p> <p><i>cheque, money order</i></p> <p>Merredin Residential College PO Box 138 MERREDIN WA 6415</p>	 <p>via EFT</p> <p><i>electronic bank transfer</i></p> <p>BSB: 066040 A/C: 19907531</p> <p>Please use student name as the reference</p>
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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 support students to achieve their academic goals.

Please note that residential college staff are not authorised to sign school documentation on parents' behalf. Should a student receive a school form or permission slip, you will need to sign and return to the school.

Homework and study

Students are invited to practise sound study habits and be respectful of other students' needs for a distraction-free environment.

The college study times are: 7:30-8:30pm Monday-Wednesday.

Students 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 other tasks such as revision, recreational reading, writing, or other supervisor approved recreational activity of their choice.

Term 3 school holidays ATAR exams

Some ATAR exams take place during the Term 3 school holiday period. With sufficient advanced notice, we may be able to arrange a modified boarding service during this time to facilitate those students requiring accommodation to attend exams. Please request this service by the first day of Term 3 should you require it.

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.

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.



Computers and Internet Access

Students are encouraged to bring their personal computers (Laptops only) to Merredin Residential College. Students' use of computers (any/all) is 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.)

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 for students while they attend, and participate in an educational programme of, a school. If your child is expected to be absent from school for an extended period, 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
- they have a long-term illness/injury.

If you are unable to collect your child, you may alternatively arrange for their travel home by other means or arrange for them to stay with a local contact or guardian.

Students absent from school for short periods of time due to illness will be confined to the colleges' sick bay.

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 pillowcases
- 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

Mobile phones and personal devices

Computer access has become an integral part of schooling and a personal device (including but not limited to mobile phones, laptops, headphones and other connectable technology) can be very useful when used appropriately.

Personal devices should primarily be used for study purposes or appropriate communication with others and are not to be used at mealtimes or after lights out.

Students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 are required to hand in all personal devices by 8:30pm Sunday to Thursday and 10:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays.

Students in Years 11 and 12 are not usually required to hand in their personal devices

Personal devices are kept in a locked cupboard or room overnight. Students may be provided access to their devices after they return from school and after breakfast on weekends.

Students are not permitted to have more than one mobile phone and must provide their mobile phone number and details of that mobile phone to staff when requested. Students are required to have the college contact numbers in their mobile phones.

Unauthorised recording or sharing of images, audio, or video of staff and/or students is strictly prohibited, in line with the *Surveillance Devices Act 1998 (WA)*.

Student property

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 labelled or marked for easy identification.

The college takes precautions to care for your child's personal belongings and will assist where possible with lost, damaged or stolen items, however, we are unable to accept responsibility for these items.

The Residential College provides a safe in each students' 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' permission is required to use a college bicycle. Students must always use the appropriate protective equipment.

Please note that eRideables are not permitted on residential college sites.

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.

Student room searches

To ensure the health and safety of students, college staff may search student rooms if they have sufficient reason to do so. Room searches may occur for many reasons, including when staff believe:

- a student is at risk of self-harm
- dangerous or banned items or illegal substances may be in the college
- a student may be in possession of stolen property.

Confiscated items will generally 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 may contact you if your child receives mail/delivery 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 we may choose to provide the unopened package to you, but we will not open it.

What not to bring

The college does not allow any items which could potentially cause danger to students, staff and/or property. This includes, but is not limited to, candles; matches/lighters; diffusers; weapons; aerosol cans; electric blankets; heaters; fridges; electric ovens; and televisions.

We have a wide range of game consoles and other equipment for students to enjoy, including pool tables and table tennis, so students are asked to not bring their game consoles to the college.



Leave arrangements

A record of students' whereabouts is maintained through the Reach Boarding school software. When leaving and returning to the college, students must 'sign out' and 'sign in' through the Reach system. Leave requests must be entered into and approved through Reach.

