2027

Ironbark
Handbook

St Peters
Lutheran
College

Key Staff
Contacts

Ironbark Outdoor Education Centre
318 Back Creek Road, Crows Nest Qld
+61 7 4698 1171
ironbark@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Postal Address
PO Box 27
Crows Nest Qld 4355

Matthew Sullivan
Director of Ironbark
m.sullivan@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Liz Jackson
Ironbark Administration
ironbark@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Anne Wormald
Ironbark Nurse (for medical information)
a.wormald@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Katrina Evans
Springfield Year 9 Coordinator
k.evans@stpeters.qld.edu.au
+61 3470 3888

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The Ironbark Experience

St Peters' iconic Ironbark Outdoor Education Program is a lived experience of More Beyond. A unique journey of self-discovery, this experience is a defining moment in the character formation of each student.

Established in the early 1970s, Ironbark has now cemented its place as a rite of passage for St Peters students for over 50 years.

The Ironbark program focuses on three core aims:

Community: To foster a Christian community where students develop the skills to relate meaningfully with others, themselves, the environment, and God; to inspire them to live and learn with a community-minded spirit; and to explore their spirituality in the context of today's world.

Commitment: To foster a sense of commitment to self, others, faith, and place—encouraging students to show respect, take responsibility, and develop initiative and leadership as they engage in challenges and strive for their personal best.

Connection: To help students connect their Ironbark experience with everyday life, fostering meaningful connections between faith, the environment, community, and place through authentic experiences that build a sense of action, consequence, and purpose.

Program Activities
Outline

The following activities will be available to your child during their stay at Ironbark:

Farm Skills Program:

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

Cronins Pioneering Program:

- whip cracking
- camp oven cooking
- sleeping in swags
- blacksmithing
- leatherwork
- bushcraft
- 'Dunny Runs'

Outdoor Adventure Program:

- navigation / orienteering
- hiking
- swimming
- high & low ropes
- cross country running
- unaccompanied camping
- (Survival & 24 Hours Solo)
- initiative challenges

Community Living Tasks:

- communal living
- personal reflection
- preparing food
- cleaning dorms
- washing clothes
- traveling in motor vehicles
- attending church services

The SEARCH Model

At Ironbark, we work to understand how the aims of the program can contribute to your wellbeing. This is achieved by exploring the elements of visible wellbeing below.

Strengths:
Recognise and use our personal qualities and abilities to help us feel confident, engaged and at our best.

Emotional Management:
Understand our emotions and use effective strategies to stay balanced, focused and in control.

Attention and Awareness:
Be present and focus our attention intentionally by noticing what is happening inside us and around us.

Relationships:
Connect with others in positive and supportive ways to help us feel safe, valued and like we belong.

Coping:
Use strategies to manage challenges, stay steady under pressure and bounce back when things are difficult .

Habits and Goals:
Create helpful routines and set meaningful goals that guide our learning, wellbeing and growth.

Term	Classes	Ironbark Class Dates
Term 1 2027	9STU 1	Tuesday 19 January –Saturday 20 February
	9STU 2	Tuesday 23 February – Saturday 27 March (Easter Saturday)

5 Week Program

Week	Day	Activity	
1	*Monday*	Staff Preparation Day	
	Tuesday	Arrival, unpack, community lunch, orientation	
	Wednesday	Dorm Group Initiatives & Low Ropes / Orientation	
	Thursday	Food Prep / Work / Horsemanship / Jacobs Ladder / Navigation Training	
	Friday	Food Prep / Work / Horsemanship / Jacobs Ladder / Navigation Training	
	Saturday	Timed Run / First Aid / Navigation Training	
2	*Sunday*	Rest Day / Chapel	
	Monday	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb or Rock Climb	Cronins – Bush Skills / Work/ Cook
	Tuesday	Horses / Work / Food Prep / Tree Climb or Rock Climb	Blacksmith / Leather work / Cook / Work
	Wednesday	Cronins Changeover Day	
	Thursday	Cronins – Blacksmith / Leather work / Work/ Cook	Horses / Work / Food Prep / Tree Climb or Rock Climb
	Friday	Bush Skills / Cook / Work	Horses / Food Prep / Tree Climb or Rock Climb
	Saturday	Rogaine (5 hour Orienteering event)	
3	*Sunday*	Rest Day / Timed Run / Chapel	
	Monday	Navigation & Hike Prep	Survival
	Tuesday	Hike	Survival
	Wednesday	Hike	Survival (Return to Base)
	Thursday	Hike	Horses / Food Prep / Work
	Friday	Hike	Horses / Food Prep / Work
	Saturday	Rest Day	
4	*Sunday*	Timed Run / Chapel / Mini Solo	
	Monday	Survival	Navigation & Hike Prep
	Tuesday	Survival	Hike
	Wednesday	Survival (Return to Base)	Hike
	Thursday	Horses / Food Prep / Work	Hike
	Friday	Horses / Food Prep / Work	Hike
	Saturday	Rest Day	
5	*Sunday*	Timed Run / REVAMP practice / Chapel	
	Monday	Girls Food Prep/ Work/ / Flying Fox	Boys Solo Interviews & return / Solo Debrief
	Tuesday	Girls Focus Day	Boys Focus day
	Wednesday	Girls Solo Departure	Boys Food Prep/ Work/ Flying Fox
	Thursday	Girls Solo Interviews & return / Solo Debrief	
	Friday	Ironbark Event / Dorm Debriefs / End of Program Celebration	
	Saturday	Clean up / Graduation / Departure	

