

YEAR 8

Curriculum Handbook 2024



FIRBANK
GRAMMAR



YEAR 8

INTRODUCTION

The Year 8 core curriculum builds upon those foundations laid in Year 7.

The delivery of the curriculum acknowledges that there are many different ways in which students learn effectively. Emphasis is placed upon challenging and teaching students to become critical thinkers.

In Year 8, our teachers ensure that the curriculum and the manner of its delivery acknowledge, encourage and value all expectations, strengths and preferences. The wellbeing leader works closely with our teachers to respond to the needs of individuals and the group.

The Year 8 program is designed to develop initiative, self-confidence and positive relationships. Early in the year, all students take part in an environmental-focused study tour. There, they investigate and gather information in a variety of formats through interconnecting subjects such as Humanities, Science and English.

Students will participate in the exciting Alpine Program, designed to promote a sense of adventure and challenge. They will complete a week of cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and an overnight snow camping adventure which will be a major highlight and challenge. Students will build upon skills previously learnt and continue to grow their confidence. This program encourages students to form a connection to and gain an appreciation for the natural world, in particular the winter alpine environment. It will also help lay the foundations for future expeditions. We expect the students will develop a greater level of responsibility and begin to realise their true potential.

YEAR 8 2024 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

CORE CURRICULUM

ENGLISH

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE*

ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES*

MATHEMATICS

SCIENCE

HUMANITIES

LANGUAGES

Choice of:

- FRENCH
 - GERMAN
 - CHINESE
-

DRAMA

MUSIC

VISUAL ARTS

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

FOOD STUDIES

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CO-CURRICULAR

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

COMPASS – LEVEL 4

* By recommendation of the Department of Student Services

CORE CURRICULUM

ENGLISH

The English curriculum at Year 8 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. Together, the strands focus upon developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing and creating.

AREAS OF STUDY

Guided reading involves active engagement with a range of spoken, written and multi modal texts, requiring students to interpret key information, concepts and issues and evaluate the choices made by the author. Students are required to synthesise key ideas and views and explore the supporting evidence. They compare and describe text structures and language features, explaining how these are influenced by context, purpose and audience.

Students create a variety of texts to explore significant ideas, report events, express opinions and respond to the views of others. They select elements from different literary genres to create informative, imaginative and persuasive texts. Students are taught to use language appropriate to particular purposes or contexts and to reflect upon the choices they make in writing various texts. Writing is taught as a process that requires careful editing and revision until language is fluent and correct and the author's intention is clear.

Students interact with other students in a variety of contexts and are required to deliver formal presentations to report researched information, share opinions and evaluate different perspectives.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on student performance in designated common tasks and a variety of other tasks.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES*

*By recommendation of the Department of Student Services

For some 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.

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 and enhancing their skills and self-esteem so that they are more able to participate in mainstream class discussions and activities.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE** (EAL)

**By recommendation of the Department of Student Services.

Students whose first language is not English will participate in EAL classes in lieu of a LOTE class. Students are deemed eligible for EAL based on the number of years of English study and the needs of individual students.

English as an Additional Language classes provide the opportunity for students to improve their general language proficiency and thus develop the skills and confidence to participate in mainstream classes. The small classes provide students with a supportive environment where they can feel secure in asking questions and actively using language.

AREAS OF STUDY

Students are involved in language activities that expand vocabulary, enhance listening and reading comprehension, improve grammatical accuracy and develop better understanding of tasks and academic expectations of our School. 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.

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, modeling 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 move 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 Firkbank Mathematics structure offers opportunities for gifted and high-achieving students at Years 7–9 to partake in Enrichment and Extension program



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

Student performance is assessed against the Achievement Standards of the Victorian Curriculum for Year 8.

