



Pathfinders 2019

Dear Pathfinders and their Families,

This is a letter designed to give you some basic information about Pathfinders and what we have planned for 2019.

Background: The Castle Hill Pathfinder club is a church-centred spiritual-recreational program designed for young people 10 to 15 years of age (and/or in Year 5 to Year 10 or equivalents). It is filled with action, adventure, challenge and group activities, and provides opportunities for the development of new attitudes and skills that produce personal growth, team or community spirit and a sense of loyalty and respect for God, His creation and His church. The basic Pathfinder philosophy can be achieved as club leaders seek to fulfil the following objectives:

- a. Help the Pathfinder to understand that God loves them, cares for them, and appreciates them.
 - b. Encourage Pathfinders to discover their own God-given potential.
 - c. Inspire Pathfinders to give personal expression of their love for God.
 - d. Make a priority of the club program the personal salvation of every Pathfinder.
 - e. Build into a Pathfinder's life a healthy appreciation and love for God's creation.
 - f. Teach Pathfinders specific skills and hobbies that will make their lives more meaningful and will occupy their time with profitable accomplishments.
 - g. Encourage the Pathfinder to keep physically fit.
 - h. Give opportunity to develop and enlist leadership.
 - i. Seek to foster the harmonious development of the physical, social, intellectual and spiritual life of the Pathfinder.
- [SPPSM (*South Pacific Pathfinder Staff Manual*), Part 1, pp 3, 4]

To assist in achieving these objectives, the Pathfinder club has standards, symbols, uniform and a constitution. The Pathfinder club flag, bearing the Pathfinder emblem, is displayed at regular club and Pathfinder programs. There is a full dress uniform and field uniform. The Pathfinder Pledge and Law highlights the spiritual basis on which the club is built.

Age Requirement: Young people, 10 to 15 years of age (and/or Year 5 to Year 10 or equivalent), may become members of the Pathfinder club. The first class, which is Friend, is designed for the average ten-year-old and is structured in keeping with their physical and intellectual abilities. Commencing this class before 10 years is reached may cause some hardship and will most likely detract from interest in future classes during the important teen years. Therefore Pathfinders must be at least 10 years of age (or commencing year 5) prior to joining in January of the given year.

Club Meetings: The club operates 12 months of a calendar year (although generally we do not run programs in December or January). Club meetings usually occur each month and run from 3:30pm to 8:30pm. During club meetings Pathfinders participate in club pursuits (learning games), class pursuits (with their individual age group), have dinner and participate in a crafts. During the regular meetings the Pathfinders may take part in drill and

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marching, crafts and/or hobbies, games, devotional activities, honours, seminars and classwork. We may also use club meeting times to participate in community events such as our annual Tinned Food drive.

The Pathfinder club will offer a minimum of 40 hours of Pursuits (learning activities/games) a year, which are divided into 4 Categories – Self, God, Community and Nature. Approx 10 hours of pursuits are devoted to each section.

Levels: Castle Hill Pathfinders runs the “Way to Go” program which divides the club into three levels, Junior, Intermediate and Senior. There are six achievement classes, two per level, which are identified by the following names/colours: Friend (blue – 10 years), Companion (red – 11 years), Explorer (green – 12 years), Ranger (black/grey – 13 years), Voyager (brown – 14 years), Guide (gold – 15 years). At the conclusion of the classwork requirements and testing, the Pathfinder receives a badge, a pocket strip and chevron at a special Investiture service at Church in late November / early December.

Investiture requirements: To be invested and receive the respective class badges at the end of the year, each Pathfinder must complete a number of criteria. There are two levels that a Pathfinder can achieve and be invested - Standard or Advanced. The advanced Pathfinder will receive an additional rectangle badge at Investiture, worn above the pocket on the left chest of the formal uniform.

To be invested each of the following criteria must be met:

INVESTITURE REQUIREMENTS	Standard	Advanced
Pursuits completed	75% (30 hours)	90% (36 hours)
Attendance	75% of all scheduled events	90% of all scheduled events
Honours completed	2 (compulsory honours)	5 (including 2 compulsory honours)
Bible texts memorised	10	15

The Club program will offer the 2 compulsory honours as a minimum and will help facilitate Pathfinders with additional honours to complete at home should they wish to complete the advanced requirements. The responsibility is on the Pathfinder to want to complete the advanced requirements, they will not be pushed or pressured to have completed the requirements – it is up to each Pathfinder to follow through.

All work must be completed to a satisfactory level and returned for marking prior to District Director testing usually in November at the second last meeting for the year.

Camps: Castle Hill Pathfinder Club usually participates in 4 camps per year. Two base camps, where we are able to drive the cars to the camping spots, and 2 hiking camps where all the Pathfinders will have to carry all their camping gear in their pack. One of these hiking camps is the Expedition which is run by the Greater Sydney Conference. This is open to all Pathfinder clubs in Greater Sydney and an opportunity to mingle with other clubs.

We encourage all Pathfinders to be self sufficient and independent and this is especially important during camps. Pathfinders will be encouraged and shown how to look after and carry all of their own equipment, cook their own meals, set up their tent and generally manage their own needs for the weekend.

Castle Hill Pathfinder Club owns a number of 2 and 3 man hiking tents, as well as larger 3 man dome style tents. The hiking tents are lighter and are split between 2 -3 pathfinders when carrying – so one person would carry the poles/fly and the other would carry the pegs/tent. These tents are transported to each camp and distributed as needed. They are returned to the club, clean and dry at the end of each event. From time to time replacements are needed for tents and our fundraising contributes to this. You do not need to buy your Pathfinder a tent. Counsellors will allocate Pathfinders to share tents with others on a rotating basis. For Hiking camps – please see the attached list (with photos) of the style of equipment that each Pathfinder will need. It is preferable that a child’s pack does not weigh more than 1/3 of their body weight – when fully packed with water and tent – therefore when choosing

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new equipment please consider the warmth, weight and the suitability of each item. Remember that our Hiking camps are often in winter.

