



WETA WONDER CAMP

Parent's Handbook

About Arthur's Pass

The Arthur's Pass Outdoor Education Centre is in a truly unique setting. The Pass holds a host of historic interests to explore, ranging from the timeworn seasonal Māori migration route to the tracks of the primary European exploration of interior New Zealand.

If you drive in either direction there are vastly different ecosystems to explore; from the lush temperate rainforests of the West Coast to the dry open riverbeds of the Canterbury plains, we have it all at our fingertips.

About the programme

The days at Weta Wonder camp are a combination of outdoor skills and environmental education with a strong focus on immersive, fun learning. An overnight tent camping experience is a large focus of the week. Outside of this, activities offered range from campfire cooking, learning river crossing techniques, conservation mahi such as trap checking and kea studies, shelter building, stream steering and more! We also run a wonderful night programme including art activities, theatre sports and outdoor games.

A key philosophy of APOEC is *Challenge by Choice*. Campers are encouraged to try everything but are not forced to continue with something they show a strong unease with. We recognise that all children have very different comfort zones. All activities are facilitated for the age and ability of the campers within our core values of honesty, kindness, inclusion and responsibility.

We operate an extensive safety management system, which involves staff managing the identified risks involved with all outdoor and environmental activities.

Child Protection

Child protection is at the forefront of everything we do in our programmes. Arthur's Pass Outdoor Education Centre strictly follows their Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable People Policy – if you would like to be sent a copy of this procedure, please contact us.

We understand that trusting your child to someone else's care is a very big decision and we know that some anxiety comes with that decision. If you have any concerns about our programme or the suitability of the programme for your child, please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.



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About our staff

All of our staff are qualified, professional and committed to working with young people with both staff and volunteers all put through a Police Vetting clearance process.

What sets Arthur's Pass holiday programmes apart are the small group sizes. This allows young people to build a relationship with their instructors. It also is a key factor in the active facilitation of a whanau type environment in which participants learn to look after, encourage and support each other – which we find overall assists individuals to challenge and extend themselves on activities.

Our Site Supervisor, who lives on the premises and runs the programmes, is on call 24 hours in the event of an emergency.

Accommodation

Accommodation at camp is provided in bunk rooms of up to 11 max per room with gender separate toilet and shower facilities. Campers are separated into boys and girls bunkrooms. Leaders are in separate bunk rooms next door. Campers should bring their own pillow, sleeping bag, mattress bottom sheet and thin fleece blanket. We ask that you advise us if your camper has any issues with bed wetting. We understand the embarrassment that it can cause some of our campers and we do our best to manage this.

Food & nutrition

Our campers are well fed during school holiday camps to ensure they have as much energy as possible to get the most out of the daily activities. Therefore, we request that parents do not send any additional food. Often on camps we have young people with food allergies and we must be able to manage what food campers have access to. Lollies and sweets in the cabins are often an issue in terms of being very divisive and erodes the equitable bond we strive to create.

Our menu is healthy and nutritious and all meals are prepared here in our kitchen. We do not use products that contain a lot of additives and colours. An example of a typical camp menu:

Breakfast – selection of cereals, toast, milk and fruit
 Morning tea – piece of fruit and piece of cake
 Lunch – rolls, wraps or toasted sandwiches, fruit, water
 Afternoon tea – muesli bar, fruit
 Dinner – hot meat dish with rice or potatoes and vegetables
 Dessert – prepared dessert dish with ice cream, then Milo pre bed

Our campers have access to fruit and water all day long. We do insist that campers carry their own water bottle to each activity, which is particularly important during the summer months.

A typical camp week

Day 1

Pick up from Bishopdale Recreation Centre 12.30pm
 Travel to Arthur's Pass
 Safety briefings and cabin allocations
 Afternoon activity
 Dip and Scream (optional)
 Showers & free time
 Dinner, then evening activities/games/bed

Day 2

Breakfast and pack for overnight camping
 Morning activity in Arthurs Pass
 Lunch
 Drive to overnight camping location
 Tents up, explore and activities
 Camp cook out dinner, evening activities/games/stories/bed

Day 3

Breakfast and pack up
 Morning activity
 Return to Arthur's Pass
 Yummy BIG lunch
 Dip and Scream (optional)
 Unpack and clean up gear and selves/showers
 Art activity
 Dinner then evening activities/games/bed

Day 4

Breakfast
 Morning activity
 Lunch
 Afternoon activity
 Dip and Scream (Optional)
 Showers & free time
 Dinner, then evening activities/games/bed

Day 5

Breakfast and make own lunch
 Pack bags/clean rooms and Centre
 Last activity and reflections on the week looking backwards, looking forwards
 Travel home with stops for lunch and games at fun places
 Greeting you! 3.30pm Bishopdale Recreation Centre pickup.



Behaviour management

We understand that there are some young people that may present with disruptive and challenging behaviours. While we try to work with and endeavour to meet the challenges of these behaviours, it's important to note that not all behaviour can be managed without adversely affecting the experience or safety of other campers.

At the beginning of each camp, all campers participate in a "Full Value Contract" which is set as a part of their age group so that all campers can 'buy in' to the process. This process allows our campers to have input into the kind of behaviour they would like to see from their fellow campers as well as commit to behaving in a certain way themselves.

Every camper has the right to feel safe and valued and enjoy a bully-free week.

