



# SPRINGFIELD Ironbark Program Information 2025



Ironbark Outdoor Education Centre  
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## Program Outline

The Ironbark program focuses on development of our adolescent students supporting the Junior High Sub School. The Ironbark program has a rich history at St Peters commencing with a pilot program in 1974 followed by compulsory attendance for Year 10 students in 1976 for a duration of 10 weeks. The program has now evolved to a 5 week experience for Year 9 students providing opportunities in Farm Skills, Outdoor Adventure, Community Living and Environmental education.

The Ironbark program focuses on three core aims:

**Community:** To create a Christian community that enables the development of skills and understanding and relating to others, self, the environment and God. To inspire students to adopt and respect a community minded approach to living and learning.

**Commitment:** To develop a sense of commitment to task and to others in the community. To enable and encourage students to show respect and assume responsibility while developing initiative and leadership by achieving their personal best.

**Connection:** To facilitate students in making a connection between the Ironbark experience and life. To provide opportunities for students to experience a connection between their actions and purposeful outcomes.

### At Ironbark, we value:

**Relationships** – focusing optimistically and believing you and others matter.

**Engagement** – building your connection to yourself and the present moment.

**Vitality** - having a healthy body and healthy mind.

**Achievements**– building your capabilities to strive, thrive and flourish.

**Meaning** – having passion and a reason for what you are doing.

**Positive Emotions** – being in charge of your emotions through your strengths.



Ironbark is best explained in the following excerpt from a letter to a new staff member written in 1981:

*'Ironbark is a place for kids. I want kids to be involved in doing everything that you believe is a good thing for them to do. I want kids to work closely with you to see your Christian life in action in all kinds of situations. I want kids to feel the power of living in a community, of working hard, of having achieved some job of work on which the community depends, and, by facing these challenges in a positive way, building a sense of self-worth, competence and a feeling of the value of service...'*



### Program Activities

During their stay at Ironbark your child will participate in the following activities:

#### Farm Skills

- feeding and handling livestock, eg milking cows
- manual labouring tasks
- horse riding
- chopping firewood
- gardening

#### Outdoor Adventure Program

- navigation/orienteering
- four-day hike
- swimming
- high ropes
- cross country running
- unaccompanied camping (Survival and 24 hour Solo)

#### Cronins Pioneering Program (Introduction to Camping)

- whip cracking
- camp oven cooking
- sleeping in swags
- blacksmithing/leatherwork
- bushcraft
- thunderbox toilets and 'Dunny Runs'

#### Community Living Tasks:

- preparing food
- cleaning dorms
- washing clothes
- travelling in motor vehicles
- attending church services

### PROGRAM DATES 2025

9STU 1 Tuesday, 28 January - Saturday, 1 March

9STU 2 Tuesday, 4 March - Saturday, 5 April

**IRONBARK 5 WEEK PROGRAM - 2025**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	
<b>1</b>	Mon	Staff Preparation Day	
	Tues	Arrival, unpack, community lunch, orientation	
	Wed	Dorm Group Initiatives & Low Ropes / Orientation	
	Thurs	Food Prep / Work / Horsemanship / Jacobs Ladder / Navigation 1	
	Fri	Food Prep / Work / Horsemanship / Jacobs Ladder / Navigation 1	
	Sat	Timed Run / First Aid Training	
<b>2</b>	Sun	Chapel / Rest Day	
	Mon	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb	Cronins – Bush Skills / Work/ Cook
	Tue	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb	Blacksmith / Leather work / Cook / Work
	Wed	Food Prep & Work AM / Cronins Depart PM	Cronins return AM / Food Prep & Work PM
	Thurs	Cronins – Bush Skills / Work/ Cook	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb
	Fri	Blacksmith / Leather work / Cook / Work	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb
	Sat	Rogaine	
<b>3</b>	Sun	Chapel / Rest Day	
	Mon	<b>Group 1</b> Navigation & Hike Prep	<b>Group 2</b> Survival
	Tues	Hike	Survival
	Wed	Hike	Survival (Return to Base)
	Thurs	Hike	Horses / Food Prep / Work
	Fri	Hike	Horses / Food Prep / Work
	Sat	Rest Day	
<b>4</b>	Sun	Timed Run / Chapel / Group Challenge	
	Mon	Survival	Navigation & Hike Prep
	Tues	Survival	Hike
	Wed	Survival (Return to Base)	Hike
	Thurs	Horses / Food Prep / Work	Hike
	Fri	Horses / Food Prep / Work	Hike
	Sat	Rest Day	
<b>5</b>	Sun	Timed Run / REVAMP practice	
	Mon	<b>Boys</b> Solo Departure	<b>Girls</b> Food Prep/ Work/ Flying Fox
	Tues	Solo Interviews & return / Solo Debrief	Focus Day
	Wed	Focus Day	Solo Departure
	Thurs	Food Prep/ Work/ / Flying Fox	Solo Interviews & return / Solo Debrief
	Fri	Ironbark Event / Dorm Debriefs / Final Night Celebrations	
	Sat	Clean up / Graduation / Departure	