There are additional costs for each camp. These costs will cover the transport, entrance fees for National Parks and any costs associated with the activities for the weekend. We try to keep these costs to a minimum and will outline the costs prior to each camp. There are camp forms that must be completed before each camp – this contains all medical and emergency information, and forms part of our risk assessment that is completed prior to each camp. All forms and money must be returned before the camp, otherwise the Pathfinder is unable to attend.

Camporees/Fairs: Every four years the Greater Sydney Conference (GSC) has a camporee. This involves all the Pathfinder clubs from the Greater Sydney area. The kids have a great time at these events, and usually registration and payment for these events is completed online directly to the GSC through the Adventist Youth Ministries web site.

Each alternate year, the Greater Sydney Conference runs a fair. This is a Sunday, where all the clubs get together and compete in various games demonstrating their skills in lashings, knots, first aid and sometimes fire lighting!

Uniforms: Pathfinders has a formal dress uniform and two informal club uniforms. The club uniforms comprise of a polo shirt and a t-shirt (the polo is worn at meetings and the t-shirt we get dirty in at conference events). Please see attached information and diagrams. Please complete the order forms prior to registration. Any orders for the Pathfinder formal uniform can be placed over the web at the ABC shop –

<https://adventistbookcentre.com.au/pathfinders/pathfinders.html>

Alternatively you can visit the Epping store and try different sizes. The club has some pants, skirts and shirts that can be hired for the year at a small fee.

Budget: A new Pathfinder should expect the following costs: Registration - \$75 per year; Craft Honour - \$10 additional depending on what craft is chosen by the child; Camps - \$25 per camp on average - 3 Club camps per year; Conference Expedition - approx. \$35 early bird price; Polo Shirt - Field Uniform - \$30 each - we recommend at least 1 shirt per child; Camping Shirts - \$15 each for use when we are camping especially when we are on Expedition with other clubs, this allows us to better identify Castle Hill kids; Castle Hill Bucket Hat - \$15 each - washable and invaluable in the sun and at camps; Castle Hill Patch for Formal Uniform - \$3 - available from Club; plus Formal Uniform (from the ABC shop) and personal Camping gear.

Communication: It is important that we are able to communicate with all parents and Pathfinders through the year. We understand that we all communicate in different ways so we have a number methods in which we will try to keep you informed. Firstly, all email addresses that are used on our registration forms will be added to a Google Group. This is our main distribution list so that we can forward information to you by email. If you are a Facebook user, we have a group called Castle Hill Pathfinder Club, just find the page and ask to join! We also have a Castle Hill Pathfinder website castlehillpathfinder.club where we will post all of the newsletters, forms and other information that we send out during the year, please visit the site and mark as a favourite so that you can catch up with anything you may have missed. Lastly, we are always available for you to talk to or email directly should you have any questions or concerns .

Pathfinder Leaders: Our Club is operated by volunteers. Yes, we are all volunteers! With the adequate training, like First Aid, we have the specific skills necessary to make any activity an enjoyable challenge for our Pathfinders. We are proud to treat all Pathfinders with kindness and respect and we expect the same from them.

In a way to promote a safe environment for children, all our staff, from counselors and instructors till parent helpers, have a valid Working With Children Check provided by The Office of the Children's Guardian (an independent statutory authority in NSW Government). We also sign and follow a Child-Safe Code of Conduct.

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Parent Helpers: There is a lot of work to make the Pathfinder program happen and it would not function without the assistance of all of the parents who volunteer to help. Pathfinders is not a “child minding service” and we request the help of all parents to assist the club throughout the year. We understand that you may not all be campers and that is fine, however there are many different jobs that you can help with. The Pathfinder application form contains a section for you to let us know what you feel comfortable assisting with. We would ask that each family volunteer to help out with at least one event during the year.

Parents also often ask – Can I come on the camp with my child? It is always great to have extra helpers for camps and you are most welcome to attend. All parent helpers must have completed their Working with Children Check and supply the relevant number and approval prior to attending. However, it is very important to note that Pathfinder camps are not “family camps”. Everyone who attends needs to assist with the supervision and running of the camps (and if possible assist with transport). The children need to be under the guidance of the Pathfinders leaders and counselors in order to achieve the goals of the camps. It is also important to allow the children to be independent and self sufficient so that they can grow through their camping experiences and not rely on mum or dad to do things for them. When we divide the Pathfinder into smaller walking groups, or activities– often parents are not with their own children. This is also designed to let the Pathfinder learn some new skills and independence through their challenges and not rely on their parents for support. They are big enough to do it themselves! If you would like to assist us with camps please let us know either on the application form or during the year.

We also need the cooperation of parents to support and encourage their children to live up to the expectations of a true Pathfinder. This includes turning up to all of the meetings and be on time, handing in completed forms promptly, dressing in the correct uniform, payment of fees promptly, completing honours or craft as needed at home. This will enable the club to run smoothly and efficiently and allow us to focus on running the activities through which we hope the kids will learn, grow and create memories which will last for the rest of their life.

We look forward to a fabulous 2019. Please feel free to contact us with any questions on registration or any events throughout the year. Don't forget to register for our Google Group, Facebook page and check out our website: castlehillpathfinder.club.

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