

YEAR 7

Curriculum Handbook 2024



FIRBANK
GRAMMAR



YEAR 7

INTRODUCTION

Year 7 is a year of discovery. The Year 7 curriculum is designed to provide a strong foundation for future learning.

In the first semester, care is taken to ensure that each student makes a smooth transition from primary to secondary schooling. A significant aspect of our comprehensive Orientation Program is the Year 7 Discovery Surf Program. Led by the Outdoor Education Department and supported by the Year 7 wellbeing leader and all mentors and/or Year 7 teachers, this program includes a range of outdoor activities designed to be engaging and facilitate the forming of new relationships. Later in the year, the students are given another opportunity to experience the outdoors on the Discovery Hike Program. This is designed to build on their skills and confidence in unfamiliar environments.

Early in the year, there will be a range of sessions to induct Year 7 students into key aspects of Firbank's Senior School. Digital and information literacy skills are taught so that students become informed, aware, safe and respectful users of technology. Furthermore, a series of aptitude tests and other activities are conducted to give teachers information about individual students which will inform their teaching.

A key goal of the curriculum at this level is to create learning experiences that students will enjoy. The focus in curriculum design and assessment is upon skill development and knowledge acquisition.

The curriculum will provide opportunities for inquiry and experiential learning, problem solving, independent and collaborative learning, recognising that many students have a background in the International Baccalaureate, Primary Years Programme. A range of learning experiences will help students to acknowledge their own and others' strengths and recognise new ways to approach learning. At Year 7, teachers ensure that the curriculum and the manner of its delivery acknowledges, encourages and values all expectations, strengths and preferences. The use of mobile learning devices will continue to enrich teaching and learning in Year 7. A targeted range of cloud-based applications, immediate internet access and innovative ways of organising and presenting their ideas will offer new challenges and opportunities for Year 7 students.

The wellbeing leader works closely with our teachers to respond to the needs of individuals and the group, encouraging the development of independence, responsible behaviour and good time management and study habits.

YEAR 7 2024 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

CORE CURRICULUM

ENGLISH
or ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES*

MATHEMATICS

SCIENCE

HUMANITIES

LANGUAGES

Choice of two:

- FRENCH
- GERMAN
- CHINESE

DRAMA (One semester)

MUSIC (One semester)

VISUAL ARTS

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

FOOD STUDIES

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CO-CURRICULAR

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

COMPASS AWARD – LEVEL 3

* By recommendation of the Department of Student Services

CORE CURRICULUM

ENGLISH

The English curriculum at Year 7 is responsive to the objectives of the Victorian Curriculum for this level and is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literacy and Literature.

AREAS OF STUDY

Together the strands focus upon developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing and creating.

Students are introduced to a range of texts and complete tasks which require analysis and comparison of text structures and language features. They examine how these are used by writers to shape meaning and influence readers. They explore the representation of events, characters, settings and ideas in texts and express their own responses to these representations in a variety of ways, including analytical and creative responses.

Students synthesise information, ideas and views from a variety of texts, draw reasoned conclusions and create well-constructed, spoken, written and multi-modal texts for a range of purposes and audiences.

They interact with others to exchange and debate ideas. In expressing their ideas and opinions, students are encouraged to select appropriate vocabulary to show meaning, engage readers and elicit the desired response from the audience. They are taught to use a variety of sentence structures and grammatical conventions to sustain meaning and develop a coherent text.

Critical and creative thinking is encouraged. Students use print and digital media resources to read and create texts, communicate their ideas and work collaboratively.

At this level, a significant aim is to encourage a love of reading. Students are encouraged to borrow regularly from the School Library and all participate in a digital reading program.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based upon performance in designated common tasks and a variety of written, digital and oral tasks.

The course content is constantly being reviewed in response to developments in this field of study and the changing needs and skills of the current group of students.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE* (EAL)

*By recommendation of the Department of Student Services.

EAL replaces English classes for students whose first language is not English. Students are deemed eligible for EAL through assessment by the Department of Student Services on recommendation from their primary school or request from parents or guardians.

EAL classes provide the opportunity for students to improve their English language proficiency in smaller classes with a specialist teacher. The small classes provide students with a supportive environment where they can feel secure in practising their developing English language skills.

AREAS OF STUDY

The EAL curriculum follows the same Areas of Study as English. There is a greater focus on developing student skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Time is also allocated to support the content and texts studied in mainstream subject areas as well as developing cultural literacy about living in Australia. This is in line with the Year 7 Curriculum Overview.