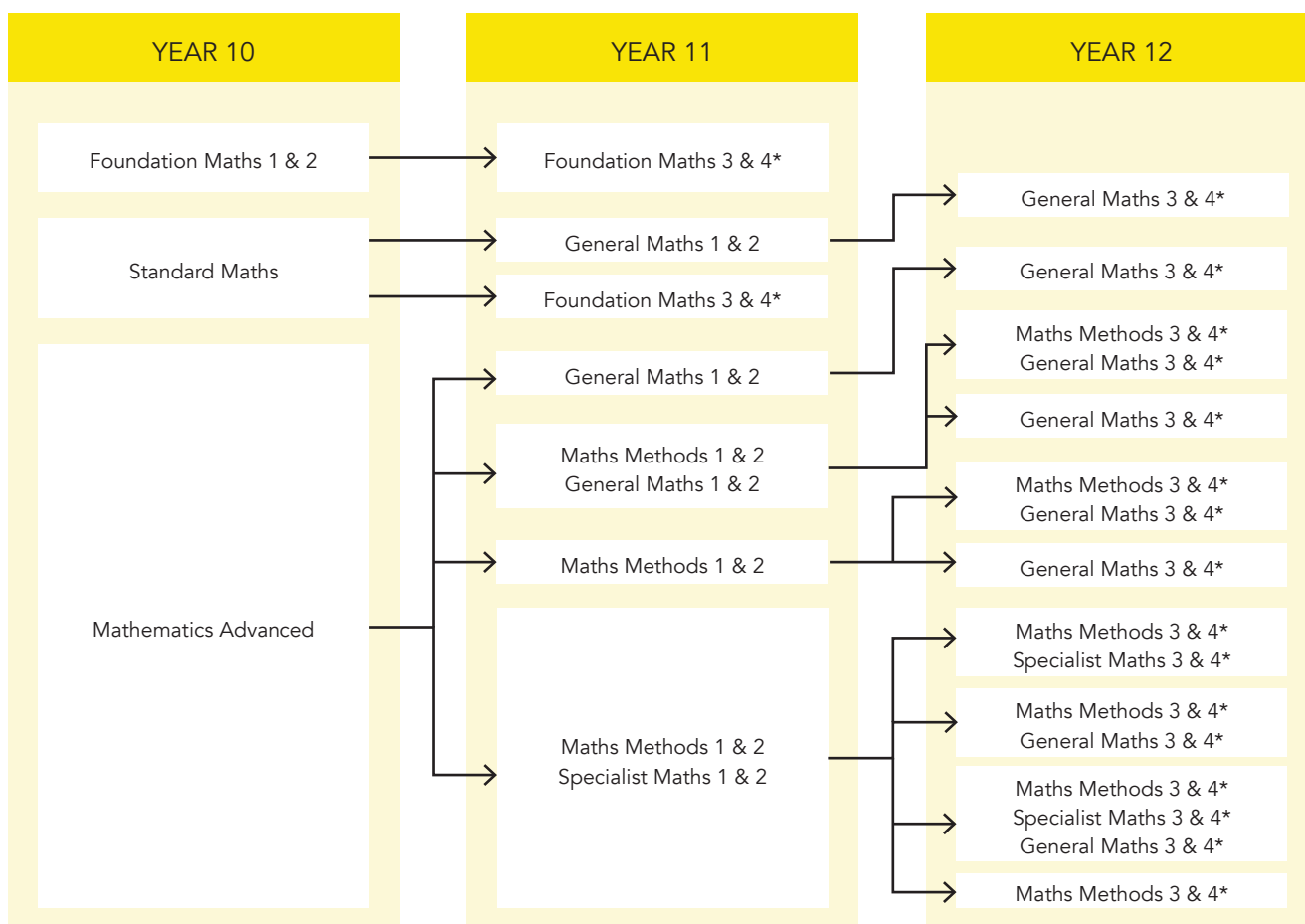
This is completed for each topic area within the content strands and also globally at the end of each semester.

The assessments are both summative and formative in nature and are designed to check the growth points, since the curriculum is designed as continuum learning with achievement standards specified for each level.

The assessment will be made by analysing general class work and level of achievement on a task/tasks which will be designed to allow students to demonstrate one or more of the proficiency strands.

The task/s may be in the form of a topic test, application task, assignment, rich task, learning journal, personal learning pathway or collaborative work.

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 8, students gain a greater understanding of the nature of science. Their skills in taking measurements are developed and they are given more opportunities to design their own experiments. They are introduced to cells as microscopic structures and the organisation of body systems in terms of how matter flows between interdependent organs. They explore changes in matter at a particle level and distinguish between chemical and physical change. They begin to classify different forms of energy and describe the role of energy in causing change in systems. Whilst developing their science inquiry skills, students identify questions and problems to be investigated scientifically and make predictions based on scientific knowledge. They work collaboratively to plan and conduct investigations. They construct and use a range of representations for data, analyse patterns or relationships, draw conclusions and identify improvements for their scientific investigations

