



## THE OUTDOOR LEARNING PROGRAM AT GUILDFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### **What is it?**

The Outdoor Learning Program at Guildford Grammar School provides experiences in nature for all students from Pre-primary to Year 9. The program uses the outdoors to provide a rich learning environment that affords students many opportunities for self-development and transformation of knowledge. Outdoor Learning at Guildford Grammar School employs Constructivist, Experiential and Play Based Learning theories and practices to connect learning intentions, whilst promoting our connections to nature and rich cultural histories.

### **What do we do?**

At Guildford Grammar School, we enrich our learning through a variety of outdoor experiences, spanning from single-day activities to multi-night expeditions. Our programs embrace diverse approaches such as nature play, curriculum-linked outdoor learning, recreational pursuits, and journey-based adventures. These include age-appropriate activities like canoeing, bushwalking, rock climbing, abseiling, and many other outdoor pursuits, all thoughtfully designed to support and enhance our educational goals.

### **Why do we do it?**

There are many well published reasons for participating in Outdoor Learning Programs, some of which include, strengthening self-determination, self-confidence, and positive self-image in accordance with lifelong participation in the natural environment. Appreciating differences and supporting diversity in our understanding of the world we live and to encourage meaningful lifelong relationships with our peers. Also, we participate in Outdoor Learning to provide a sense of place, of community, recognising the value of our connection's past, present and future. Furthermore, we participate to foster positive relationships with the natural world which provides for our rich and sustainable ongoing lives.

### **Who do we do it with?**

The Outdoor Learning Program uses several outdoor centers and natural camping locations in Southwest Western Australia, including venues such as, Nanga Bush Camp, Forest Edge Recreation Camp, Camp Quaranup, Boshack Outback and campsites in Boranup Forest, Blackwood River, Contos Campground, and Kalbarri National Park.

We also partner with key outdoor providers, including but not limited to: Educated by Nature, Outdoor Discoveries, Adventure Out Australia, Otech Outdoors, The Outdoor Education Group, and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.



## Programs

### Bush School

In an era of heightened social and environmental awareness, a profound commitment to using nature and adventure to foster a deep appreciation for the environment and instill enduring values and skills in students is a foundational principle of Bush School. Led by a dedicated Nature Pedagogy Practitioner, GGS Bush School provides a unique approach to learning for all preparatory students. Direct relationships with nature—inside, outside, and beyond—fundamentally shape our students' learning journeys.

Meaningful, self-directed outdoor play enhances the senses, benefiting our children's growing minds, bodies, and spirits. Research demonstrates the effects of outdoor play on social skills, emotional resilience, gross and fine motor skills, auditory and visual processing, attention, creativity, conflict resolution, and more. The positive impact of time spent outside is reflected in increased classroom engagement. By using the rich natural tapestry of Guildford Grammar School grounds and interacting regularly with the natural world, we ultimately support the cognitive, emotional, and physical development of our preparatory students.

Bush School operates throughout the year, seasonally adjusted and within the direct Guildford Grammar Landscape. Individual year level sessions are collaboratively determined upon commencement of the school year.

### Year 1

Our students have a one-day experience on campus – a diversity of experiences are offered, building upon Bush School knowledge. Using the Old Boat Shed as our learning hub we learn to ride with Cycle Sense, enjoy interactions with farm animals and learn how to make fire!

**DATE: Friday 26 September 2025**

### Year 2

Over two consecutive days at the schools historic Old Boat Shed students have several opportunities to engage in their surroundings with various nature connection activities, informed by Nature Pedagogical theory. Students are placed in small learning groups to facilitate productive learning sessions. The highlight of the program includes indigenous singers from Wanjoo playing music and teaching Noongar language on the banks of Derrbal Yerrigin.

**DATE: Thursday 23 October to Friday 24 October – no overnight.**



### Year 3

A three-day program is offered to year three students. Our learning environment includes one overnight stay at Point Walter Recreation Camp. Dyoondalup is the Whadjuk area that we respect and engage in, hearing stories of indigenous use of the significant mothers and children area and that of early settlement. The excitement of the flying fox, kite making and abstract nature art keep us busy before returning home. The final day includes a visit to Caversham Wildlife Park, where we follow our map and stamp our passports after visiting each of the significant wildlife enclosures and shows.

**DATE: Wednesday 5 November to Friday 7 November**

### Year 4

Three days and two nights at Boshack Outback on the edge of Wattening Spring, Bolgart allow for deep nature connections to be fostered. Walking through the ancient melaleucas where for thousands of years fresh water has bubbled to the surface provides a cool and relaxing place to sketch and wonder. From paddling canoes on the lake, constructing shelters, being wild with nature games, star gazing, ancient sky stories and constructing artwork for display is all part of the fun. This program marks a significant milestone and provides a large growth opportunity for Year 4 students.

