Dear Parents/Guardians and current Year 9 students

Since 1998, St Philip’s College has offered an exciting Outdoor Education expedition for Year 10 Students. This eleven-day winter camp to Mittagundi Outdoor Education Centre in Victoria is a particularly adventurous expedition and will be offered again in 2017. A second expedition option to Wollangarra Outdoor Education Centre in Victoria has now been added; given the increase in numbers attending Mittagundi over recent years, the success of this year’s Endeavour Camp, and the large student population in Year 10 (2017). Please read the following information below carefully, as it is necessary to gauge the number of students who are likely to attend the programs in 2017.

Preference will be given to those students who attended Endeavour Camp in 2016, register expression of interest immediately stating your preference, attend the information night, pay the deposit, and submit forms all by the due dates.

MITTAGUNDI OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

Mittagundi is located on an isolated property adjoining the Bogong High Plains and the township of Omeo, in Eastern Victoria, by the side of the Mitta Mitta River. It has been built and maintained by students over the past 25 years and aims to provide students with opportunities for adventure. Mittagundi has no electricity and follows a simple pioneer lifestyle. Do have a look at the many photos of Mittagundi on the Outdoor Education section of the College website.

The Mittagundi Winter Program is an extension of the Year 9 Endeavour Camp – focusing particularly on inter- and intra-personal skills. The primary activity will be cross country skiing, but this will be combined with other activities, with an alternate program in the event of poor snow conditions. The time at Mittagundi is usually divided between a 1-day and a 3-day cross country skiing and snow-camping trip to the adjacent Bogong High Plains, and helping to the run the property at Mittagundi itself. This includes milking cows, baking bread, building shed and fences, planting trees, blacksmithing, making furniture, and helping tend to the vegetable garden. It is important that students and parents understand that the environment in which the camp is held is meant to be very challenging and that it is particularly cold. Cross country skiing takes place in the backcountry away from resorts; there are no ski lifts. Students walk and ski with packs (see also www.mittagundi.org.au).

Mittagundi is a very popular, exciting, and rewarding trip. Places will be limited to a max of 80 students (there are over 140 students in Year 10 for 2017). In deciding to go, students and families should consider carefully:

- Mittagundi is a demanding adventure-based expedition. It is not a ski resort style trip – there are no ski lifts and there is no snowboarding. Instead, it is a cross country ski touring expedition and pioneer lifestyle experience. In the snow and mountains, students will camp in the snow, ski and walk with backpacks. At Mittagundi itself, students will prepare for their ski trips, cook, clean, feed animals, and maintain Mittagundi.
- Mittagundi is a simple lifestyle. There is no electricity and one shower during the week. Food is simple and wholesome – there is not meat every day, and there is porridge for breakfast every morning!
- Students will be cold and uncomfortable at Mittagundi at some stage. This is normal, but challenging – so all should be prepared appropriately, but acknowledge that they will be substantially challenged. This is what is great about Mittagundi!
MITTAGUNDI WINTER PROGRAM DATES

Group 1: Monday, 10 July to Thursday, 20 July (third and last week of Term 2 holidays)
Group 2: Thursday, 20 July to Sunday, 30 July (last week of Term 2 holidays and Week 1 of Term 3)

MITTAGUNDI WINTER PROGRAM COST

The cost of the camp will be $1750 and this includes airfares, course fees, all meals, accommodation in Melbourne, and transport in Victoria. Apart from woollen clothing and thermal underwear, minimal special equipment or clothing is required to be purchased (equipment list is on the College website).

A non-refundable deposit of $600 will be required by Friday, 17 February 2017, with the final payment of $1150 due Wednesday, 5 April 2017. Places are confirmed by payment of deposit and paperwork by specified due dates.

WOLLANGARRA OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

Wollangarra is a unique and simple place situated beside the Macalister River south of Licola, Victoria. Wollangarra was built by hundreds of volunteers using materials brought over by flying fox, hauled through the river, and cut from the surrounding bush. Similar to Mittagundi, Wollangarra is also a pioneer-style homestead (no electricity) and aims to provide students an opportunity to get away from timetables and mobile phones, and live in a simple but comfortable way. The main focuses are providing a small but vital step towards a healthier environment, stronger communities, and happier young people.

The Wollangarra Stage One: Meeting the Mountains introductory program major aim is encouraging awareness of our environment. The program is a five-day course with a two-night, three-day hike. Access to Wollangarra is via flying fox across the river and the first day is spent preparing for the hiking trip and doing activities around the property. This includes baking bread, planting vegetables, and doing maintenance on fences and other timber work incorporating pioneer skills. It is important to understand, much alike Mittagundi, this expedition program is meant to be challenging but in turn is rewarding and lots of fun (see http://wollangarra.org.au/).

Wollangarra is a challenging and rewarding trip. Places will be limited to a max of 20 students. In deciding to go, students and families should consider carefully:

- Wollangarra is a challenging, enjoyable adventure-based expedition. It is a pioneer lifestyle experience and involves three days of hiking.
- At Wollangarra, students will be expected to prepare for the hiking trip, cook, clean, and maintain the property.
- Wollangarra is a unique and simple lifestyle. There is no electricity and food is simple and wholesome. There is not meat every day, but there is a hot shower and roast lamb for students on the evening they return from their hike.

WOLLANGARRA MEETING THE MOUNTAINS PROGRAM DATES

Saturday, 22 July 2017 to Saturday, 29 July 2017 (Week 1 of Term 3)

WOLLANGARRA MEETING THE MOUNTAINS COST

The cost of the camp will be $1530 and this includes airfares, course fees, all meals, accommodation in Melbourne, and transport in Victoria. Apart from woollen clothing and thermal underwear, minimal special equipment or clothing is required to be purchased (equipment list is on the college website). A non-refundable deposit of $600 will be required by Friday, 17 February 2017, with the final payment of $930 due Wednesday, 5 April 2017. Places are confirmed by payment of deposit and paperwork by specified due dates.

EXPRESSONS OF INTEREST

If you are particularly keen for your son or daughter to participate, please register by email by Thursday, 8 December 2016, including your son/daughter's camp preference and Frequent Flyer Number. Registering by email allows us to have regular and efficient communication with families in planning and organising the program between now and the trip. All news and information is distributed by email. You may register multiple email addresses, but always specify who the message is from. Please do not submit email addressed on paper – I will reply to all emails as confirmations. Registration is regarded as a genuine and considered expression of interest.
PARENT AND STUDENT INFORMATION EVENING – all students should attend

An Information Night will be held on Monday, 13 February 2017 in The Minnamurra Hall at 7pm. It is compulsory that students attend this meeting to make themselves aware of all the requirements of the trip. Parents are also welcome and encouraged to come to this meeting. A copy of the presentation will be made available on the College website.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

There will be an option for students to book their own flights or travel to Melbourne (unsupervised) prior to the trips beginning. Please email independent travel arrangements to david.atkins@stphilips.nt.edu.au by Friday, 17 February 2017.

Given the time frame, it is not unrealistic for students to commit to raising some (or all) of the cost of the trip. Therefore, all students should be able to afford to attend if they have the motivation. Students must commit themselves to the personal organization required for the trips. Students should do the work, not parents. Students should manage deadlines, the submissions of forms, collection of gear, and all work required preparing for Mittagundi or Wollangarra.

I look forward to seeing you at the Parent/Student Information Evening. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at the College by phone or email if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

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