



WOODRIDGE COLLEGE CAMP PROGRAMME 2026

Dear Parents,

At Woodridge College, outdoor education is a cornerstone of our holistic learning approach. Our camp programme is carefully designed to build resilience, leadership, and teamwork while connecting students with the outdoors. Each experience is developmental, supporting your child's growth year by year from Grade 8 through to Grade 12.

Below is an overview of the 2025 Outdoor Education Camp Programme, along with important preparation information to help your child, and you, be ready for these exciting and formative adventures.

General Camp Preparation

1. Equipment:

Each student requires:

- A small **2-person hiking tent**,
- A **warm but compact sleeping bag**,
- A **lightweight sleeping mat**, and
- A **60–75 litre hiking rucksack** (which the student will carry themselves).

For safety and comfort, please ensure that the **packed rucksack does not exceed a quarter of your child's body weight**.

2. Food and Cooking:

Students will plan, carry, and prepare their own meals during expeditions. They will cook one nutritious meal per day using **lightweight hiking stoves**. This forms an important part of the independence and self-management learning outcomes of our programme.

3. Accommodation:

All camps are **tent-based**, and there are **no dormitory or bungalow facilities**. This encourages self-reliance, teamwork, and environmental awareness.

4. Weather Considerations:

- **March:** Mild to cool weather.
- **September:** Can be cold at night.
Please ensure your child packs appropriate warm clothing and waterproof gear.

5. Kit List:

Please refer to the **Outdoor Education Kit List** (provided separately) for detailed equipment requirements and recommendations.

Your support in helping your child prepare responsibly makes a significant difference in their confidence, comfort, and enjoyment of these experiences.

GRADE 8

Rite of Passage – Orientation Camp (Second week of Term)

Focus: Orientation, fellowship, and introduction to the Woodridge spirit.

Students overnight in the school's bush camp in the gorge under the supervision of prefects and the Outdoor Education Department. They hike 2km to the site and sleep under a large communal tarp.

- 60–75 litre hiking rucksack essential.
- Concludes with a **Rite of Passage Ceremony** in assembly.

Camp 1 (March) – Woodridge / Bluegums Farm

Focus: Introduction to expeditions and self-sufficiency.

Students complete a **self-navigated 10km hike**, carrying all camping equipment and cooking their own meals.

- All Grade 8s are automatically enrolled in the **President's Award (Bronze level)**, with their assessed adventurous journey taking place in Grade 9.
- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.

Camp 2 (September) – Woodridge / Yellowwoods Farm

Focus: Practice expedition for the Bronze President's Award.

Students complete a **20km hike** carrying all camping gear and provisions.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.

GRADE 9

Camp 1 (March) – Yellowwoods / Maitlands / Van Stadens

Focus: Bronze President's Award – *Assessed Adventurous Journey*.

Students complete a **30km hike** over varied terrain, carrying all kit and food.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.

Camp 2 (September) – Longmore Forest

Focus: Silver President's Award – *Assessed Adventurous Journey*.

A **40km hike** testing endurance, teamwork, and leadership.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.
- Concludes with a **Walking Stick Rite of Passage Ceremony** celebrating students who complete both expeditions.

GRADE 10

Camp 1 (March) – Nieu Bethesda

Focus: Academic cross-curricular exploration.

Students take part in short walks and educational workshops linking geography, history, and art to the landscape.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.

Camp 2 (September) – Crossways / Ferry Hotel

Focus: Adventure skills development (cycling and kayaking) in preparation for *The Way – 21-Day Journey*.

Activities include:

- **Paddling:** Kayaking on the Gamtoos River.
- **Cycling:** Mountain biking at Crossways.
- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.
- **Suitable mountain bike essential.**

Camp 3 (November) – The Way (21-Day Journey)

Focus: Extended wilderness adventure promoting self-discovery, leadership, and resilience.

Students embark on a 21-day expedition through the Baviaanskloof, integrating hiking, cycling, and paddling components.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.
 - **Suitable mountain bike essential.**
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GRADE 11

Camp 1 (March) – Kudu Kaya / Bruintjies Kraal

Focus: Leadership and teamwork through the *Tomorrow's Leaders* programme.

Activities include kloofing, raft-building, and an 8km hike.

- 60–70 litre hiking rucksack essential.

Camp 2 (September) – Van Stadens Resort Campsite

Focus: Advanced leadership and peer mentorship training under *Tomorrow's Leaders*.

- No rucksack required.
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GRADE 12

Camp 1 (March) – Willows Resort Campsite

Focus: Leadership, reflection, and preparation for life after school.

This camp provides a supportive environment for matrics to bond and set goals for their final year.

- No rucksack required.
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Physical Readiness and Parental Support

A key part of what makes Woodridge special is our Outdoor Education Programme, it's active, challenging, and incredibly rewarding. Every student has the opportunity to hike, cycle, paddle, and camp in some of the most beautiful parts of our region, building confidence, resilience, and teamwork along the way.

To get the most out of these experiences, students need to arrive with a **basic level of fitness and physical readiness**. Each camp involves carrying their own gear, walking or cycling significant distances, and being outdoors for extended periods. When students are well-prepared physically, they gain far more from the programme, and they enjoy it!

We therefore ask for your support in encouraging an active lifestyle at home. Regular movement, outdoor play, sport, and family activity all help prepare your child to thrive in the Woodridge environment. Students who arrive unfit or overweight can find the physical demands difficult, which may limit their enjoyment and impact the group's progress.

With your partnership, we can ensure that every student is ready to take full advantage of this unique and life-shaping part of a Woodridge education.

In Closing

Our Outdoor Education Programme is a defining feature of a Woodridge education. Through these experiences, students learn to lead, collaborate, persevere, and appreciate the natural world. These camps form a vital part of their personal and leadership development journey.

We thank you for your continued support in helping your child prepare — practically and mentally — for these unique and transformative opportunities.

Warm regards,

The Outdoor Education Department
Woodridge College and Preparatory School