ASSESSMENT

The EAL curriculum adopts the same assessments as English, with appropriate modifications. Students are assessed against EAL criteria in line with the Victorian Curriculum.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES*

*By recommendation from the Department of Student Services.

For students who have specific learning needs, the subject English Language Studies provides extra support. Students identified as being in need of support will be assessed and the appropriate recommendations will be made. The students deemed eligible to participate in this program are advised to choose English Language Studies (ELS), which then takes the place of LOTE (Languages Other Than English).

AREAS OF STUDY

The ELS program caters as much as possible for the individual learning styles of the participants by teaching the students a range of appropriate learning strategies. It also aims to enhance their skills and self esteem so that they are more able to participate in mainstream class discussions and activities.

MATHEMATICS

At Years 7–9, all students undertake the study of the Victorian Mathematics curriculum.

The Mathematics curriculum focuses on developing increasingly sophisticated and refined mathematical understanding, fluency, reasoning, modelling and problem-solving. These capabilities enable students to respond to familiar and unfamiliar situations by employing mathematics to make informed decisions and solve problems efficiently.

The Areas of Study (strands) are:

- Number and Algebra
- Geometry and Measurement
- Probability and Statistics

Each of the Areas of study has progressive levels as students progress up the year levels.

The progressive levels are for:

- Level appropriate (Year level descriptors)
- Content descriptors (Content to be learned at each year level)
- Achievement Standards for each of the Areas of study appropriate to the level.



The Firbank Mathematics structure offers opportunities for gifted and high achieving students at Years 7–9 to partake in Enrichment and Extension programs.

Likewise, besides the NCCD program at Firbank, there are additional provisions for students to undertake support learning in Mathematics when learning gaps are identified with students’ conceptual understanding in any of the three strands.