AREAS OF STUDY

- Working with scientific data
- Cells
- Body systems
- Energy
- Substances
- Physical and chemical change
- Earth's rocks

Students 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 relating 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 (HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY/CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP)

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

HISTORY

In History, students build on the knowledge and skill base introduced in the Year 7 course – in this sense, the sequential nature of skill acquisition is encouraged. The Year 8 curriculum involves historical study from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern period (c.650 CE - c.1750). This was when major civilisations around the world came into contact with each other and when the modern world began to take shape. There are several areas of key knowledge that are covered, including the Vikings, medieval Europe and the Renaissance. Students will also continue to build on the key skills developed in Year 7 such as chronological understanding, using historical sources as evidence and historical concepts such as causation and change and continuity.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a range of tasks such as essay writing, primary and secondary source analysis and historical inquiry.

GEOGRAPHY

The Geography course is organised into two strands::

- Geographical Knowledge and Understanding
- Geographical Inquiry and Skills

The strands are related with knowledge of processes being acquired through collection and analysis of data. There are two units of study. The first unit focuses on the processes that shape individual landforms. The local environment provides the opportunity for fieldwork and the collection and analysis of data relating to coastal processes. The second unit is concerned with the study of where people live and the challenge of planning Australia's urban settlements.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based upon written exercises, activities based on digital technologies, individual and group activities, fieldwork reports, tests and class participation.

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

This unit in Civics and Citizenship involves students learning about the Australian governmental and legal system. In Year 8, students will focus on government and democracy through learning about Australia's political system, including the Australian Constitution, the Executive, the Houses of Parliament and the separation of powers. Students will also study laws and citizens by comparing how laws are made in Australia and understanding how Australia's legal system aims to provide justice, including through the rule of law, presumption of innocence, burden of proof, right to a fair trial and right to legal representation.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a range of tasks from extended writing to independent research.

LANGUAGES

In Year 8, all students will continue the study of ONE of the languages they selected in Year 7.

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 held.

FRENCH

The course at Year 8 continues to develop students' skills of listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing in French. It also aims to contribute to the students' understanding of the nature and functions of language as a tool for communication and to enhance their awareness and appreciation of French culture and a civilisation other than their own.

AREAS OF STUDY

Topics covered include:

- Housing
- School life
- Leisure activities
- Directions and locations

Activities include songs, vocabulary, games and role play, and students participate in the annual Alliance Française poetry recitation competition. Students will continue to 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. Students will complete a portfolio which will be assessed against the Year 8 Victorian Curriculum Achievement Standards. Students will complete a Major Assessment Task at the end of each semester.

GERMAN

In Year 8, German students will continue to develop basic communicative skills but also develop a greater awareness of grammatical rules within a thematic context. German culture, with its traditional festivals including Christmas and birthday customs, will be explored.

AREAS OF STUDY

Topics covered include:

- Daily life
- Transport
- Animals
- Birthdays
- At home
- Farewells

The skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing are practised in a variety of ways. All students may learn a poem and have the opportunity to try out for the AGTV Poetry Competition. A cultural incursion supports the course.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of oral, aural, reading and writing tasks. Students will complete a portfolio which will be assessed against the Year 8 Victorian Curriculum Achievement Standards. Students will complete a Major Assessment Task at the end of each semester.

CHINESE

All students will benefit from having access to Chinese language and as a result, access to Chinese cultures and perspectives.

Students will continue to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills which they began to develop in Year 7.

An introduction to Chinese culture will be integrated into language teaching.

AREAS OF STUDY

Everyday topics including the list below will be introduced:

- Date, time and weather
- Occupation
- Hobbies
- Transportation

Year 8 Languages Events

Students will be able to participate in Languages Week in Term 1, as well as other interesting cultural activities throughout the year.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on a variety of oral, aural, reading and writing tasks. Students will complete a portfolio which will be assessed against the Year 8 Victorian Curriculum Achievement Standards. Students will complete a Major Assessment Task at the end of each semester.

DRAMA

Drama in Year 8 runs for two semesters. It offers an extension of the skills developed in Year 7, particularly the development of the students' understanding of artistic and creative processes.

Through exploratory and collaborative work, students develop their sense of inquiry and empathy by responding to and exploring a diverse range of dramatic experiences.

Drama is the enactment of real and imagined events through the exploration of roles and situations. It enables students, both as individuals and as part of a group, to share, develop and present ideas and feelings. They also explore how the choices relating to these ideas may impact their peers and their audience.

