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EDUCATION PROGRAMME



ABOUT DARK SKY PROJECT

Nā tā pō, ko te ao, ko te ao mārama –
From the darkest depths of the night we become enlightened.

At Dark Sky Project, we connect manuhiri (visitors) to our night skies, igniting a lifelong passion for dark sky preservation and what lies above. We're proud to be regarded as leaders in astrotourism and stargazing experiences.

Takapō (Tekapo) and the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve is home to some of the world's darkest skies. It may be one of the quietest spots on the planet, yet it has one of the liveliest skies in the world.

OUR OFFERING:

We offer a range of outdoor and indoor education options, designed to offer primary and secondary school students a hands-on experience, centered around science and the stories of our Southern Skies.

For each of our experiences, the content covered can be adapted to suit the curriculum and learning objectives of the students attending.



Location:

1 Motuariki Lane, Takapō (Tekapo) Canterbury



Amenities

Toilets available at base building
Bus drop off area at base building
Student bag storage available at base building



Other information:

All indoor experiences are wheelchair accessible. Enquire with us regarding accessibility requests for our outdoor options.



OUTDOOR STARGAZING EXPERIENCES

Cowan's Hill Crater Stargazing



Duration:
1h + 15mins transport



Group Size:
Min: 10, Max: 30



Ages:
5-18+



Price:
\$70 per student*

*One student goes free of charge per group of 10.

Description:

An exclusive stargazing experience from our private Cowan's Hill Observatory.

Nestled in a giant purpose-built crater to provide maximum wind protection and minimum light pollution, our expert astronomy guides will enhance students' knowledge and understanding of our Southern Skies with our powerful optical telescopes.

Students will witness a number of objects in the pristine night sky. Viewing both through the naked eye, with the help of an impressive laser, and through two powerful telescopes (9.25" and 14").

This tour is weather-dependent and will be cancelled in case of cloud cover or extreme winds. If conditions prevent us from taking students outdoors, you will be offered any of our indoor astronomy options (see below) with a partial refund, or a full refund.

Mount John Summit Stargazing



Duration:
1h15min+ 30min transport



Group Size:
Min: 15 Max: 22



Ages:
7-18+



Price:
\$99 per student

*One student goes free of charge per group of 10.

Description:

Stargazing from the world-renowned University of Canterbury Mt John Observatory - the southernmost optical astronomical facility in the world. An unparalleled learning experience about what lies above and witnessing objects through sophisticated viewing technologies.

Students will witness a number of objects in the pristine night sky. Viewing both through the naked eye, with the help of an impressive laser, and through two powerful telescopes (9.25" and 16").

This tour is weather-dependent and will be cancelled in case of cloud cover or extreme winds. If conditions prevent us from taking students outdoors, you will be offered any of our indoor astronomy options (see below) with a partial or full refund.

INDOOR EXPERIENCES

All indoor experiences are situated in our indoor purpose-built experience zone. Tours operate in all weather conditions.

Dark Sky Experience



Duration:
45 min-1hr



Group Size:
Min: 10, Max: 26



Ages:
5-18+



Price:
\$15 per student.

*One student goes free of charge per group of 10.

Description:

A cultural outlook on astronomy and a treat for the senses. The Dark Sky Experience merges science and tatau aroraki (Māori astronomy) in a 'Big Bang' of awe and inspiration.

With the use of fascinating multi-media installations, students will be educated and inspired by our guide through four different zones of our experience.

Students will have the rare opportunity to get up close to the newly restored Brashear telescope. As one of the world's most famous Victorian telescopes it stands an impressive 8 metres tall and will ignite a passion for all budding astronomy enthusiasts.

Indoor Astronomy Plus



Duration:
45 min-1hr



Group Size:
Min: 10, Max: 26



Ages:
5-18+



Price:
10-20 pax: \$29 per student*
20-30 pax: \$25 per student*
30+ pax: \$19 per student*

*One student goes free of charge per group of 10.

Description:

A deeper dive into the science behind our stars, using our theatre-sized astro-screen. We will demonstrate celestial mechanics and explain core concepts of astronomy sure to fascinate and impress students.

We'll take a closer look at the solar system, our place in the universe, the search for extra-terrestrial life and the life cycle of a star.

This is an interactive session where students will be encouraged to ask questions and delve deeper into the content covered by our expert guides.

INDOOR EXPERIENCES

All indoor experiences are situated in our indoor purpose-built experience zone. Tours operate in all weather conditions.

Indoor Astronomy Full Experience



Duration:
1hr 30 mins



Group Size:
Min: 10, Max: 29



Ages:
7-18+



Price:
\$35 per student

*One student goes free of charge per group of 10.

Description:

The best of both worlds! Students will begin their learning experience with a look at tatai aoraki (Māori astronomy) through the Dark Sky Experience.

After this cultural journey through the stars, students will then learn how this translates into a scientific understanding of our universe. Using our theatre-sized astro-screen to demonstrate celestial mechanics.

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Enquiries:
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