

# Queens Park Excursion Guide

Thank you for booking an excursion to Queens Park in Ipswich.  
This guide contains helpful information to help you plan your day.







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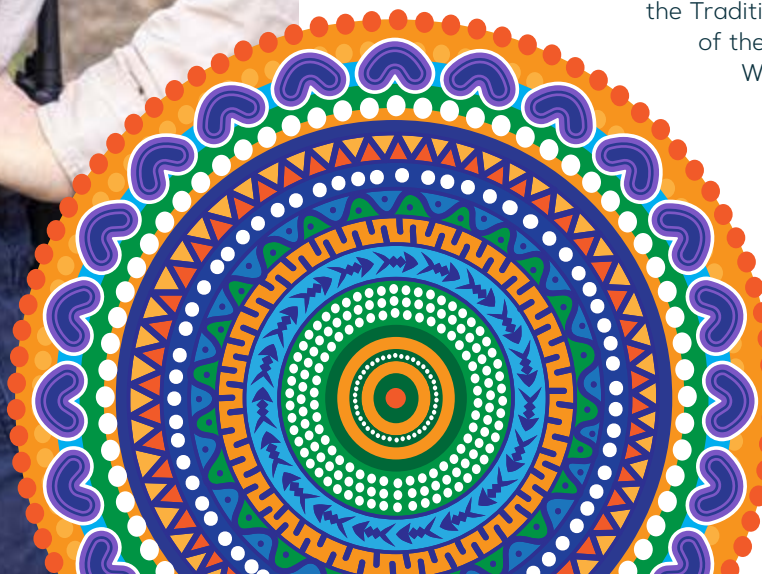
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Ipswich City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners as custodians of the land and waters we share. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, as the keepers of the traditions, customs, cultures and stories of proud peoples.

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# INTRODUCTION TO QUEENS PARK

Queens Park, in Ipswich, is Queensland’s first official parklands and welcomes thousands of school students each year. Over the course of the day there are five main areas schools usually visit.

## Ipswich Nature Centre

features a range of Australian wildlife, lush landscaped gardens and exhibits that have been recreated to represent local bushland and flora communities.



## Queens Park Environmental Education Centre

is a space that can be enjoyed by all ages, with plenty of hands-on opportunities to connect with and learn about Ipswich’s natural environment and sustainability.



The park areas includes **Lions lookout**, the **Glasshouse** and **Bush Chapel**.



**Nerima Gardens**, the Japanese Gardens of Ipswich, is a place of peace and tranquillity, to meet nature and calm the spirit.



The **playground** features equipment suitable for a range of ages, including some disability access equipment.



Click the link below for a map and brochure of these areas:  
[Queens-Park-Guide.pdf \(ipswich.qld.gov.au\)](#)



## Ipswich Nature Centre background information

Native and domestic animals have been displayed in Queens Park since the 1920s in a variety of enclosures. Stage 1 of the current centre was constructed and opened in December 1998.

It included many of the features we enjoy today:

- an environmental oasis of native plants
- a large water feature with lagoon and cascading streams
- raised boardwalks meandering through enclosures
- a huge walkthrough aviary
- an Australian barn.

Stage 2 opened in March 2008, including realistic native habitat enclosures and the large amphitheatre.

In March 2009, the world-class bilby habitat opened, with the exhibit designed to reflect arid regions of Western Queensland, a natural home of the bilby. The exhibit also includes spinifex hopping mice.

A few months later, in June, the Queens Park Environmental Education Centre opened.

Ipswich Nature Centre aims to feature Ipswich native animal and plant species, particularly those that may be found across council’s conservation estates and reserves, funded through Enviroplan. More then 6,700 hectares of land is managed by council through Enviroplan including White Rock – Spring Mountain and Flinders-Goolman conservation estates.

Some of the species at Ipswich Nature Centre are of regional significance and rarely seen in the wild, including the Ipswich faunal emblem Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*). It is tremendous that visitors to the Ipswich Nature Centre can be so close to this cryptic species.

Outside of the exhibits, there are many local native creatures that can be spotted roaming free at Ipswich Nature Centre. This includes possums, flying foxes, reptiles and many species of birds. It can be a fun game to try and count how many Eastern water dragons you see on rocks and in the leaf litter!

