Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre
Overnight/ Camping Booklet
Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre is a specialist facility established to assist schools with the integration of fieldwork and environmental education into all Key Learning Areas for students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

It acts as a resource centre for fieldwork and environmental education for schools all over the state but in particular schools in the northern suburbs.

Its headquarters are at Bobbin Head in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

Groups can stay overnight at three different locations in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Muogamarra Nature Reserve. They range from the parkland setting of Bobbin Head to the coastal retreat of The Basin and the rugged near wilderness of Muogamarra.

Why Take Your Students Away Overnight?

Schools go on overnight trips for many different reasons but of major importance are the learning experiences that the students gain from the trip. Educational, personal and social outcomes are all gained from a well planned overnight stay. Some of these outcomes are highlighted below:

Overnight Camping Outcomes

✓ Enjoyable learning experience to create and motivate learners
✓ Develop individual qualities of self-reliance and self discipline
✓ Understand the value of co-operation between individuals
✓ Develop sound environmental habits by following waste reduction strategies
✓ Expand the learning experiences of students with respect to field study ideas and techniques
✓ Investigating and interpreting a variety of habitats both natural and ones modified by people
✓ Provide a valuable social experience for both students and teachers
✓ Complete the mandatory fieldwork components of relevant curriculum areas
✓ Develop a sense of responsibility for personal health and safety

Overnight stays with students take a great deal of time and effort so good planning is essential to gain the most out of the experience. The program must be relevant and integrated into your students’ class work and satisfy the outcomes of the Key Learning Areas you are teaching. Use the experience for social and personal development of your students with the students taking responsibility for planning, preparing and cleaning up after meals.

Of course, overnight camping is a valuable social experience for students of all ages and disciplines, but this cannot be the sole reason for such a visit. The field work undertaken during such a camp must be an integrated part of the students’ classroom studies.
Length of Stay

The recommended stay is 3 days and 2 nights as it is just as much effort to plan for one night as it is for two. The students then have more time to relax into the overnight experience and obviously there will be more time for fieldwork tasks.

Bookings Policy

Overnight bookings can be made up to a year in advance. This allows for forward planning and certainty of the booking for all the Centre's clients. A non-refundable deposit of $100 is payable for overnight visits. The Centre reserves the right to charge any group the total cost of repair or replacement for damage or loss of the Centre’s property. The visiting teacher must give the Centre’s teaching staff specific educational outcomes they wish to achieve in order to have a successful overnight stay. Only groups with an educational or environmental charter will be able to book the Centre. Visiting groups must supply in writing, before an overnight stay, a list of students who have specific medical requirements.

Procedure

Initially a booking is made by contacting the Centre and arranging a tentative date and giving details of the course of study that is being followed at school. At this time suitable locations and the organisational steps will be discussed.

A deposit for $100 is required to confirm the visit, and further camping information and resource material will then be sent to assist you in planning the visit and the field studies to be undertaken.

Student Numbers.

The maximum number of students allowed in any one location is 30. There must be an overnight supervision ratio of at least 1 adult to 10 students with a minimum of two adults with small groups e.g. 2 teachers, 1 parent or 1 teacher, 2 parents. In the case of schools, the class teacher must stay overnight with the group as the Centre’s staff do not stay overnight.

Cost

Please contact the centre for the latest fee structure.
Overnight Venues and Accommodation Types

- Dormitory Style Accommodation at Bobbin Head
- Tent camping at The Basin and Muogamarra Nature Reserve
Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre - Dormitory Style Accommodation

The Bobbin Head building is the Centre's headquarters and is available all year round for overnight stays.

The Bobbin Head area is a popular picnic area on the banks of Cowan Creek. It has a large grassed playing area as well as easy access to a variety of habitats including mangroves, dry eucalypt forest and rainforest. A boardwalk provides easy access across the mangroves and along the delightful Cockle Creek. The Gibberagong track can be followed all the way to Wahroonga. The area has also a number of Aboriginal midden sites which can visited. Other facilities for the tourist include a National Parks & Wildlife Shop, kiosk, marina and numerous fishing spots.