'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...'

Excerpt from a letter to a new staff member written in the early 1980's.

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 provided packing list includes all essential items for their comfort and safety. There is no requirement for you to purchase the latest equipment from outdoor stores. Students will need to bring clothing that is suitable for work tasks and that can get dirty.

Luggage

Please keep baggage to a minimum as bus and dormitory storage space is limited. Two suitcases and a backpack should be enough. Please ensure suitcases **weigh less than 25kg** for ease of lifting.

Electronic Devices

To maximise face-to-face social interaction and quiet reflection time, radios, mobile phones, iPods, 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 after the program.

Prohibited Items

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

Pocket Money

We suggest $70.00 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. Class t-shirts are available for $35.00, craft items (some are free) and Ironbark merchandise.

Transport

On departure day students are to arrive no earlier than 6:15am and no later than 7:00am. Information regarding departure will be sent via email by the Year 9 Coordinator.

Medical Information

A link will be emailed to each family to complete an online medical form prior to your child's program. Please complete by the due date to ensure Ironbark staff can be prepared for your child's arrival.

The process of ensuring that we have the correct medical information is lengthy and thorough. Please ensure that you fill out the information carefully. If any further information needs to be communicated to Ironbark staff after you have submitted the form please email 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. panadol, 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.

In the event of illness or accident, parents will be informed once all details are known and an action plan will be instigated. All Ironbark staff are trained in First Aid procedures and the medical care of students will be overseen by the Director and Registered Nurse.

Student Welfare and Concerns

St Peters Lutheran College is committed to providing environments where children and young people receive the highest standard of care, where their rights are supported, and they can thrive and be fruitful. Such environments nurture and safeguard the intelligence, dignity, safety, and wellbeing of each child or young person, by placing them at the centre of thought, values, and actions. All staff, contractors and volunteers must ensure that their behaviour towards, and relationships with students reflect proper standards of care for students.

We understand that for many students the residential nature of Ironbark and being away from their regular support network will be challenging. The Ironbark staff are St Peters employees and will be primarily responsible for the wellbeing of the students in their care. Ironbark staff liaise with key Indooroopilly staff prior to a group's commencement, during and post program.

We acknowledge that the Ironbark staff are not regular figures in the students' lives. As such, there may be times where students may request the support of family, or a member of the Indooroopilly staff to raise a matter of concern to them. Such requests are accommodated.

Checklist

3 weeks prior to departure:

- ☐ Completed all sections of the online medical form by the due date

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
- ☐ Alarm clock is set
- ☐ Travelling to Ironbark: Wear comfortable clothing, sensible walking shoes and a hat.

While your child stays at Ironbark:

- ☐ Write letters to your child at least once a week
- ☐ Notify Ironbark of any changes to emergency contact details
- ☐ If your child has a birthday whilst at Ironbark, contact the office to arrange a phone call
- ☐ Make preparations to pick them up on the last Saturday

Packing List

Clothing/Equipment:

Day clothes should be tough, comfortable and able to get dirty. Pack at least seven sets of clothes.