## Preparing for Ironbark

### Packing

Students will have a variety of activities to complete whilst at Ironbark. This can range from farm jobs, hiking/camping through to attending activities in the community. We do not expect you to spend a small fortune in preparing for the program but please ensure your child has the essentials.

The following packing list includes all essential items for their comfort and safety.

Students will need to bring clothing that is suitable for work tasks and that can get dirty. We respect the wishes of parents to choose where to buy items but we stress that students should at least have good robust shoes for working/hiking to reduce injuries and blisters and a good sleeping bag for their minimum of eight nights camping.

### Prohibited Items

- weapons of any kind (this includes replicas, pocket knives, etc)
- prohibited substances (eg. illegal drugs, prescribed medications – unless given to medical staff or the prescribed medicine is an asthma inhaler)
- implements or instruments for the use of illegal drugs
- alcohol
- cigarettes/tobacco
- pornographic or offensive material (the College determines what is offensive by its christian values/teachings as well as an understanding of wider community values)
- chewing gum
- lollies/junk food
- magazines
- permanent marker pens
- make-up



### Luggage

Please keep baggage to a minimum as bus and dormitory storage space is limited. Two to three bags should be enough. A back pack is a handy item to bring. Suitcases need to be limited to 25kg.



### Electronic Devices

To maximise face-to-face social interaction and quiet reflection time, mobile phones, music devices, ebooks, etc, are not to be brought to Ironbark. Any of these items found will be confiscated. This includes digital cameras as we will provide these to students to take photos. These photos will be available via Firefly after the program.

### Medical Information

Please complete the online medical form by the due date. This allows staff time to collate the information and make arrangements for each child.

The process of ensuring that we have the correct medical information is lengthy and thorough. Please ensure that you fill out the information carefully and accurately. Please remember we need to know all details required to care for your child. If any further information needs to be communicated to Ironbark staff after you have completed the forms please send an email to [ironbark@stpeters.qld.edu.au](mailto:ironbark@stpeters.qld.edu.au) with the updated information.

Students should have a complete medical and dental check-up before going away. Students will be required to hand in all medication on arrival at Ironbark. Ironbark has access to a local Medical Centre, an Ambulance Station and both Public and Private Hospitals in Toowoomba. Ironbark supplies medications for students on a first aid basis if needed ie. paracetamol, throat lozenges, etc. Parents are asked to send **only prescribed medications**. Any medications that are prescribed by doctors whilst at Ironbark will be paid for out of the student's pocket money. Parents will be consulted.

We accept there are risks involved in performing such tasks but management strategies are implemented to ensure risks to both students and staff are minimised. Parents need to be aware that in the event of illness or accident they will be informed once all details are known and an action plan will be instigated. At times when students are located in remote settings it may take longer for medical assistance to be obtained but all Ironbark staff are trained in First Aid procedures and will manage the situation until such assistance arrives.

### Pocket Money

We suggest \$70 as a reasonable amount of pocket money for the duration of the course. Money will be lodged with staff and banked until required by the students for incidentals. The balance is refunded on the last day minus any expenses incurred including breakages. Students usually like to purchase a class t-shirt (\$30), craft items they construct and Ironbark merchandise.

### Transport

Students will take a bus to Ironbark. Students and parents are to meet at the School carpark at 7:00am on departure date.

## Packing List

### Clothing/Equipment

**Day Clothes:** Day clothes need to be tough, comfortable and able to get dirty. Pack at least 7 sets of clothes.

- shirts need to be a combination of t-shirts and collared shirts avoiding low neck lines to help with sun protection
- all shirts must have sleeves
- no bare midriffs or revealing shorts (these will be confiscated)
- shorts should be a comfortable length to wear with a harness
- broad-brimmed sun hat (not straw)
- at least 6-8 pairs socks and underwear
- daily water bottle

### Evening

- modest casual clothes
- pyjamas

### Running

- singlets, bike pants, tights are allowed for running only

### Workwear/Horse Riding

- gardening/work gloves
- denim jeans for horse riding

**Warm Clothes:** You won't need many but it can still get cold!

- jumpers
- long pants
- beanie (optional)
- warm jacket
- waterproof raincoat - activities still continue in the rain (preferably hooded & thigh length)