Facilities

Dormitory Accommodation consists of:

- Overnight accommodation for 30 students
- Fully equipped kitchen and dining room
- Four bunk rooms each sleeping a maximum of 8 students.
- Separate teachers' rooms
- Bathrooms with hot showers
- Classroom (including Interactive White Board and Video Conferencing)
- Science lab with environmental monitoring equipment
- Recreation equipment and large grass area
- Aquariums, terrarium, insectarium and worm farm

Sample Activities at Gibberagong EEC Bobbin Head

- Orientation
- Short walks around area. Mangrove, Rainforest, Dry Eucalypt forest
- Canoeing, fishing, art, orienteering/sport games
- Walk to Kalkari via Birrawanna track
- Visit Aboriginal engraving site
- Environmental games
- Bush tucker

Access

The Gibberagong building is located near the bridge and picnic area at Bobbin Head and can be accessed by car or chartered bus. Alternatively there are hiking options to access Bobbin Head.
The Basin, Pittwater (Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park) Terms 1 and 4

The Basin is located on the eastern side of the West Head peninsula in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park adjoining magnificent Pittwater. It is a popular public picnic and camping area administered by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. It has a large grassed camping area as well as a safe enclosed lagoon for swimming. A variety of habitats are available nearby that include dry eucalypt, rainforest, mangroves and rock platforms. The Basin also is within reach of Aboriginal engraving sites and local European historic sites.

Additional features include:

- Amenities block with cold showers, laundry and public telephones
- On site Campground Manager
- Delivery service for milk and bread (ferry)
- Ice available from the Campground Manager
- Campfire area
- Large enclosed swimming lagoon
- Numerous fishing spots
- Sports equipment and canoes

Tent Camping

We have a full range of camping gear to accommodate 30 students. Everything you need including gas BBQs, tents and lights. You bring your students and their sleeping gear and food.

Terms 1 and 4 at “The Basin” in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

Terms 2 and 3 in Muogamarra Nature Reserve.

Sample Activities  The Basin

- Orientation
- Erecting tents
- Short walks around Basin, History of The Basin (visit Beechwood cottage)
- Canoeing, snorkelling, fishing, art, orienteering/sport games
- Walk to Currawong along shoreline - seashore studies
- Spotlight night walk to observe animals and visit Aboriginal engraving site
- Whole group walk to Dam on top of hill, morning tea in bush
- Environmental games
- Bush tucker

Access

The Basin can be reached by water with a 20 minute ferry trip from Palm Beach (www.palmbeachferry.com.au) or a 5km hike from the West Head Road. The ferry leaves from the Palm Beach Wharf which can be reached by regular public buses which travel from Wynyard to Palm Beach (www.sydneybuses.info) Alternatively a bus can be chartered to this point.
Muogamarra Nature Reserve, Cowan - Terms 2 and 3.

Muogamarra Nature Reserve has been established to protect the unique vegetation and extensive Aboriginal and European historical sites which exist within its 2,000 ha area. The excellent camping area is located on a ridge top overlooking the Hawkesbury River and can be locked at night making it extremely safe. Muogamarra contains a rich heritage of Aboriginal engraving sites as well as the remains of the first convict built road which travelled north from Hornsby. Within walking distance of the campsite there is a wide variety of habitats including dry eucalypt, rainforest, mangroves and abandoned farmland.

In addition it has:

- Amenities block with cold showers
- A wet weather visitor centre
- Small historic museum
- Significant number of Aboriginal and European historical sites
- Campfire area
- Composting toilet block

Sample Activities Muogamarra Nature Reserve

- Orientation
- Erecting tents
- Short walks around area. History of Muogamarra
- Visiting Aboriginal engraving sites
- Art activities
- Longer walks to Peats Crater and beyond along convict road. Visiting vegetation communities
- Spotlight night walk to observe animals and visit Aboriginal engraving site
- Bush tucker

Access

Muogamarra is 5km north of Cowan on the old Pacific Highway. The entrance to the reserve is on the left just before the pie shop. The campsite is located on a ridge top 3 km from the main road and is accessible by car and chartered bus.
Overnight Essential Information

Camping Equipment

The camping equipment that can be supplied by the centre includes:

- Tents 13 Safari style tents (3 to 4 person)
- 15 Hiking tents (2 person)
- A large tarp for meal preparation and cooking
- A big marquee for storage and lessons
- Gas BBQ cooking facilities
- Preparation and cooking utensils
- Gas lights
- Food storage facilities (large Eskys)
- Plates, knives, forks and spoons etc.
- First aid kits (on site and transportable)
- Mobile phones (carried by the Centre’s staff)
- Sports equipment cricket, volleyball, frisbees etc.