- ☐ Shirts (a mix of T-shirts and collared shirts; all must have sleeves and avoid low necklines for sun protection. No bare midriffs.)
- ☐ Long pants (to protect from scratches in the bush)
- ☐ Shorts (must be practical for wearing a harness; no revealing shorts)
- ☐ Broad-brimmed sun hat (not straw)
- ☐ 6–8 pairs of socks and underwear (minimum)
- ☐ Daily water bottle (a sports drink bottle is fine)

Evening

- ☐ Modest casual clothes
- ☐ Pyjamas

Warm Clothes: *It's much colder at Ironbark than in Brisbane!*

- ☐ Jumpers
- ☐ Tracksuits
- ☐ Beanie, thermals and gloves (suggested for winter groups)
- ☐ Warm jacket
- ☐ Waterproof raincoat – activities still continue in the rain (preferably hooded and thigh-length)

Footwear: A minimum of two pairs of closed shoes/boots

- ☐ Supportive running shoes in good condition for running and hiking over rough terrain
- ☐ Hiking/working boots are allowed but not essential
- ☐ Thongs or Ugg boots for inside dorms only
- ☐ 1 pair of shoes that can get wet/muddy

Running / Hiking / Camping:

- ☐ Singlets, bike pants and tights (for running only)
- ☐ Lightweight long-sleeved shirt and shorts/long pants
- ☐ Swimmers – one piece
- ☐ 4 pairs of thick socks (for hiking only)
- ☐ 1 pair of sock protectors (to prevent grass seeds in socks)
- ☐ Torch (preferably a headlamp with spare batteries, to allow hands-free use)
- ☐ Sleeping mat (no wider than 60cm, to fit in a hike pack)
- ☐ Sleeping bag (appropriate for the season)
- ☐ Water bottles/bladders to carry three litres (for hiking only; handed in on arrival)
- ☐ Sunglasses (glare can be an issue)
- ☐ Wet/baby wipes (for an improvised camping shower)

All hike packs, tents and cooking equipment are provided.

Workwear / Horse Riding

- ☐ Gardening/work gloves
- ☐ Denim jeans (for horse riding and blacksmithing)
- ☐ If your child wears size 12+ shoes, bring school shoes for horse riding

Dormitory Bedding:

- ☐ 1 pillow and 2 pillow cases
- ☐ 2 fitted sheets
- ☐ 2 flat sheets
- ☐ 1 doona, quilt or blanket (separate to your sleeping bag)
- ☐ 2 towels

Toiletries:

- ☐ Toothpaste
- ☐ Soap
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Roll-on insect repellent
- ☐ Roll-on deodorant
- ☐ Sunscreen (not tinted)
- ☐ Hand sanitiser (100ml)
- ☐ Lip balm (not tinted)
- ☐ Sanitary items
- ☐ Razors

Aerosol cans, make-up and hair clippers are not permitted.

Daily Living:

- ☐ 1 set of cutlery/crockery: knife, fork, spoon, sturdy plate, bowl and mug (in a cloth bag; no ceramics)
- ☐ Mesh laundry bag for underwear
- ☐ Medication (must be named, labelled and stored in a zip-lock bag or similar container)
- ☐ Pocket money
- ☐ Watch (preferably with alarm)

Stationery:

- ☐ Notebook/writing paper
- ☐ Pens and pencils
- ☐ 1 exercise book for daily journal (encouraged)
- ☐ Envelopes and stamps (including some priority stamps for faster return)
- ☐ Blu Tack (if wanting to display photos or letters)

Stationery items can be purchased from the Ironbark shop using students' pocket money.

Musical Instruments:

Students have the opportunity to practise and perform during the program. They are encouraged to bring their instruments, provided they have checked suitability beforehand.

Please keep luggage to a minimum.

ENSURE ALL ITEMS ARE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR NAME

Prohibited items will be confiscated

Communication
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 childs' stay and a photo package will also be available for download a few weeks after the completion of the program.

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, 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 they 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, raise attention with a whistle in case of emergency. Adjustments will be made for those students who are very uncomfortable about this experience. This is a valuable experience for our students to reflect on their time at Ironbark.

Significant Letters

We believe it is important for families to play a part in this experience and the students 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 through a special letter. If this person is not a parent we ask that you have someone in mind so that the process runs smoothly.

Parents' Day – Returning Home

Parents' Day is held on last Saturday of the program where 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 students' opportunity to share their experience during the 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	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).