**Footwear: A minimum of 2 pairs of closed shoes/boots**

- at least 1 pair of supportive running shoes in good condition for running and hiking over rough terrain
- hiking/working boots are allowed but not essential
- thongs/ugg boots/crocs for inside dorms only
- one pair of shoes that can get wet/muddy

### Hiking/Camping:

- lightweight long sleeved shirt and shorts/long pants
- swimmers – one piece
- 4 pairs of additional thick socks to be used for hiking only
- 1 pair of sock protectors (to prevent grass seeds in socks) torch
- we prefer a headlamp with spare batteries so that students can do tasks hands free
- sleeping mat (no greater than 60cm wide to fit in hike pack)
- 1 sleeping bag (for camping only). Please ensure it is appropriate for the season
- water bottles/bladders to carry 3 litres, for hiking only (to be handed in on arrival)
- sunglasses - students find that glare can be an issue
- wet wipes

**All packs, tent flies and cooking equipment are provided.**

### Dormitory Bedding:

- 1 pillow and 2 pillow cases
- 2 fitted sheets
- 2 flat sheets
- 1 doona, quilt or blanket (not sleeping bag)**
- 2 towels
- 1 face washer

### Toiletries

- toothpaste
- soap
- shampoo
- roll-on insect repellent
- roll-on deodorant
- sunscreen
- lip balm (suggested)
- hand cream (suggested)
- sanitary items

**Aerosol cans, make-up, hair clippers/electric razors and hand sanitizer are not permitted.**

### Daily Living

- 1 set of cutlery/crockery: knife, fork, spoon, sturdy plate, bowl, and mug in a cloth bag (no ceramics)
- laundry bag and clothes pegs
- 2 tea towels
- medication (must be named, labelled and stored in a zip lock bag/similar container)
- pocket money
- watch (preferably with alarm)

### Stationery

- note book/writing paper
- pens and pencils
- 1 x exercise book for daily journal (encouraged)
- envelopes and stamps (including some priority stamps for faster return)

**Stationery items can be purchased from the Ironbark shop using student's pocket money.**

### Musical Instruments

Students have the opportunity to practice and perform during the program. Students are encouraged to bring their instruments, providing they check the suitability beforehand.

### Travelling to Ironbark

Wear comfortable clothing and sensible walking shoes and a hat.

Please keep suitcases to less than 25 kg.

**ENSURE ALL ITEMS ARE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR NAME.**

**Prohibited items will be confiscated.**

## While at Ironbark

### Correspondence/Communication

We expect students to write to parents at least once each week. Students do not have access to telephones or computers and therefore look forward to receiving letters from home as their form of communication with family and friends. If you have family overseas or in remote locations we are happy for you to email letters to us. Parents are also welcome to contact the Ironbark staff by phone or email if they have any concerns or questions during the course. Please inform us immediately if your emergency contact details change during your child's stay.

Photos will be posted intermittently on our Facebook page during your child's stay and a photo package will also be available for download a few weeks after the completion of the course.

### Student Birthdays while at Ironbark

If a student has a birthday while at Ironbark, parents are able to contact the office on 4698 1171 prior to organise a time to call their son/daughter (generally done in the evening around 6pm). Family and friends are encouraged to send presents, if so desired. However, we do ask that thought is given to comply with the expectations and allowable items.

### Parcels

In order to maintain our philosophy of 'sticking to basics' we ask that parcels not be sent to the students. Urgent needs can be posted to the student. All parcels will be opened under supervision of a staff member. Please do not try to smuggle items of contraband as they will be confiscated and will not be returned, and this practice contradicts the spirit of cooperation and trust we aim to achieve.

### Solo

In the last week every student will complete a 24 hour solo. The purpose of this experience is to provide an opportunity for the students to reflect on their experiences at Ironbark in the quiet surrounds of the bush. Students will be assigned a campsite, relevant equipment and tasks to complete. During this time a staff member will also conduct a one on one interview with the students to gain feedback for the reporting process. The solo is an overnight stay in the bush alone at the designated campsite.

Students value this experience highly and during the 4 weeks prior students acquire the necessary bush skills and self-discipline to complete the solo safely. They are checked on by a staff member, and are able to radio staff in the event of an emergency. Adjustments will be made for those students who are very uncomfortable about this experience ie. camp with or within sight of a staff member. This is a valuable experience for our students to reflect on their time at Ironbark.



### Coming Home Rite of Passage

We believe it is important for families to play a part in this experience and the final debrief allows that opportunity. You will receive an email from Ironbark once your child has arrived asking you or a family member to make a contribution to this debrief in Week 5. We will be seeking a significant male for boys and a significant female for girls to provide a special something for the students, the email will explain. If this person is not a parent we ask that you have someone in mind so that the process runs smoothly.