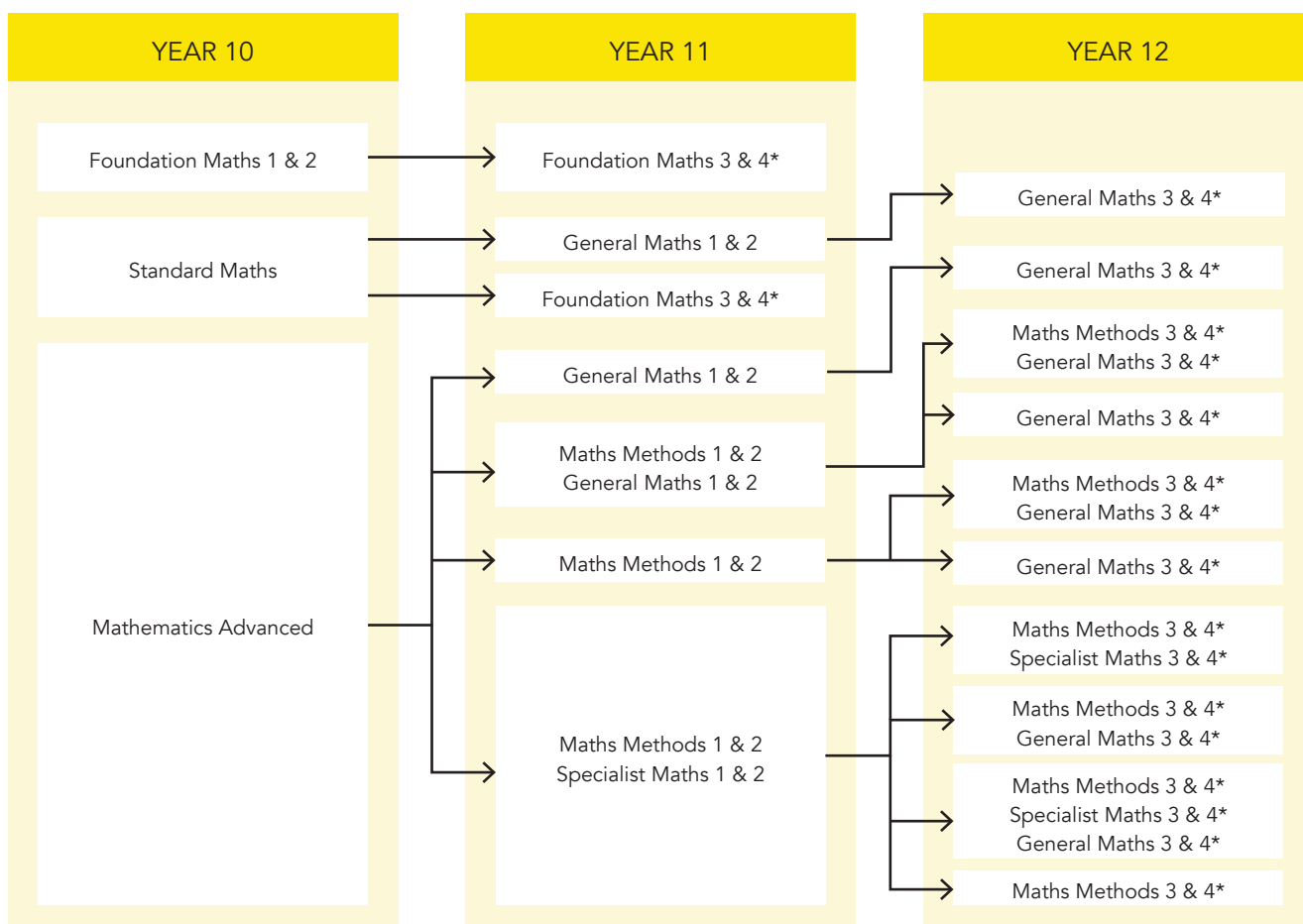
ASSESSMENTS

There are periodic assessments that students undertake as part of their learning to meet the achievement standards.

The assessments are summative (and/or) formative and are varied in form of:

- Topic Tests
- Open and closed ended assessments by way of Problem Solving, Analysis and Modelling tasks (including projects)

STRANDS (Areas of Study)	NUMBER AND ALGEBRA	MEASUREMENT AND GEOMETRY	STATISTICS AND PROBABILITY
Sub-strands	Number and place value	Using units of measurement	Chance
	Fractions and decimals	Shape	Data representation and interpretation
	Real numbers	Geometric reasoning	
	Money and financial mathematics	Location and transformation	
	Patterns and algebra	Pythagoras and trigonometry	
	Linear and non-linear relationships		



*It is recommended that students only undertake a maximum of two (2) VCE Maths courses with Units 3 & 4

SCIENCE

In Year 7, students begin a four-year program that introduces them to the various scientific disciplines and correct use of scientific equipment whilst working safely in a laboratory. They explore the diversity of life on Earth and continue to develop their understanding of the role of classification in ordering and organising information. They use and develop models to describe changes within systems. Students make accurate measurements and control variables to analyse relationships between system components. They explore and explain these relationships through appropriate representations and consider the role of science in decision-making processes.

Whilst developing their science inquiry skills, students identify questions and problems that can be investigated scientifically and make predictions based on scientific knowledge. They work collaboratively to plan and conduct a range of investigations.

AREAS OF STUDY

The year begins with activities that introduce the basic skills and knowledge required to perform laboratory work and write practical reports. These skills are developed throughout the year as the students complete different units of work:

- Working scientifically
- Properties of substances
- Earth resources
- Mixtures
- Habitats and interactions
- Classification
- Forces
- Earth in space

Each topic is taught with an emphasis on learning through practical activities.

Students will access their textbook and online resources associated with their textbook. They will create presentations, undertake independent research and are encouraged to analyse resources and their own observations critically.

Students are given the opportunity to enter the Science Talent Search after completing a project related to the relevant theme for the year. All students are invited to participate in a selection of national science competitions.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment may include written and practical tests, practical investigations, analysis tasks, research assignments and experimental investigations.

HUMANITIES (GEOGRAPHY/HISTORY/CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP)

In the subject Humanities, over the course of the year students will study Geography, History and Civics and Citizenship. The Humanities course is framed around the Victorian Curriculum.

AREAS OF STUDY

1. Geography

In studying geography, students learn about physical and human environments. Students develop knowledge about the Earth and the skills to analyse and explain environments from a spatial perspective. The knowledge that students acquire focuses on the regions of Australia and its immediate surrounds. To understand the processes forming these environments, students learn geospatial skills which enable them to read and interpret maps and other visual media.

The three units explored in a geographical context are:

- Geographical Skills
- Water in the World
- Place and Liveability

Fieldwork is an important component of the course. Students will experience a fieldwork excursion and will write up a fieldwork report based on the data collected.

2. History

The study of history develops particular historical understanding as well as historical reasoning and interpretation. The curriculum provides a study of history from the time of the earliest human communities to the end of the ancient period (approximately 60,000 BCE–650 CE). There are a number of depth studies and an overview. The overview focuses on the theory that people moved out of Africa and migrated to other parts of the world. This also includes a focus on Indigenous Australian history and culture. The depth studies investigate the ancient past and include studies of Ancient Egypt and Ancient China. By looking at these different ancient civilizations, students learn to sequence historical events and periods. Students identify a range of questions about the past and identify and locate relevant sources to investigate these problems.