**DATE: Wednesday 9 April to Friday 11 April 2025**

### Year 5

Three days two nights at Forest Edge Recreation Camp provides the adventure experience our students thrive on. Forest Edge staff make us very welcome, providing all meals and dormitory accommodation and adventure activity leaders. From ziplining, abseiling Billy cart making, team games, screen printing and an adventurous incentive walk that has a little mud and water, keeps our students busy. The well facilitated experiences ultimately provide students an opportunity to build resilience and compassion for, with and amongst each other.

**DATE: Wednesday 30 July to Friday 1 August**



## Year 6

Camp Quaranup the heritage listed quarantine station in Albany provides the magnificent location and vista for admiring the Great Southern region. A true multicurricular program that has a wonderful blend of recreation activities and cultural immersion, learning about the significance of the whaling industry and most importantly, the ANZAC story. Fishing from a southern beach looking over King George Sound is a wonderful lifelong learning experience as is standing on the edge of The Gap in Torndirrup National Park or getting inside a Wind Turbine seeing our renewable energy sector in action. As a five-day program which takes in much the great southern has to offer, we exploit the rich opportunities of learning that exist when we venture further afield.

**DATE: Monday 17 March to Friday 21 March**

## Year 7

The year 7 Outdoor Learning Program is conducted in Term 3 and students are placed in randomised groups, breaking down barriers and generating new relationships. Adolescent growth is heavily influenced by peer relationships and by providing opportunities to foster and strengthen friendship circles, developing trust, acceptance and respect is a central element of this program. Conducted at Manjedal Activity, Karrikup and in partnership with the Outdoor Education Group, this program uses a multi skills approach to support development. Common outdoor recreation activities, facilitated by Scouts WA allow participation in small groups or individually, bolstering student capacities and capabilities.

**DATE: Monday 18-21 August**

## Year 8

Advancing skills and physical development allow Year 8 students to participate in a quasi-expedition like program where teamwork, resilience and self-management are necessary for all round success. Travelling from campsite to campsite using a variety of recreational modalities incorporating skill development, teamwork and communication strategies provides growth opportunities. Fundamentally, connection with peers, personal growth, pro-social behaviour with meaning and purpose serves to increase hedonic and eudemonic wellbeing in adolescents. Physically and neurologically adolescent development requires opportunities that are afforded in the outdoors and in participating in this program, personal growth is expected.

**DATE: Monday 24 November – Thursday 27 November**



## Guildford Grammar School

FOUNDED 1896

### Year 9

Kalbarri is well known for its river gorges, coastal cliffs and the Murchison River meandering through this top tourist town. Building upon skills learnt the previous year the year 9 OLP ascribes to the notion of 'slow pedagogy', in this we ask ourselves, what is right here, what can we learn by intentionally slowing down? The gorge environment provides a spectacular backdrop for significant time spent exploring and relaxing with peers, and this program supports and intentionally plans for this. Allowing adolescents to go slower, to talk, to explore, to remind themselves that childhood is to be cherished, forms a large part of this program. Students participate in short form expeditionary travel in and out of the Murchison River gorge and visit sites close to the town of Kalbarri to connect with nature. This program operates over two weeks in Term 2 with 50% of students attending the first rotation (Saturday – Thursday) and the remainder the second rotation (Saturday – Thursday). Students and staff alike, attending this program will be living out of a hiking pack, though many of the main movements rely on bus travel. Students will be allocated to their appointed rotation in consultation with key staff.

**DATE: Rotation 1 - 17 May – 22 May, Saturday to Thursday**

**DATE: Rotation 2 – 24 – 29 May, Saturday to Thursday**

Ultimately, The Guildford Grammar School Outdoor Learning Program seeks to support the schools, Purpose and Values.

#### ***Our Purpose***

*Inspiring students to achieve personal excellence and to be outstanding citizens who work to create a just, loving and peaceful society.*

#### ***Our Values***

Our values serve as a compass, shaping our decisions and actions by providing a clear sense of right and wrong. They ground us in our beliefs and principles, helping us navigate complex situations with consistency and integrity. The Outdoor Learning Program provides many opportunities for us all to employ and practice and uphold our values.

- **Excellence** – being the best we can be
- **Respect** – showing appreciation and consideration for those around us
- **Integrity** – sticking to moral and ethical principles even when others are not looking
- **Compassion** – showing sympathy and empathy for others
- **Spirituality** – a personal way of loving, accepting and sharing with people and the world