Teachers Checklist -

What to bring

- A list of all students, noting medical needs
- Food and drink
- Washing up detergent, sponges etc.
- Garbage bags
- Night time activities e.g. campfire song sheets, ‘skit’ ideas
- Wet weather activities e.g. small games e.g. chess, draughts
- Pencils and paper.
- A vehicle is required to stay overnight at Muogamarra and Bobbin Head for safety reasons.

Students -What to Bring:

- Sleeping bag (or sheets and blankets at Bobbin Head)
- Pillow case (for Bobbin Head)
- Air Mattress or sleeping mat (if required for tent camping)
- Torch
- Tea Towel
- Clothes
- Rain gear
- Toiletries
- Drink bottle for hiking (eg. 1 litre plastic drink bottle)
- Fishing gear (The Basin and Bobbin Head only)
- Swimming goggles (The Basin only)

Please Do Not Bring

- Drinks in cans or poppers
- Mp3’s, ipods etc
- Thongs
- Aerosols spray insect repellent
- Lollies
- Pocket knives
- Any items of value
Catering Guide

Planning the menu

It is suggested that the food for the camp be carefully thought out and discussed by the group. This can be a learning process in itself to work out the best food to bring, keeping in mind weight, ease of cooking, preparation, rubbish generated, nutritional and energy value, cost and personal preferences.

Remember "Fresh is best"

From this discussion develop a menu and a shopping list.

Also consider:

- Capabilities of the cooks
- Tent camping cooking and refrigeration facilities
- Bobbin Head has full kitchen facilities

Do not take it for granted that your students know how to cook on a BBQ, boil water on an open fire or how to wash and wipe up. Even some Yr 11 and 12 students have problems with these daily duties. Find out the capabilities of your students so that you can anticipate any problems. Remember one of the reasons for camping is to teach the student these life skills.

Waste Reduction Strategy

In keeping with the Centre's philosophy of minimal impact camping the Centre has devised a strategy to ensure that each group reduces, reuses and recycles as much waste as practical. Some refuse, where appropriate, will be sorted into categories for recycling. The students will instructed on these procedures before the camp commences. In particular, at Muogamarra Nature Reserve all refuse generated must be taken away by the visiting group.

As part of this strategy it has been found that many packaged items are inappropriate for use.

These items include:

- aerosols and cans
- single serve packets such as wrapped cheese slices and portion controlled packets
- soft drinks in glass containers and wrapped lollies

These items should not be brought to the camp as alternative packaging is available while some items should not be brought because of safety considerations.
Suggested Menus

Basically keep it simple and healthy with a minimum of waste!

Breakfast

- Cereal, milk, fresh fruit, fruit juice and toast.
- Toast & spreads
- Eggs boiled or scrambled, bacon and eggs or spaghetti or sausages

Lunch is usually eaten outdoors and on walks so food should be easily transportable in backpacks.

- On day 1 students to bring own morning tea, lunch and drink
- On the other day(s) sandwiches- cold meat/cheese/salad/honey/fruit

Dinner

- Soup
- BBQ steak, sausages, fish fillets, boneless chicken, hamburgers or rissoles
- Spaghetti bolognaise
- Fresh salad and baked potatoes, cordial
- Dessert: Fresh fruit salad or plum pudding and custard or cream
- Supper: Hot chocolate, biscuits, cakes or a damper (you will need to bring self raising flour for the damper and honey and jam for filling)

Morning and Afternoon tea

- Fresh fruit and biscuits, or each student to bring a “plate” of home made goodies and then share.
Occupational Health and Safety

To ensure the health and safety of all students, teachers are reminded of the DET’s Guidelines and Policies regarding overnight excursions.