3. Civics and Citizenship

This unit emphasises investigating contemporary issues and developing points of views that encourage and enable students to participate in, and contribute to, Australian society as active and informed citizens. In Year 7, students will investigate Australian values and identity, including Indigenous perspectives on national identity, with a particular focus on the 'Change the Date' debate. They will also focus on government and democracy through learning about Australia's political system and the different ways in which political change can be achieved. Students will research a political issue that interests them and explore different methods to achieve change in their chosen field.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a range of tasks, ranging from extended writing, and source analysis to independent research.

LANGUAGES*

*At Year 7, students study TWO languages: French, German or Chinese. Students will continue the study of ONE language in Year 8.

The study of languages contributes to a balanced general education as well as to the personal development of the individual. It assists in communication with and understanding of other peoples and their cultures, strengthening international bonds in many ways. During Languages Week, a special assembly and a Languages Lunch are organised.

FRENCH

At this introductory level, the main emphasis is on the acquisition and development of basic receptive and productive skills: listening to and understanding the spoken word, pronunciation and communication in French.

AREAS OF STUDY

Everyday topics such as:

- Greetings
- Talking about oneself, one's family, likes and dislikes
- Animals
- The alphabet and numbers
- Days of the week and months of the year
- Birthdays, festivals and food

Activities include role play, songs and vocabulary games. Students also participate in the annual Alliance Française poetry recitation competition. Basic grammatical structures are introduced and reinforced through written exercises. Students will also discover aspects of French culture and lifestyle through their language study and through cultural activities.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of oral, aural, reading and writing tasks. There will be a major assessment task at the end of the year.

GERMAN

As a cousin language to English, students will quickly discover how much German they can understand in the first weeks of Year 7. They will draw some comparisons between Germany and Australia and begin to learn about one of the great European cultures.

The students will develop basic listening and speaking skills and will practise these using a variety of resources which combine visual, text-based and aural input.

AREAS OF STUDY

Topics will include:

- Describing people
- Numbers
- School subjects
- Sport and hobbies
- Family

All students will learn a poem for recitation and finalists may participate in the AGTV Poetry Competition. Grammatical structures will be introduced and students will be encouraged to explore how they learn most effectively. Students learn about German Christmas traditions and decorate gingerbread hearts.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of oral, aural, reading and written tasks. There will be a major assessment task at the end of the year.

CHINESE

All learners will benefit from having access to the Chinese language and, as a consequence, access to Chinese cultures and perspectives.

At this introductory level, students will begin to develop basic listening and speaking skills, as well as reading and writing Chinese characters. An introduction to Chinese culture will be integrated into language teaching.

AREAS OF STUDY

Topics will include:

- Basic knowledge of Chinese culture
- Greetings and self-introduction
- Family members and pets
- Learning Chinese
- Sports
- Friends
- Food

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of oral, aural, reading and written tasks. There will be a major assessment task at the end of the year.

DRAMA (ONE SEMESTER)

Year 7 Drama is fun, practical and energetic.

All students in Year 7 participate in Drama classes for one semester. In an environment that promotes playfulness and creativity, the students build their understanding of relationships with others, artistic processes and a growing awareness of their personal contribution to activities. Drama enables students as individuals and groups to explore, shape and represent ideas and feelings, as well as tell stories to audiences.

AREAS OF STUDY

- Learning through drama games
- Improvisation
- Physical expression
- Exploration
- Collaboration and sharing ideas
- Performing

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is ongoing throughout the semester, with emphasis on practical experiences:

- Skill development – expressive, collaborative
- Creativity – finding original ways to tell stories
- Performance outcomes – specifically in the following areas:
 - Physical theatre
 - Indigenous stories
 - Scripting – interpreting and writing

MUSIC (ONE SEMESTER)

The Music curriculum focuses on musicianship, composition and performance, and aims to broaden and enrich students' music experience. This will assist in developing personal awareness of the expressive qualities of music and encourages a life-long engagement with music. Through continuous and sequential music learning, students listen to, compose and perform with increasing depth and complexity. Through performing, composing and listening with intent to music, students have access to knowledge, skills and understanding which can be gained in no other way.