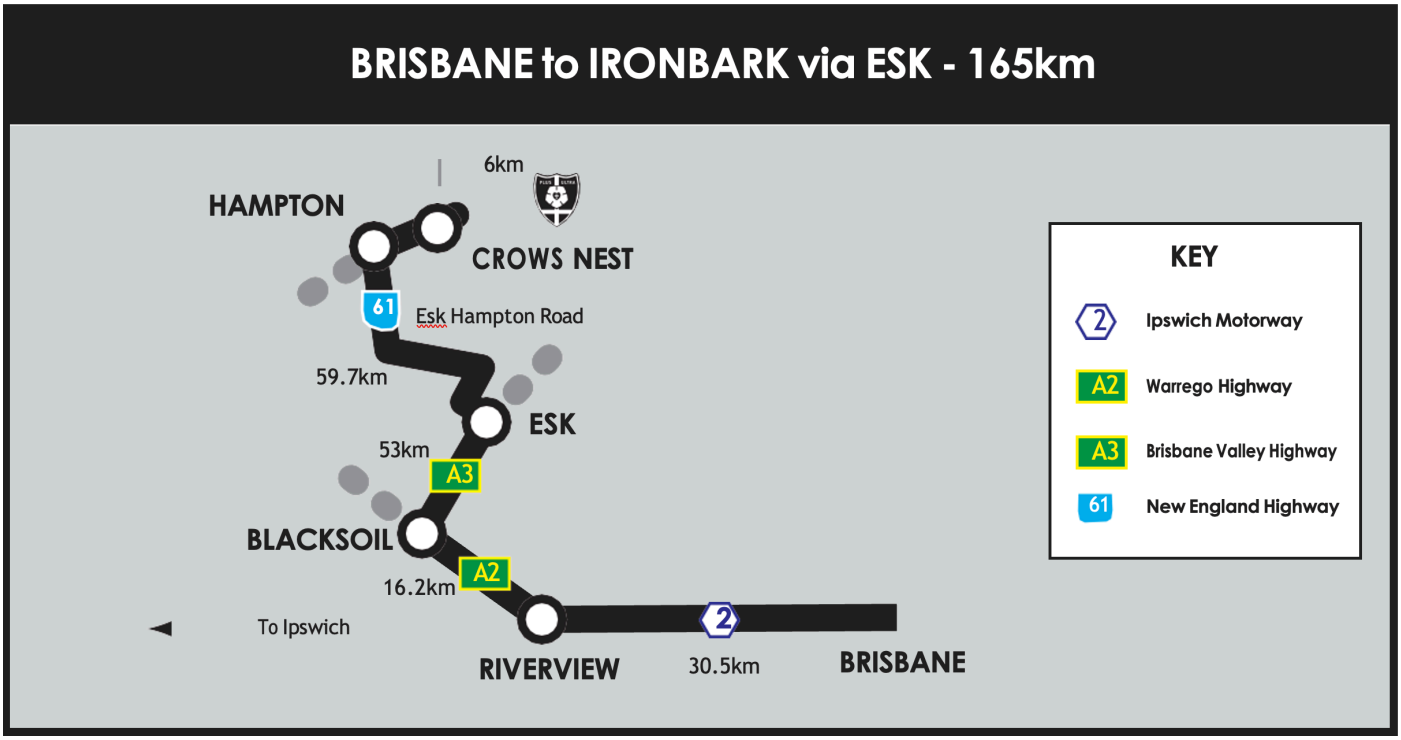
Please note that the students are generally very excited as they wait to greet their families and can be quite upset if they arrive late. It is wise to allow 2¼ hours for the trip from Brisbane via Esk, Hampton and Crows Nest.

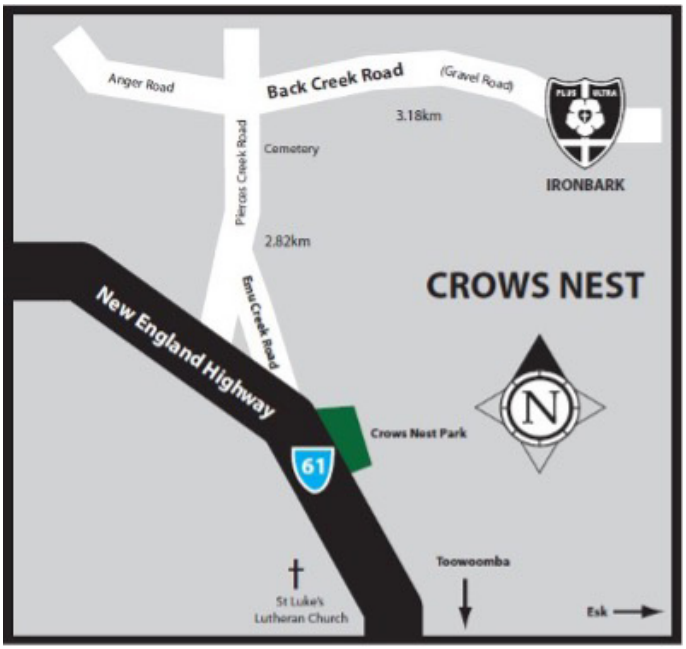
Do not use a GPS to find us as they can be misleading. Please use the map provided. We recommend that you wear hats, sunscreen, walking shoes and suitable clothing for your visit as you will be outdoors. Please do not bring any pets to Ironbark.