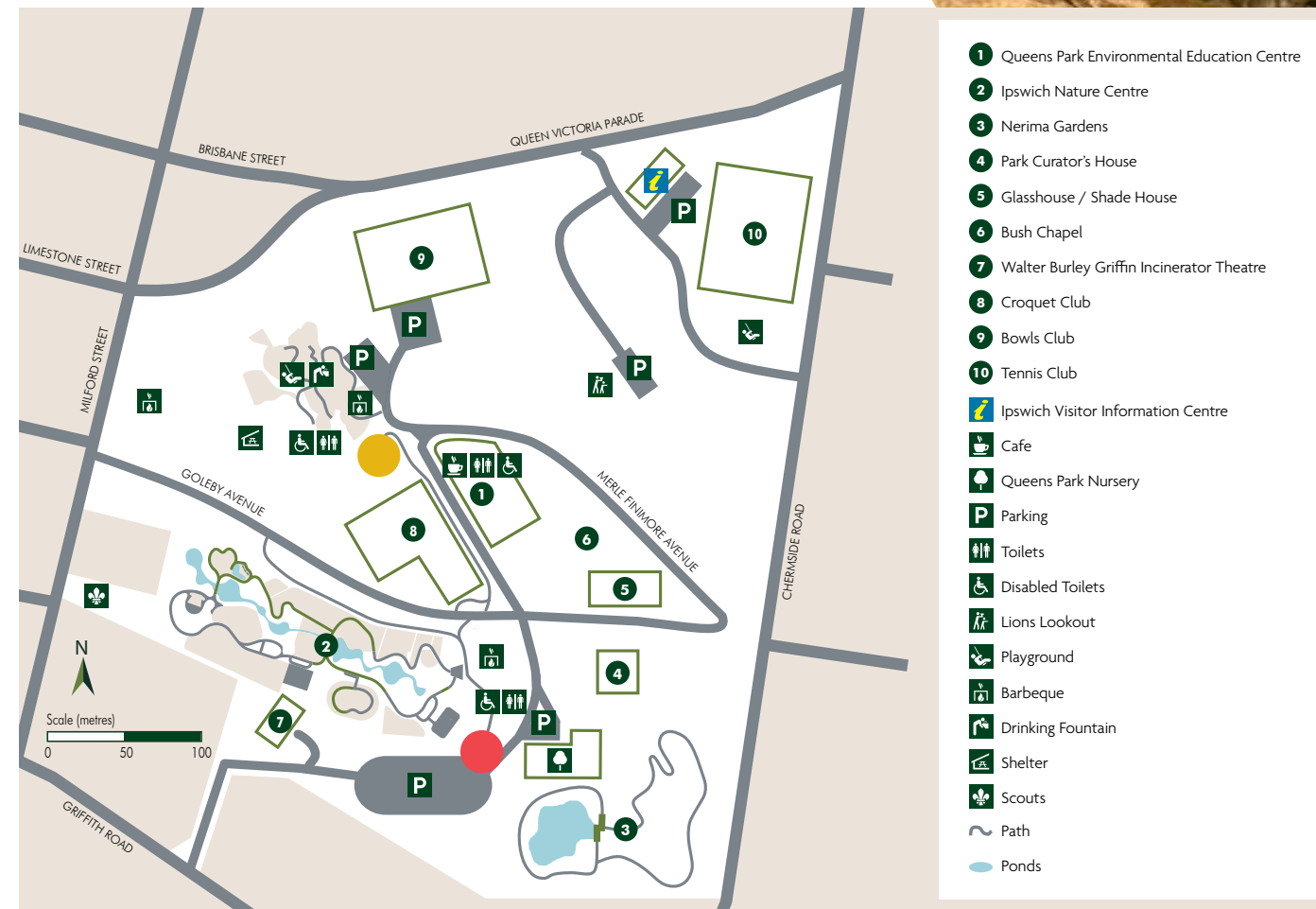
The water feature is home to native local fish species, such as rainbow gudgeon and Pacific blue-eyes, as well as turtle species, such as, Brisbane short-necked, saw-shelled and broadshelled river turtle.

# WHAT YOUR DAY WILL LOOK LIKE

## Getting to the Queens Park Environmental Education Centre (QPEEC)

Most schools travel to the park in a coach. There is coach parking on Merle Finimore Avenue outside the QPEEC and Café (see yellow dot on map below). Some large coaches find it difficult to navigate the turn after this parking spot. These coaches may park in the large car park behind Ipswich Nature Centre (red dot). This is up to the preference of your driver.

The staff at the QPEEC will keep an eye out for your coach and meet you where you disembark to guide you to the grassy area next the QPEEC.



## Schedule

For ease of planning your visit, a recommended schedule for visiting the different areas of the park has been provided as a suggested itinerary. These times are flexible and are a guide only. You may adapt this schedule to meet the needs of your students. Please advise the team by emailing [enviroed@ipswich.qld.gov.au](mailto:enviroed@ipswich.qld.gov.au) if you wish to follow a different schedule.