A Gibberagong risk assessment pro forma is available from the website.

In addition the Centre also has specific guidelines which have been summarised below. Detailed policies and guidelines will be forwarded prior to the overnight stay.

• On overnight visits the visiting teacher/s or supervisor/s are responsible for the supervision, welfare and discipline of their students. If the Centre’s teaching staff are present this then becomes a joint responsibility and should conform to the visiting school’s and Centre’s policies.

• Teacher/student ratio should not exceed 1/10 on overnight visits. This includes visiting teacher/approved supervisor plus two adult supervisors for a group of 30.

A minimum of two adult supervisors for small groups

• NB. Gibberagong teaching staff don’t stay overnight.

• It is the responsibility of the visiting teachers to ensure that their students have their personal medication with them and the Centre is notified in writing prior to the visit of any medical condition.

• The Centre will follow the NSW Department of Education & Training drugs in schools policy and will discipline students accordingly.

• Gibberagong staff are trained in First Aid and carry a first aid kit and a mobile phone during any field trip away from the camp.

A vehicle must be kept on site or at the nearest location for emergencies.

Contact Phone Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>000 or 112 (mobile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Police -Church Point (7.30 am - 2.30 am)</td>
<td>9979 4044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibberagong EEC(main number)</td>
<td>9457 8245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibberagong EEC Bobbin Head (After hours only)</td>
<td>9457 0753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Parks - (Duty Officer)</td>
<td>9457 9577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Basin Camping Site( automated booking service )</td>
<td>9974 1011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Parks (Northern Beaches Area)</td>
<td>9451 3479</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Palm Beach Ferry Service 9974 2411
The ferry leaves Palm Beach every hour from 9 am. The journey takes 20 minutes. The return trip leaves The Basin at 20 minutes past the hour.

Sample Overnight Programs

Modifications are always necessary to allow for many variables such as weather, tides and fitness levels.

Sample Program—Gibberagong EEC
Bobbin Head

Day 1
8:00am • Students arrive at school, organise luggage
8:15am • Bus departs school
10:00am • Arrive at Gibberagong • Orientation, organise rooms, morning tea • Short orientation walk around area history etc

Day 2
9:00 to 11:00 • Fieldwork Mangroves, Rainforest and Dry Forest
11:00 to 12:00 • Morning tea • Laboratory work
12:00 noon • Lunch
1:00 to 5:00 • Continue Fieldwork Activities • Sport • Bush Tucker • Camp activities, historical display, fishing games etc
4:00 • Afternoon tea

Day 3
• Breakfast • Pack up • Environmental games • Sport • Bush Tucker • Lunch
1:15 • Depart Gibberagong

Day 1
8:00am • Students arrive at school, organise luggage
8:15am • Bus departs school
10:00am • Ferry departs Palm Beach • Arrive at The Basin • Orientation, put up tents • Morning tea • Short orientation walk around Basin, history etc

Day 2
9:00 to 11:00 • Whole group walk to Dam on top of hill, morning tea in bush
11:00 to 12:00 • Games
12:00 noon • Lunch
1:00 to 5:00 • Visit Beechwood Cottage • Sport • Bush Tucker • Camp activities, historical display, swimming, fishing games etc
6:00 • Dinner • Campfire

Day 3
• Breakfast • Pack up • Environmental games • Visit Beechwood cottage • Sport • Bush Tucker • Lunch
1:00 depart The Basin

Sample Program—Muogamarra

Day 1
8:00am • Students arrive at school, organise luggage
8:15am • Bus departs school
10:00am • Ferry departs Palm Beach • Arrive at The Basin • Orientation, put up tents • Morning tea • Short orientation walk around area, history etc

Day 2
9:00 to 2:00 pm • Whole group walk to Peats Crater, Historical road, Aboriginal midden, includes morning tea and lunch
2:00 to 5:00 • Bush Tucker • Camp activities, historical display,
5:00 • Dinner • Campfire

Day 3
• Breakfast • Pack up tents and equipment • Environmental games • Bush Tucker • Lunch
1:00 depart Muogamarra