Behaviour Management Strategies

We use a variety of strategies to address inappropriate behaviours including time out, diversion and removing campers from a difficult situation. All behaviour management conversations are conducted away from the group to allow the camper to express their concerns and feelings without embarrassment.

At times, we will call parents for assistance to address a difficult, re-occurring behaviour. Generally a phone call home has the desired impact.

Behaviours Resulting in Expulsion from the Programme

It is the responsibility of the Camp Director to determine whether a young person's behaviour is adversely affecting the experience or safety of other campers or staff. The Supervisor of the site has the absolute discretion to remove a camper from the programme. Reasons for expulsion from a programme may include, but are not limited to:

- > Bullying
- > Hitting / or other aggressive and physical behaviour towards other campers or staff
- > Sexually inappropriate behaviour
- > Absconding behaviour

In the event that a camper must be sent home, the parents/carers will be notified as soon as possible.

In the event that the Camp Director feels the camper or other campers' safety is at risk they may require that the camper be picked up immediately, within a reasonable amount of time, allowing for travel.

Technology

We realise that children are becoming more and more reliant on technology. We ask that phones, Bluetooth speakers and other technology that can be a distraction, be kept at home – this is an opportunity for the children to connect with the outdoors and their peers. We appreciate your support on this.

Medical / Illness

In the event of an emergency an ambulance will be called and the parent/guardian will be advised as soon as possible. A staff member will travel in the ambulance with the camper and will remain with the camper either until they return to camp, or the parents/guardians arrive at the hospital.

In the event that medical attention is not urgent, or is as a result of pre-existing injury or illness, parents/guardians will be contacted to determine a course of action. These will be handled on a case by case basis.

The best place for children when they are not well is at home. As illness spreads quickly amongst young people in close contact, we ask that you do not send your child to camp if they are unwell.

If we have questions or concerns about your child's health or wellbeing we will contact you immediately.

Medication

All medication is kept safe and administered by our staff team. Parents/carers must provide a signed medication form for each camp and it must contain all the details for each medication.

If your camper is asthmatic, even if they have not had an attack for some time, you must send appropriate medication for them.



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Gear List for Camp

ESSENTIAL

- ☐ flat or fitted sheet, and pillow
- ☐ sleeping bag (rated to minus 5 for boys and minus 8 for girls)
- ☐ 2 towels
- ☐ soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, sunscreen
- ☐ bug/sandfly repellent in small easy to carry tubes (100ml max)
- ☐ 2 pairs of lace up walking shoes, one of these preferably being tramping boots
- ☐ 2 pairs of shorts
- ☐ 2 pairs of trousers (denim is only good for wearing at night-time at the Centre, not while doing activities)
- ☐ 1 cotton t-shirt
- ☐ 2 non-cotton/synthetic quick drying t-shirts
- ☐ 2 warm jerseys **thick fleece** or **wool** - NOT cotton
- ☐ down jacket
- ☐ raincoat (down jackets and ski jackets are not waterproof or suitable as a raincoat)
- ☐ 3 pairs thick walking socks (not tennis type socks)
- ☐ 4 underwear
- ☐ warm pyjamas
- ☐ 2 thermals tops and 2 thermal longs
- ☐ wide brim sunhat
- ☐ beanie (wool or fleece NOT acrylic)
- ☐ gloves (NOT ski gloves)
- ☐ togs
- ☐ slippers or crocs (for inside where)
- ☐ day pack
- ☐ torch - head torches are best
- ☐ notebook or other small book for daily journaling activity & pens
- ☐ 2 x 1 litre drink bottles (empty fizz drink bottles are fine)
- ☐ Newspaper (great way to dry shoes/ stuffing newspaper inside overnight)
- ☐ waterproof overpants (NOT essential for summer camps)

OPTIONAL

- ☐ favourite card game
- ☐ thin fleece blanket single size and hot water bottle for at the Centre (recommended)
- ☐ camera
- ☐ book
- ☐ gumboots

Tents are provided by APOEC

All equipment/clothing should be suitable for a rugged outdoor environment and of sturdy construction.

We do not recommend cotton clothing as it is not fit for purpose and can be very unsafe in an alpine environment such as ours.

The mantra we use and your child will learn is that – cotton is rotten.

DO NOT BRING

- money or valuables
- phones, gaming devices, laptops, smart watch, bluetooth speakers
- spray deodorant
- cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, vapes
- lollies, chips, soda or junk food types
- pocket knives

Contact & access

Drop off and pick up for all Weta Wonder camps is from the Bishopdale Recreation Centre in Christchurch. Drop off time is 12.30pm and pick up time is 3.30pm. Please ensure you arrive on time. If you wish to drop your child off directly at the APOEC, please contact us in advance to arrange this.

Contacting your camper during camp can be challenging due to the nature of the site and the programme. Activities are based around the National Park in various locations.

If you would like to check on your camper, please telephone our head instructor/site supervisor at the number below to make arrangements for you to speak to them or pass along a message. While away on the overnight camp they will be uncontactable by cell phone.

Please note that due to our child protection policies the APOEC site is not open to the public and no one is permitted to visit campers during their stay.

Camp is a wonderful, life-changing experience for your camper. We look forward to working with you and your family and making this an experience they will never forget.

We do hope this booklet provides some helpful information for you. If you still have questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.



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