All schedules include:

- a guided tour of Ipswich Nature Centre
- a session with an education officer at Queens Park Environmental Education Centre focusing on habitat, biodiversity and actions we can take to protect native species
- time for your group to experience other areas of the park (such as the playground or Nerima Gardens) in a self-guided capacity at the discretion of the teacher.

Please note: In the event of unforeseen staff shortages, such as due to illness, schools may be required to undertake a self-guided experience in Ipswich Nature Centre and/or Queens Park Environmental Education Centre. Please see information about our weather cancellation policy later in this guide.

Some schools may choose to have a self-guided experience of the park rather than use the schedule.



RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE UP TO 90 STUDENTS:  
three groups of up to 30 students (max group size)

	9.30 am	10.00 am – 10.50 am	10.50 am – 11.10 am	11.10 am – 12.00 pm	12.00 pm – 12.40 pm	12.40 pm – 1.30 pm	1.30 pm
	Arrival	Rotation 1	Morning tea	Rotation 2	Lunch	Rotation 3	Departure
<b>Ipswich Nature Centre</b> Guided Tour	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>amenities</li><li>munch and crunch</li><li>orientation for rotations</li><li>leave bags if needed.</li></ul>	<b>Group B</b>	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>amenities</li><li>snack</li><li>orientation for rotations.</li></ul>	<b>Group C</b>	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education centre</b>  OR <b>Playground</b>	<b>Group A</b>	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education centre</b>  Regathering and departure.
<b>The Park/Nerima Gardens/playground</b> Optional: a class set of Nature Play Passports or Nature Bingo (younger years) can be provided to guide this exploration of the park		<b>Group C</b>		<b>Group A</b>		<b>Group B</b>	
<b>Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> Session with education officer		<b>Group A</b>		<b>Group B</b>		<b>Group C</b>	

RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE FOR MORE THAN 90 STUDENTS  
(two groups each day, spread over two days)

	9.30 am	10.00 am – 10.50 am	10.50 am – 11.10 am	11.10 am – 12.00 pm	12.00 pm – 12.40 pm	12.40 pm – 1.30 pm	1.30 pm
	Arrival	Rotation 1	Morning tea	Rotation 2	Lunch	Rotation 3	Departure
<b>Ipswich Nature Centre</b> Guided Tour	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>amenities</li><li>munch and crunch</li><li>orientation for rotations</li><li>leave bags if needed.</li></ul>	<b>Group B</b>	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>amenities</li><li>snack</li><li>orientation for rotations.</li></ul>	<b>Group A</b>	<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education centre</b>  OR <b>Playground</b>		<b>Grass area next to Queens Park Environmental Education centre</b>  Regathering and departure.
<b>The Park/Nerima Gardens/playground</b> Optional: a class set of Nature Play Passports or Nature Bingo (younger years) can be provided to guide this exploration of the park				<b>Group B</b>		<b>Group A</b>	
<b>Queens Park Environmental Education Centre</b> Session with education officer		<b>Group A</b>				<b>Group B</b>	





## WHAT TO BRING

Most of the excursion day is spent outdoors.

Please encourage students to bring water and ensure sun safety is a key priority:

- hat
- sunscreen
- long sleeved shirts recommended (school uniforms are fine for kids to wear)
- closed in shoes
- morning tea and/or lunch (litterless lunches preferred)
- water (in reusable bottle)
- pencils and clipboards (if completing activity sheets)
- class list (with groups and rotations schedule)
- first aid kit.

A ratio of 1 teacher/adult for every 10 students is strongly recommended. It allows for groups to be staggered and easier movement through Ipswich Nature Centre.

School groups will be split into groups of no more than 30 and rotated through different sections of the park. This prevents overcrowding and ensures a better educational experience.



## WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR (HAZARDS)

### At Ipswich Nature Centre

Ipswich Nature Centre is an outdoor environment. Potential hazards include:

- uneven ground, slopes, loose/slippery surfaces
- drops/low heights from the raised walkways (if barricades climbed/breached)
- bites, scratches or stings
- falling branches
- biohazards, including exposure to animals
- open water (pond/stream) that could be entered if barricades are breached.

For a more detailed understanding of the conditions of the Ipswich Nature Centre, the following video is helpful: [Watch the guided video tour here](#)

To mitigate these risks, the following guidelines must be followed by all visitors at Ipswich Nature Centre. Visitors not adhering to these guidelines (including students) will be asked to leave.