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.

Navigating to
Ironbark





How to find us

Please do not use a GPS to find us from Brisbane. This will send you up a rough, gravel road. We suggest you follow the signs to Esk and then Hampton & Crows Nest.

Child Protection

At St Peters Lutheran College, we are committed to creating environments where children and young people are safe, valued, and supported to thrive. We believe every child has the right to care of the highest standard, and we place their dignity, safety, and wellbeing at the centre of our decision-making, values, and actions.

Grounded in our Christian ethos, we are shaped by the belief that every child is made in the image and likeness of God:

Every child is lovable and loved.

Every child is one of a kind, with their own gifts and potential.

We live out our faith by creating welcoming communities grounded in compassion, kindness, fairness, justice, and love, and by providing exceptional pastoral care.

Our Commitment

St Peters Lutheran College aims to provide a safe and supportive living and learning environment for all students. Staff, volunteers, and visitors are expected to model behaviours that uphold the dignity, safety, and wellbeing of every student. This includes:

- Responding promptly and appropriately to all allegations of harm to a student.
- Complying with all legislative obligations, policies, and procedures relating to child protection.
- Supporting, wherever possible and appropriate, students, parents, staff, and volunteers affected by child protection matters.

The College's Child Protection Policy sets out clear written processes for staff and students, in line with Queensland legislation. Further details can be accessed via Firefly under: Child Protection Policy and Staff and Students Code of Conduct.

Conduct of Staff and Students

All staff, contractors, and volunteers are required to maintain professional boundaries and ensure their behaviour reflects the highest standards of care. Staff, contractors, and volunteers are expected to always act in ways that protect and support the safety and wellbeing of students. The Staff Code of Conduct outlines the expectations and responsibilities in this regard.

Awareness and Accessibility

The College is committed to transparency and awareness. Information about procedures for student safety and staff conduct will be:

- Communicated in writing to staff, students, and parents at least twice per year.

Training

All staff are trained in student protection procedures as part of their induction and participate in annual refresher training. Attendance at these sessions is formally recorded to ensure compliance.

Implementation and Compliance

The College regularly audits its procedures to ensure they are being implemented effectively and consistently across the community.

Complaints

Any concerns or suggestions of non-compliance with child protection procedures can be raised under the St Peters Lutheran College Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Policies

Please refer to below documents that can be found on our website and Firefly:

- LEQ Child & Student Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- LEQ Child Protection - Reporting Concerns of Harm, Abuse and Reportable Conduct Policy
- LEQ Child & Cultural Safety - Statement of Commitment
- LEQ Child Protection - Reporting Concerns of Harm & Abuse in Schools Procedure

Child Safety Flow Chart

Parents should direct any queries or concerns to:
Director, Deputy Director, Registered Nurse

Ironbark staff work in conjunction with the:
Year Level Coordinator (YLC), counsellors and Head of Junior High

Direct queries or concerns to Director, Deputy Director, Registered Nurse

Ironbark staff works in conjunction with the Year Level Coordinator (YLC), counsellors and Head of Junior High

Student Protection Officers

Ironbark

Mr Matt Sullivan
Director of Ironbark
m.sullivan@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mr Ricky Johnson
Deputy Director of Ironbark
r.johnson@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mrs Anne Wormald
Nurse
a.wormald@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mr Joh Knijnenburg
Boys Night Supervisor
j.knijnenburg@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mrs Rosie Knijnenburg
Girls Night Supervisor
r.knijnenburg@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Springfield

Junior High

Mr Dominic Piacun
Head of Secondary Years
d.piacun@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mrs Katrina Evans
Year 9 Coordinator
k.evans@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Student Support Services

Mrs Sarah Johnson
Counsellor
s.johnson@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mrs Amy Logan
Counsellor
a.logan@stpeters.qld.edu.au

Mr Matthew Wilksch
Chaplain
m.wilksch@stpeters.qld.edu.au

St Peters
Lutheran College

Ironbark Outdoor Education Centre

Back Creek Road (PO Box 27)
Crows Nest QLD 4355 Australia
+ 61 7 4698 1171

St Peters Lutheran College

66 Harts Road, Indooroopilly Qld 4068
+61 07 3377 622
stpeters.qld.edu.au
CRICOS Provider: 00516E

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St Peters Lutheran College Springfield

42 Wellness Way (PO Box 4556, Springfield)
Springfield Central
Ipswich QLD 4300 Australia
+61 7 3470 3888