Leave while under college care

Different leave arrangements enable students to participate in a range of sporting; cultural 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. Supervisors 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 leaves conclude at 5.00pm midweek 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.
- Students can only take town leave in two 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 provided an opportunity to undertake a limited amount of casual employment. While the college may be able to assist with transportation on occasions, this may not always be possible, and parents should ensure alternative transport options are available.

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 the Reach boarding school software.

Parents are required to use Reach for leave requests/approvals. Reach is designed to make the process easy for you to use at any time.

If you have any issues or queries about Reach, please contact college staff or the Reach support team at <https://reach.cloud/boarding-schools/>.

Sign out ('host') list

You can add any number of trusted adults ('hosts') into Reach that you can approve your child to go on leave with. It is recommended for ease of use to pre-load Reach with as many 'hosts' as possible to eliminate the need to enter all the details each time a leave request is submitted.

Leave requests

Leave requests are fully automated in Reach. Once a leave request has been submitted, a sequence of permissions is required from parents and college staff for leave to be approved.

A minimum of 24 hours' notice of your child's leave plans are required unless there are exceptional circumstances. This allows us to better plan for and cater to all students at the college.

'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. All other conditions as stated under "Overnight leave" apply to day leave.

Students may go on day leave but must return to the college by 8:30pm Sunday to Thursday and 9:00pm on Friday and Saturday.

'Overnight leave'

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

Overnight leave on a school night is discouraged and generally it 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 may provide transport for students in and around town where practicable, however, this service may not always be available.

Private motor vehicles

Your child is not permitted to travel in a private vehicle unless signed out with an approved host through 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 an exceptional circumstance.

Student motor vehicles

Students are only permitted to use their own vehicle for transport between the college and home. Only senior students (Year 11 & 12) and parents must apply to the Residential College Manager to have a car at the Residential College.

Students must:

- complete a Student Vehicle Application form and Application to Drive a Passenger (if applicable) receive permission from the College Manager and Parents
- provide a copy of driver's license to be kept on file
- understand that vehicles are parked at the college at the car owners' risk
- surrender car keys to staff when onsite
- only use vehicle for travel to and from home (as per agreement)
- not carry passengers at any time (as per agreement, exceptions for siblings only).

Having a vehicle at the college is a privilege and not a requirement and hence this privilege may be revoked at any time.

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 roll call at 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 there 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 reading 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.)

- **9:30pm – Year 7,8, 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)

Fridays and Saturdays there is no study and lights out is 10:00pm for everyone. On 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 provided with their own bedroom and this is primarily a room for sleeping, storing belongings and as personal space should a student wish to spend some time away from others. Students are responsible for keeping their bedrooms clean and tidy and staff may inspect rooms regularly to ensure this is the case.

Bedrooms are not for socialising in. The college provides multiple common areas for students to socialise with bedrooms not to be used for this purpose.

A student may invite 2 other students into their bedroom briefly, while keeping their door wide open for safety concerns, when there is a good reason for them to do so. This exception does not apply after lights out when all students are required to be in their own bedrooms.

Dress code

Students should be mindful that CCTV is situated throughout the college, and that a supervisor of a different gender may need to access their dormitory at any time. Other than while using the showers/bathrooms, students are to be fully and appropriately dressed while outside of their bedrooms. This includes at breakfast time when it may be tempting to instead wear pyjamas which are not permitted.

Meals

Merredin Residential College supports healthy eating in line with the Department's Student Health in Public Schools policy and procedures.

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

We aim to ensure all students enjoy three healthy meals every day, attendance at mealtimes is required.



Meal requirements outside of regular meal times

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

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

Meals must be consumed in the dining room and are not to be taken into student bedrooms or common areas.

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, caffeinated 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.

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.

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

Camps and outings

The college may organise 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, recreation room and gym facilities

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.

The college requires media (television, movies, computer games, DVDs, magazines etc.) accessed by your child whilst boarding at Merredin Residential College to 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 students, all visitors must enter and leave through the reception area and to register in the visitors' book.

Visitors are not permitted to enter student bedrooms or common rooms other than on approved dates and times – usually at the start and end of each term. We appreciate parent support in helping students settle into their rooms at the start of the year. We remind all parents that other than at these times, access past the reception area is not permitted unless accompanied by a staff member.