Students are given the opportunity to compose, notate and perform their own music as well as simple music from scores. Students develop competency in reading and writing music, developing an understanding of basic musical structures and textures, as well as the basic fundamentals of rhythm and pitch. Assignment work is project based, with students working both individually and as part of small ensembles. They develop the skills necessary to be able to express their own musical thoughts through performing in front of their peers.

AREAS OF STUDY

- Music language, including theory and aural skills
- Composing and performing
- Listening and analysis
- Music technology

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of tasks such as musicianship tasks, creative work, composing and performing.

VISUAL ARTS

Visual Arts in Year 7 is a full-year program. The curriculum content and design for this year level provides students with the basis for future studies within the areas of Art, Studio Arts, Visual Communication Design, and Media.

The course aims to assist students to:

- develop a range of technical skills to communicate their ideas, beliefs and feelings in a visual form
- learn to use technical tools and equipment
- engage in appreciation of art works with an emphasis on active and practical involvement

The course consists of various common components applicable to Art, Visual Communication Design and Media.

AREAS OF STUDY

- Elements and principles
- Design thinking
- Art forms, materials and techniques
- Responding and forming opinions in visual analysis

Students will have the opportunity to express themselves creatively via a range of media and techniques. They will become familiar with the elements and principles of art and design as applied to their own work and in commentary on the work of others.

Visual Arts in Year 7 also focuses on the design process. Students will learn basic skills in technical drawing including linear perspective, viewpoints, scale and proportion. By generating ideas to produce their own designs, they will learn to apply the design process in various media, including the introduction of various components and aspects of the Adobe Suite.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on both practical and theoretical work. The visual diary allows for assessment of the art, design and media process along with the completed artworks.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

DigiTech is a subject that will launch the students' journey in developing and improving their 21st century skills, through various means of technology.

AREAS OF STUDY

Through the process of setting up their devices, students will learn different skills of efficiently manage new files and folders and learn the fundamentals of the Office 365 package, including Word, One Drive and Outlook.

Students will work independently and collaboratively to develop the creation of different digital solutions. They will use different types of applications, such as Excel, Code.org – App Development Software, Minecraft Worlds Education Edition and Python Programming – Turtle Module to develop these digital solutions. Sustainability and innovation will be a theme throughout all these solutions.

Throughout each of their digital solutions, students will use different aspects of 'define, design, create and evaluate', so that in later year levels the use of all parts together is seamlessly combined appropriately.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed across the year through classwork, observation and project-based tasks that will require the application, knowledge and the skills developed throughout the year.

Assessment topics include:

- Introduction to your device
- Data collection and visualisation in Excel
- App design and prototyping
- Sustainability designs in the Minecraft World
- Introduction to text-based programming – Python

FOOD STUDIES

In this subject, Year 7 students will have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to practical classes and develop food preparation skills in a collaborative learning environment.

AREAS OF STUDY

The Year 7 Food Studies unit will provide students the opportunity to investigate kitchen and food safety principles and apply these principles and those of sensory evaluation during the practical component of the course. Students will also explore what is meant by healthy eating and the implications of consuming various nutrients for health and wellbeing.

Students will regularly participate in food production activities demonstrating the skills and knowledge they have learnt. As well as evaluating food items produced, students will self-assess and reflect on success criteria.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based upon class work, assessment tasks and practical work throughout each semester.

HEALTH

The theme for Health in Year 7 is 'Self in Transition'.

This course will support students in the various transitions and changes in their lives at this stage of their development.

AREAS OF STUDY

Activities and discussion will focus on:

- Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Puberty
- Introduction to consent – Age/Law/Facts
- Emotional literacy and personal strengths
- Role models
- Safe Choices – alcohol
- Nutrition – healthy decisions – sociocultural influences
- Mindfulness and meditation

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based upon class work and assignments covering a variety of topics.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Participation in Physical Education at Year 7 provides opportunities for the acquisition and improvement of motor skills.

AREAS OF STUDY

The curriculum covers a range of games and sport activities including, but not limited to:

- Orienteering
- Water safety
- Net/wall sports
- Fundamental movement skill development
- Athletics
- Gymnastics
- Striking and fielding games
- Invasion games

The experience of physical activity provides the opportunity for challenge, personal growth and enjoyment. Students develop an understanding for good sporting behaviour, including self control, discipline, cooperation, tolerance and respect for others.

Through involvement in physical activity, an understanding of the importance of health, fitness and lifelong participation in physical activity is fostered.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on class participation and the ability to apply skills to practical situations.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religion is an essential characteristic of many societies and religious knowledge is fundamental to an understanding of self, others, the world and God.

