



Challenging Minds, Nurturing Hearts, Building Futures...



IRONBARK

The St Peter's Lutheran College
Outdoor Education Program



👉 **Ironbark is based on the dual concepts of education for life and a spiritual retreat and forms a valuable and unique experience for the students. Ironbark provides experiences of excellence, team work and adventure, which challenges each and every girl and boy to fully realise their inner strengths and individual resources, providing a platform for them to flourish in life.** 👉

– Tim Kotzur, Head of College

Since 1976, the St Peters Lutheran College Ironbark program has provided defining moments for generations of girls and boys. These students emerge stronger, wiser, more resilient and more self-confident because of the experience.

St Peters' Ironbark program is a pioneering outdoor education program in schools throughout Australia. The five-week residential program for Year 9 students is an expansive experience which accelerates each student's social development. In an environment absent of electronic media (mobiles, TV or computers), the students are

awakened to more of themselves and their capabilities, away from everyday environments. The Ironbark experience helps our teenagers focus during their adolescent years and is renowned as a rite of passage.

When establishing the Ironbark program, then Head of College, Dr Carson Dron, knew that exposing students to their natural environment and creating opportunities to be challenged physically, spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially in the context of the outdoors, would develop them in a manner that would set them apart.

When Old Scholars were surveyed last year about their experience at St Peters, Ironbark consistently rated as among the top strengths of the College.

The Ironbark program focusses on three core aims:

- **Community:** To create a Christian community that enables the development of skills in 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 self, others, faith and place. This will enable students to show respect and assume responsibility while developing initiative and leadership by engaging in challenging situations to achieve their personal best.
- **Connection:** To facilitate students in making connections between their Ironbark experience and life. To provide opportunities for students to create connections in faith, the environment, community and place while experiencing authentic action, consequence and purpose outcomes.

Located near Crows Nest, a small rural community located on the Darling Downs. Ironbark encompasses over 600ha of heavily timbered, undulating granite country. Ironbark provides a learning environment in which girls and boys discover tools they need to grow into fine responsible adults.

Ironbark is cornerstone to the philosophy to proving excellence to extend our girls and boys and to build strength of character.

This is the heart of the St Peters Ironbark Outdoor Education Program.



💧💧 Ironbark was great! I did a whole heap of activities that I hadn't been able to do growing up in the city—I got to look after farm animals, chop wood, plant things and actually see them grow, plus do heaps of fun activities, like hiking, Jacob's Ladder and camping. The challenges at Ironbark taught me that I could achieve anything I put my mind to. 💧💧

— *Former Ironbark student*



At Ironbark students discover....

- Personal strength through experiential learning opportunities
- The value of our environment first hand. Located in a region renowned for its high biodiversity value, housing an abundance of native flora and fauna.
- An expanded world-view without mobiles, TV and computer access
- How to face fears and enter 'the challenge zone', extending themselves into new territories.
- How to live with others in a community of their peers in a five-week residential stay in which lifelong friendships are formed.
- A deeper understanding of Christian values and teaching in relation to God, the world and the environment, and their relationship to them.

Strength born of teamwork, persistence and camaraderie

Ironbark operates four main elements in the program including Outdoor Pursuits, Farm Skills, Environmental Awareness and Community Living.

Teenagers who are confronted with challenges that take them beyond their comfort zones, discover new strengths and capabilities.

Ironbark satisfies all state-of-the-art safety and risk management procedures.





💧💧 **My child returned from Ironbark a more mature and grounded person. They quite often bring up stories from Ironbark and their face lights up when they do. Their friendship group seems to be stronger for the experience and I'm thankful for how confident my child has become. 🙏🙏**

– Parent of former Ironbark student

The Ironbark outdoor education activities include:

Agricultural Skills:

- Feeding & handling livestock
- Horse riding
- Chopping firewood
- Gardening
- Manual labouring tasks

Outdoor Adventure Program:

- Navigation/orienteering
- Hiking
- Abseiling & rock climbing
- High ropes
- Cross country running/sporting games
- Swimming

- Initiative challenges
- Camping
- Unaccompanied camping (Survival & 24-hour Solo)

Community Living Tasks:

- Dormitory living
- Meal preparation/cooking
- Cleaning rooms
- Washing clothes
- Attending church services

Cronins Pioneering Program:

- Whip cracking
- Camp oven cooking
- Sleeping in swags
- Blacksmithing or leatherwork
- Bushcraft



Life at Ironbark

Year 9 St Peters students board at Ironbark for a five-week period with their peers. They are cared for by specialist teaching, outdoor, residential, nursing, catering, maintenance and horse riding staff. All staff work closely with students in their areas of expertise under the watchful eye of the Ironbark Director.

S^tPETERS



LUTHERAN COLLEGE

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