Students are welcome to invite their school friends to visit the college. Friends are also required to register in the visitor book and are not permitted in bedrooms or common rooms. Students' friends 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.

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

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 practise 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, you are required to complete a [Student Health Care Summary Form](#) ensuring staff have the information required to support the management of your child's health care needs.

If your child's health changes at any time, it is essential you inform our staff.



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 organize 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 cannot 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 may be able to assist you. Please advise the college on the [Student Health Care Summary Form](#) if you have any preferred local medical practice.

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

Cancellation of ambulance call-out by parents

We have a duty of care for our students. If we call an ambulance for a student at risk, but parents request its cancellation, we will not do so until parents arrive, and the student is handed into their care.

Medication

'Medication' includes those that are prescribed, purchased 'over the counter' and those that may be considered supplements. Examples include Panadol, Nurofen, antibiotics, anti anxiety medications, melatonin, Ritalin or other medications used to treat ADD/ADHD, birth control, herbal remedies, iron tablets, vitamins and hay fever/allergy relief.

Medications carry inherent risk – both to the individual they are prescribed for, and to others. For the safety of all, students are not permitted to keep any medications in their bedrooms and/or to self administer, unless approved by the College Manager.

Whenever a student requires medication, it must be administered and recorded by our staff.

While our staff will be able to assist with most medications, this may not be possible for every medication.

If your child requires medication as a short or long-term measure, you are required to complete an administration of medication form.

To ensure medications and dosages are appropriate, we require all medications to be provided to the college in a webster pack. Your local chemist/pharmacy will be able to do this for you.

For those medications which cannot be supplied in a webster pack, the college may require confirmation from a doctor or pharmacist that it is medically required along with written instructions as to the dosage and how it is to be administered.

If the college is unable to assist your child with a specific medication, your child may be required to return home until such time as the medication is no longer required.

Mental Health

Our supervisors keep a close watch on the mental health of students. We also have support from a school psychologist who works with students and staff to improve student wellbeing. Students can make an appointment with the school psychologist through the supervisory team. Parents are also able to request this service for their children.

Students and parents may also be able to avail themselves of mental health supports through their school and/or other community services.

It is essential you keep the college informed of any developments in your child's home or personal life so that we can best provide and care for your child. This includes information about your child's wellbeing, which may include such concerns as bullying, friendship issues, suicidal behaviour, suicidal ideation and non-suicidal self injury (NSSI).

Collaborating and sharing information with the residential college and fostering open communication between parents, the school and the college is essential in supporting the safety and wellbeing of all students.





Homesickness and 'child sickness'

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.

Similarly, parents may become 'child sick' when they don't get to see their child every day. These are all very normal feelings for the whole family.

Emergencies and accidents

The college maintains an Incident Management Plan to guide aspects of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. We regularly practise 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 practise 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 practise evacuation drills regularly.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services may charge a fee to attend 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, please let us know. You can also talk about it with any member of staff.

Should they be unable to assist you, then please request an appointment with the college manager to discuss your concern or complaint.

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 Wheatbelt Education Regional Office Northam (08) 9622 0200 or the Manager Residential Colleges on 9264 4425 or residentialcolleges@education.wa.edu.au.

Child protection concerns

Merredin Residential College is committed to the care, safety, and protection of all students. We provide protective behaviours 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 several 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.
- contact the Parent Liaison Office at email: parentliaison@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/s 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.

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.

Support options

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)

Crisis Care is a free crisis information and counselling service by the Department of Communities 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.

Other support options you may like to consider:

- eHeadspace 1800 650 890 or www.eheadspace.org.au
- Rurallink 1800 552 002
- 13 YARN 13 92 76 or <https://www.13yarn.org.au/about-us>
- Your local or family General Practitioner or mental health provider

Bullying

We are committed to providing all students with a safe and caring environment – should you have any concerns about feeling unsafe or threatened, we encourage you to speak to a staff member about your concerns.

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.