Religious Education promotes an understanding of story, ethics, ritual and symbol that have shaped humanity from the earliest times. It helps students appreciate the role of prayer, beliefs, sacraments and sacred texts in the lives of others and the possibility of incorporation into their own belief and values system.

Religious Education invites students to appreciate the value of faith and to respect the various faiths and worldviews that permeate Australia's diverse society. This knowledge and understanding is essential for a rich spiritual life, for informed and committed participation in a society and working for the common good.

Firbank draws students from a wide range of backgrounds and traditions, so the Religious Education program endeavours to:

- Develop self-awareness and religious literacy in each student
- Introduce students to the richness of Anglican tradition
- Promote an understanding and appreciation of the nature of religion, with focus on the Christian religion
- Explore how religion contributes to a sense of identity and community
- Develop skill in conversing respectfully and eloquently on faith and religion

Whilst the Religious Education program sits firmly within the Anglican Tradition, respect for all religious traditions is an important value underpinning the program.

AREAS OF STUDY

The Year 7 curriculum covers four content areas:

- Bible
- Church and community
- Tradition of place
- Values

Some units of study will cover one content area but most will cover more than one.

The units of study include:

- Stories and the Old Testament
- Stories of a man called Jesus
- Anglican identity and Christian workshop
- A festival of Christian Festivals

ASSESSMENT

Feedback will be provided to students on their participation in the activities conducted in class. This will include completion of written tasks and quizzes, individual research tasks and participation in group presentations.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

An integral part of a student's transition to Senior School is their participation in the Year 7 Discovery Program. This exciting program will provide students with valuable opportunities to meet new friends and staff by joining outdoor activities in a safe and enjoyable manner.

AREAS OF STUDY

1. Discovery Surf

In class groups, the students will participate in a range of activities including:

- Surfing
- Body boarding
- High ropes
- Stand-up paddle boarding
- Dance

All activities are facilitated and supported by the student's mentor and subject teachers. Students will spend two nights staying in cabin accommodation at Camp Burnside as well as an introductory experience of two nights camping in tents at Camp Eumeralla.

The Camp Out will include camp cooking and some short bushwalks. The program will be conducted out of Anglesea, along the Great Ocean Road in Victoria.

2. Discovery Hike

The next stage in the sequential Outdoor Education Program is the Discovery Hike in Term 4. In conjunction with Bindaree Outdoors, a specialist outdoor education provider, the program will help consolidate the introductory skills taught earlier in the year and introduce a range of outdoor skills that will allow students to live and travel in a safe and enjoyable way. The program will be conducted along the Great Ocean Walk on Victoria's Shipwreck Coast. Students will be camping in tents and will journey from one campsite to another. The students will have some gear transported, so their hiking bags are at a suitable size and weight.

The Outdoor Education Program is an integral and compulsory component of Year 7 and each program must be completed in its entirety. This program will satisfy the Exploration component of the Compass Award.

2024 DATES

Surf: 8–11 February

Hike: 2–4 November

COMPASS AWARD (LEVEL 3)

The Compass Award is a state-recognised award program that is a compulsory part of the Year 7 curriculum. There are four progressive levels of the Award: Level 1, 2, 3 and 4. Each level requires an increased amount of commitment and time.

Levels 1 & 2 are offered in Years 5 & 6 at the Junior School campuses. Levels 3 & 4 will be completed across Years 7 and 8. Students will commence Level 3 at the start of Year 7 and may begin Level 4 as soon as Level 3 is complete. It is expected that students have started Level 4 by the beginning of Year 8. They must complete the Award by the end of Year 8 and will not be able to continue their Compass Award in Year 9, as they will begin the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

For each level, participants create a unique program of activities in four sections: Physical Activity, Hobbies, Volunteering and Exploration. The Year 7 Discovery Surf Program fulfills the requirements of the Exploration section for Level 3.

Students are given the opportunity to try new activities and develop previous skills. The Award is a student-led initiative and the students are expected to take ownership of their Award and lead the process.

LEVEL 3 AWARD REQUIREMENTS (Year 7)

- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – Minimum 10 hours
- HOBBIES – Minimum 10 hours
- VOLUNTEERING – Minimum 10 hours
- EXPLORATION – Discovery Surf Program

LEVEL 4 AWARD REQUIREMENTS (Year 8)

- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY – Minimum 15 hours
- HOBBIES – Minimum 15 hours
- VOLUNTEERING – Minimum 15 hours
- EXPLORATION – Alpine Program



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GRAMMAR

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