AREAS OF STUDY

- Telling stories through daily life
- Choreography & dance
- Group-devised plays & performances
- Theatresports & improvisation
- Design – costume, set makeup
- Shakespearean shenanigans

ASSESSMENT

With emphasis on the practical, the following areas will be assessed throughout the year:

- Collaborative skill development – listening, sharing ideas, responding to peers
- Dramatic skill development – building awareness of vocal and physical communication
- Analytical skill development – promoting a trusting environment and encouraging verbal responses and feedback to work that their peers create and their own exploration and performances
- Creativity through design and performance – brainstorming, offering ideas of their own or in response to ideas from others, willingness to explore on the floor, building an understanding of the need to be open and flexible when devising work together, finding ways to respond imaginatively and originally

MUSIC

The Music curriculum focuses on musicianship, composition and performance, and aims to broaden and enrich students' music experience, assist students in developing personal awareness of the expressive qualities of music and encourage 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 build on the skills developed in Year 7, composing, notating and performing 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. In addition, they develop skills in technology, using Sibelius and GarageBand to realise their creative ideas.

Semester One has a focus on the music of Oceania and Asia, as well as the blues providing students with an opportunity to explore culturally diverse music. Semester Two focuses on popular music, song writing and composition.

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 with a focus on creative work: composition and performance, as well as listening.

VISUAL ARTS

The Year 8 Visual Arts subject extends over the course of one year.

This course aims to:

- Enable students to develop confidence to express themselves visually
- Explore a range of media
- Increase students' awareness of elements and principles
- Analyse visual arts in various contexts

AREAS OF STUDY

Two Dimensional Art Forms

To gain an understanding in the analysis of artists and artworks, students will explore a range of painting, printmaking, drawing, design and/or photography. The emphasis is on exploring, developing, resolving and refining ideas as well as stretching concepts through design thinking. Students become more familiar with the elements and principles of art and design.

Three Dimensional Art Forms

The course aims to introduce students to: sculpture, ceramics, installation, found objects and 3D forms. Students make, construct, assemble and discuss the idea of three dimensional art forms. These may include light and sound.

In both units, students will be inspired by the work of other artists and use their visual diaries to record commentaries, ideas, progress, technical details and a glossary of visual art terminology.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on both practical and theoretical components of the art forms studied. Assessment includes the visual diary, finished artworks and written responses.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Digital Technology is a year-long subject that will enable students to continue their development of appropriate 21st-century skills, such as collaboration, problem-solving, creativity and digital literacy.

AREAS OF STUDY

How do I connect to the Internet? Students will develop a basic understanding of different types of networks and how multiple devices can connect with each other through wireless, wired, and mobile mediums. They will demonstrate the different ways using the BBC Micro:bit, with the use of different connection methods such as radio waves and alligator clips.

Using the different stages of the design process, student will be working with a 'client' to develop an ideal pet using the Micro:bit and recyclable materials. The students will use analysis techniques to interview and then research ideas for their client. They will sketch multiple designs and choose an appropriate one to create and design their code using algorithms. Using the MakeCode web application, they will code their algorithm on their Micro:bit and create their pet using the materials that have been provided to them for their client. Once developed, students will sit down with their clients and evaluate the final pet.

As Artificial Intelligence is making a splash into the students' everyday lives, they will work collaboratively to research and present to their peers how AI is being developed in a specific field, such as farming, entertainment, shopping and the environment.

ASSESSMENT

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

Assessment topics include:

- Networks Poster
- Micro:pet prototype – Analysis and Design
- Micro:pet prototype – Development and Reflection
- AI Presentation
- Text-based programming portfolio – Python

FOOD STUDIES

In this subject, students will review kitchen safety and hygiene concepts, study basic nutrition and investigate the impact of eating patterns on health and wellbeing. Students will regularly participate in practical lessons.

AREAS OF STUDY

Students will design and prepare healthy meals, reflect on their eating patterns and investigate the impact of major nutrients on health. Students will analyse the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating food model as a tool for improving dietary intake. Students will also consider the issues of hygiene, safety and food preparation techniques in the kitchen. Practical lessons will support the application of theoretical learning.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on class work, practical activities and small assessment tasks.

HEALTH

The theme for Health for Year 8 is Boundaries of Self.