- never feed the animals – this includes animals in enclosures or found throughout the park
- never chase, catch, pick up or harass any animals.
- never picnic (no food or drink) within Ipswich Nature Centre (with the exception of water bottles)
- never smoke within Ipswich Nature Centre
- never enter any of the animal enclosures
- never approach any animals, including those found external to enclosures – if flying foxes are seen on the ground, all children must be taken immediately from the area and Ipswich Nature Centre staff/guide notified
- never bring a pet inside Ipswich Nature Centre (not even small carried dogs) – Guide Dogs/Assistance Dogs are permissible providing they are wearing the appropriately signed 'Assistance Vest'
- always walk through Ipswich Nature Centre. running can be dangerous to yourself and other visitors and also frighten the animals
- always stay on the paths provided – never climb barricades
- always ensure children are actively supervised by an adult
- always thoroughly wash/sanitise hands after visiting Ipswich Nature Centre, especially before eating food.



### At Queens Park Environmental Education Centre

The centre includes a number of installations that may present risk of injury if not used appropriately:

- students may enter the fig tree, however must not overcrowd the internal area
- the tree has a number of protruding artificial 'limbs'. These are not designed to bear weight and must not be climbed.

The fig tree (including external branches) and wooden 'cubby' corner could present a risk for head knocks. Students are asked to be careful and mindful of their surrounds, and to always walk (not run) in the centre.

### At the park/playground

Queens Park surrounds include:

- open parkland, including steep slopes
- playground equipment
- established gardens
- open water body (in Nerima Gardens)
- roads with low-speed limits, some roads do not have pedestrian crossings and will require adults to monitor for cars to find an appropriate time to cross
- a cobblestone road behind the cafe
- proximity to road with high-speed limit (while at playground)
- native animals including birds, lizards and flying foxes.

To mitigate these risks it is recommended:

- A minimum ratio of 1 adult per 10 students while on excursion – the playground involves multiple levels and maintaining visibility of students requires adults to be dispersed across the different sections
- Follow designated paths while in the park, especially in Nerima Gardens, for both visitor safety and protection of the garden
- If teachers require assistance with crossing roads (especially roads without pedestrian crossings) Queens Park Environmental Education Centre staff may be able assist – please request this assistance when you meet at the beginning of your excursion
- Never chase, catch, pick up or harass any animals
- Never approach any animals – if flying foxes are seen on the ground, all children must be taken immediately from the area and council staff immediately notified.



# WHAT TO DO IN BAD WEATHER

In instances of hazardous weather, it may not be safe to proceed with the outside component of Queens Park school excursions, including the Ipswich Nature Centre tour.

Weather may include:

- high temperatures or heatwaves
- rain or storm
- smoke or reduced air quality.

In determining the safety of the event, council staff will consult sources of information including:

- Bureau of Meteorology Website – [Ipswich Forecast \(Bom.gov.au\)](https://www.bom.gov.au/forecast/)
- [live air data | Environment, land and water | Queensland Government \(Des.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.des.qld.gov.au/air-quality/)
- internal Ipswich City Council communications and advice.

The Queens Park Environmental Education Centre team will monitor the weather and if conditions change or worsen beyond what was predicted, the outside components may be cancelled. Students would be brought inside QPEEC for remainder of excursion/while hazardous weather occurs.

## Extreme/hazardous weather

When extreme weather is predicted, council staff will contact you to discuss how we will proceed.

The excursion will be cancelled if the weather includes:

- warning of severe storms or heavy rain
- temperatures with an apparent or actual above 38 degrees Celsius
- very poor or extremely poor air quality.

In these conditions a school group may choose to continue with a self-guided excursion but this will not be serviced by Queens Park Environmental Education Centre staff.

## Poor weather

The excursion may go ahead, with some precautions, if the weather includes:

- slight rain/showers
- temperatures apparent or actual above 35 degrees Celsius
- fair – poor air quality.

Some example precautions for wet weather include:

- location provided in the QPEEC to store wet umbrellas/rain jackets

Some example precautions for heat include:

- staff and students advised of locations to refill water bottles
- schedule reorganised to ensure outside activities completed early in day
- electrolytes and ice blocks available at the QPEEC if required
- those without hats unable to participate in outdoor activities
- shaded/indoor locations for breaks throughout the day.

# WHAT TO DO AFTER YOUR EXCURSION

For a range of ideas on what your school can do to help protect our natural environment or improve your sustainability please visit [ipswich.qld.gov.au/enviroed](https://www.ipswich.qld.gov.au/enviroed).

- [Resources and activities](#) (this includes both internal and external resources and experiences)
- [EnviroEd Programs](#) for Ipswich schools looking for ways council can support you including:

- events/excursions for students
- grants and free plants
- teacher professional development opportunities
- Environmental events for families.

Follow council's Eventbrite page [ipswichcitycouncil.eventbrite.com](https://www.ipswichcitycouncil.eventbrite.com) for environment and sustainability events, activities and workshops. This includes teacher Professional Development sessions.







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