### Parents' and Friends' Support

We welcome any support in money, goods or advice. We limit our budget to the essentials to run the program so that fees are kept to a minimum, and thus encourage parents, friends and people from the surrounding community to take an active interest and perhaps contribute in their own way.



### Parents' Day

Parents' Day is held on last Saturday of the program. It is expected that parents come to Ironbark to collect their child (extended family members are also welcome). If you are unable to come to Ironbark you should arrange alternate transport and notify us of the details as soon as possible. There is no bus service back to Brisbane for the students.

Parents Day is the student's opportunity to share their experience of five-week program with their families. It is important that parents allow time in their schedules to celebrate the students' achievements at the Graduation Ceremony. The day's program is as follows:

- 9:30am** Families arrive for morning tea at Kibung Ples and dorm tours
- 10:30am** Chapel and graduation
- 12:00pm** Students picnic with families on Ironbark property – please bring a picnic lunch
- 1:00pm** Tours and displays
- 2:30pm** Head for home or join a tag along tour to Cronins (2 wheel drive and 4 wheel drives can make the journey as we travel via road, not through the property).

Please note that the students are generally very excited as they wait to greet their families and can be quite upset if they arrive late. It is wise to allow 2¼ hours for the trip from Brisbane via Esk, Hampton and Crows Nest. Do not use a GPS to find us from Crows Nest as they can be misleading, please use the map provided. We recommend that you wear hats, sunscreen, walking shoes and suitable clothing for your visit as you will be outdoors. Please do not bring any pets to Ironbark.

Please do not arrive before 9:30am. This allows the students time to complete their clean up and other closing activities.

We look forward to sharing the day with you.



**Contact Us**

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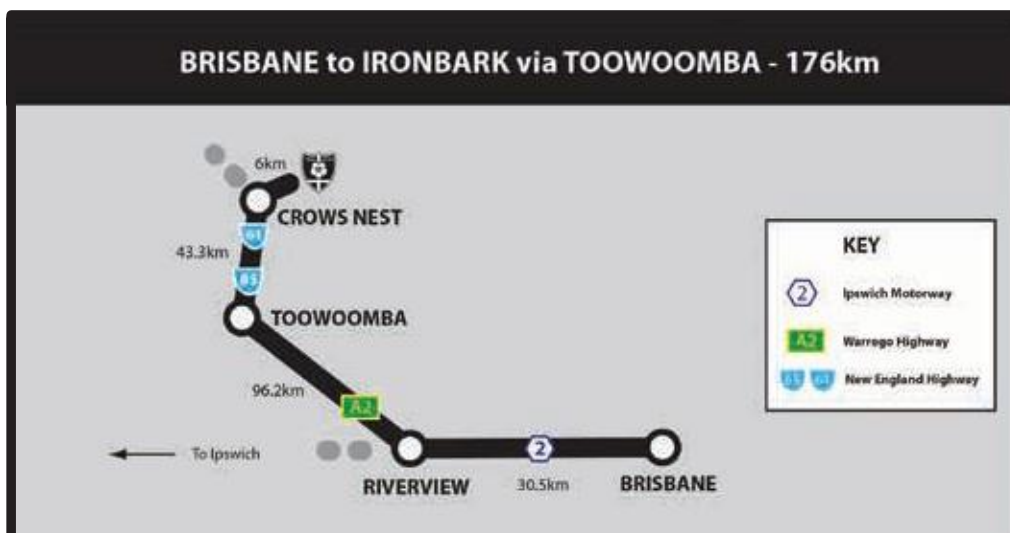
**Director of Ironbark - Matt Sullivan**  
email: m.sullivan@stpeters.qld.edu.au

**Administration Officer -Liz Jackson**  
email: ironbark@stpeters.qld.edu.au

**Registered Nurse – Anne Wormald**  
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**AT SPRINGFIELD**

**Year 9 Coordinator – Claire Santangelo**  
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**Checklist for Ironbark**

**3 weeks prior to departure:**

- completed the online medical form
- Started working through the packing list
- Raised any concerns with Ironbark staff

**The night before departure:**

- checked off packing list
- medications (if needed) in clearly marked zip-lock bag
- pocket money in clearly marked envelope
- student and parent know contact details for postage
- car has enough fuel to get to bus
- alarm clock is set

**After your child has left for Ironbark:**

- write letters to your child at least once a week
- make preparations for Parents Day on the last Saturday
- notify Ironbark of any changes to emergency contact details