As students become more independent, they need skills and information to enable them to make safe and healthy decisions as they push the boundaries of their world.

AREAS OF STUDY

The following topics are covered:

- Access to health information and services
- Gender and identity
- Positive gender relations
- Sexual health and safety
- Mindfulness & meditation
- Respectful relationships – including consent
- Safe choices – drugs and alcohol
- Healthy choices – nutrition

ASSESSMENT

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

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Year 8 Physical Education program further promotes development and refinement of motor skills. This is achieved through involvement in a range of physical activities including both individual and team sports, recreational pursuits and movement cultures.

AREAS OF STUDY

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

- Water polo
- Rhythmic gymnastics
- Triathlon
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Badminton
- Invasion games

The program provides the opportunity for students to develop knowledge and understanding of the body and its response to exercise as well as contributing to the development of social skills, independence and self-worth and tolerance.

Students in Year 8 acquire an awareness of the physical skills and competence that contribute to healthy growth and physical development.

ASSESSMENT

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Year 8 Religious Education program builds on the knowledge and understanding developed in the Year 7 program.

It seeks to:

- Further investigate the richness of Anglican tradition in a whole-church context
- Promote further understanding and appreciation of the nature of religion, with a focus on Christianity
- Further investigate how religion contributes to a sense of identity and community
- Enhance their skill in conversing respectfully and eloquently on faith and religion

AREAS OF STUDY

The Year 8 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:

- What's in a worldview?
- For the love of God
- Faith and science
- My belief and values

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

The overarching theme of Outdoor Education and Service in Year 8 is Exploring Sustainability. It consists of two key experiences: the Earth Program and the Alpine Program.

AREAS OF STUDY

EARTH PROGRAM (Term 2)

The Earth Program provides unique experiences for students to learn first-hand about environmental impacts, management strategies and be involved in meaningful service projects and conservation efforts. During the five-to-six-day program, students will be engaged in a variety of permaculture activities, farming and landcare projects. The students will also complete an introductory bushwalk which will provide the necessary skills for future outdoor adventures, including the snow camping experience later in the year.

The aim of this program is for students to explore the interconnectedness of our ecosystems and sustainable living and resourcefulness. Students are encouraged to be inquisitive about the environments they explore and consider their actions and the results of them on others and the environment. To ensure that this experience is hands-on and practical, we will be using a range of venues to maximise the quality of experience. Further information will be sent out at the end of Term 1.

Students will be divided into countries represented within the United Nations. They will complete research about their country and are given time to investigate a given topic. The conference will run as an official day. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to find the best possible solution to a problem at hand through dialogue, negotiation and multilateral diplomacy.

ALPINE PROGRAM (Term 3)

The Alpine Program will involve students participating in a range of snow activities, including cross country skiing, downhill skiing, snow shoeing and an overnight snow camping adventure. The program will be based out of a specialist Outdoor Education Centre, YMCA Howman's Gap Alpine Centre, at Falls Creek in the Victorian Alps.

This five-day program is designed to promote a connection and appreciation for the winter alpine environment. Students are encouraged to further develop a greater level of responsibility and begin to realise their true potential. The lessons gained from this program will help lay the foundations for future expeditions. Further information will be sent out at the end of Term 2.

COMPASS AWARD (LEVEL 4)

The Compass Award is a program of discovery that is integrated into the Year 8 Curriculum. The Award is modeled on the framework of the International Duke of Edinburgh Award, a program we introduce in Year 9. The Compass Award encourages students to try new activities and develop previous skills across four sections: Physical Activity, Hobbies, Volunteering and Exploration. The Year 8 Alpine Program fulfills the requirements of the Exploration section for Level 4.

The girls are expected to set their own goals, organise a suitable mentor and complete a set number of hours for each section.

By completing the Outdoor Education programs in Years 7 and 8, this meets the requirements of the Exploration section for each level.

The Compass Award is structured over four progressive levels. Levels 1 and 2 are offered in Years 5 and 6 at the Junior School campuses. Levels 3 and 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 students have started Level 4 by the beginning of Year 8. Both Levels 3 and 4 are required to be complete by the end of Year 8, as they will begin the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award in Year 9.

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



FIRBANK
GRAMMAR

51 Outer Crescent, Brighton VIC 3186 ELC – Year 12 Girls Campus
45 Royal Avenue, Sandringham VIC 3191 ELC – Year 6 Co-educational Campus
firbank.vic.edu.au