

Kamay Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre

Excursion outline

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultural day

Location:

Kamay Botany Bay EEC, Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell

Special note

Program Cost:

- **\$30 per student** – This rate applies when the program includes an Aboriginal knowledge holder for the full day. This allows students to engage in authentic cultural experiences such as weaving and yarnng, and supports respectful and meaningful learning guided by an Aboriginal perspective.
- **Standard booking costs apply** – This option is available without an Aboriginal knowledge holder. In place of weaving, students will participate in a *mandala nature art* activity using natural materials.

We are committed to delivering culturally respectful programs. If your school is seeking to have Aboriginal perspectives authentically embedded through the guidance of a knowledge holder, please note that this requires dedicated funding to appropriately support and acknowledge their role in the program.

Overview:

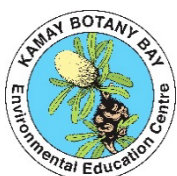
Kamay Botany Bay National Park in Kurnell is a place of deep cultural significance for the Gweagal clan of the Dharawal Nation. During a guided bushwalk with an Aboriginal knowledge holder, students will engage in rich, place-based learning about Gweagal culture and ways of knowing. They will explore Aboriginal artefacts, learn about seasonal calendars, and gain insight into traditional weaving practices. As they move across the rock platform, students will discover local food sources traditionally gathered from this coastal environment. This immersive experience fosters a deeper respect for Aboriginal perspectives and highlights the enduring connection between the Gweagal clan and Country.

Outcomes:

AST5-CUL-01- analyses the diverse and dynamic nature of Aboriginal Cultures across time and location

Students will:

- Take a guided bushwalk along the Muru-Yema Track to gain a deeper understanding of the significant plant resources traditionally used by the local Gweagal clan
- Explore Gweagal cultural artefacts and view local bird and animal specimens, learning about their traditional uses and meanings
- Participate in a traditional weaving activity with an Aboriginal knowledge holder, reflecting on the significance of cultural practices passed down through generations
- View and reflect on the coastal sculptures, including the Whale (*Burriburi*) Dreaming story, which highlights the deep spiritual connection between people, animals, and Country
- Investigate traditional coastal food sources by exploring the rock platform and understanding sustainable harvesting practices



Kamay Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre

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Education

Booking Information:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Location | Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell 21 Cape Solander Drive, Kurnell |
| Bus booking | Drop off and pick up at Commemoration Flat picnic area, Kamay Botany Bay National Park |
| Timing | Ideally schools should allow 4 hours for the program, including meal and toilet breaks. |
| Student checklist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> low waste lunch and recess (reusable containers, no plastic wrap)<input type="checkbox"/> refillable water bottle (Kamay Botany Bay National Park has a refillable water station)<input type="checkbox"/> hat<input type="checkbox"/> sunscreen<input type="checkbox"/> school or sports uniform (sports uniform preferable)<input type="checkbox"/> sturdy, enclosed walking shoes<input type="checkbox"/> backpack and raincoat (no plastic bags) |
| Teacher checklist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> students' prescribed medication and health action plans<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit<input type="checkbox"/> General use EpiPen |
| Staffing | The EEC complies with NSW DoE policy for a student/adult ratio of 15:1 for bushwalking. Parent helpers welcome, no pre-schoolers. |
| Medical or special needs | Please notify Kamay Botany Bay EEC staff at time of booking. |
| Risk Management Guidelines | RMG will be provided at the time of booking |
| Excursion pack | See KBBEEC website /resources for teacher background notes. Bring a camera, ipad or phone to photograph the students during the day. |

Weather

In the event of extreme weather conditions,
please phone or text 0477 742 281

Bushfire

During bushfire season (approximately 1 October-31 March), check [Rural Fire Service fire danger rating](#). During catastrophic ratings, the park and centre are closed. Kamay Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre fieldtrip experiences will be postponed. During extreme or severe conditions, fieldtrip experiences and locations may be cancelled or modified to ensure the safety of all students and staff.



Buses should drop off students in the designated bus bay, located near the EEC.

Buses should then move to the parallel parking bays on Solander Drive.

Buses generally take 10 minutes to drive from Cronulla High School to Kurnell.



Buses turn left at this sign

Agenda outline

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures Day

Location: Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell

Focus: Gweagal Clan – Dharawal Nation

Target Audience: Primary Students

Program Duration: 10.00am – 2:00pm

Welcome at the Meeting Place

Fruit back

Introduction:

Welcome students and introduce the cultural significance of Kamay Botany Bay National Park as Country belonging to the Gweagal clan of the Dharawal Nation. Begin with a yarn circle to set expectations, acknowledge Country, and explain the day's learning experiences.

Focus:

An introduction to how the Gweagal clan used bush resources for survival and daily life, including:

- **Bush tucker** – Local edible plants and seasonal food sources
- **Tools and weapons** – How trees, rocks, and animal products were used
- **Bush medicine** – Examples such as paperbark and spiderweb bandages, possum pelts used for broken bones
- **Local animals and birds** – Their significance and traditional uses
- **Cultural expression** – Nature art using natural materials or weaving with an Aboriginal knowledge holder
- **Aboriginal games** (*optional*) – Traditional games for engagement and learning

Activity 1 – Bush Walk: Connection to Country 10.30am-11.15am

Focus:

Guided bushwalk with an Aboriginal knowledge holder to explore how the Gweagal clan used local environments for food, medicine, tools, and shelter.

Students will walk a bush track to observe the natural resources that would have been available to the Gweagal clan. As all knowledge was passed down orally through generations, it is important that students stay alert and aware throughout the walk—observing details closely. For example, the difference between two similar-looking leaves could mean the difference between a poisonous plant and a food or medicinal source.

This activity will deepen understanding of how Aboriginal people read the land and tuned into their surroundings.

Sensory and observation activities may include:

- "Spot the change" activity – In pairs, students observe each other, turn away while one person changes a small detail (e.g. undoes a button), then turn back and guess what has changed. This builds observation skills and attention to detail.
- Sound map – Students close their eyes and count five natural and five human-made sounds using their fingers (one per sound).
- Leaf memory – Each student takes a leaf and studies its features. After tossing it into a central pile, they try to find their original leaf again.
- Journey stick – Students collect three natural objects that are meaningful to them and tie them to a journey stick. At the end of the walk, they share their chosen items and explain their significance.

Possible resources and discussion points on the walk:

- Asparagus fern – Identifying male and female plants
- Sarsaparilla – Tasting (with teacher permission) and discussion of its uses
- Termite mounds – Their role in the ecosystem and reuse by animals like possums and kookaburras
- Stringybark – Demonstrate how bark was used; students may take a small piece with them
- Animal evidence – Look for tracks, droppings, scratches or nests
- Wattle – How it can be crushed and mixed with water to make a natural soap

Key messages to reinforce during the walk:

- Aboriginal people have an ongoing, deep connection to Country
- Observation and listening are essential tools in understanding the land
- Country is not just land, but everything – the sky, waters, plants, animals, and people
- Knowledge is a gift that is shared through stories, experience, and connection

Activity 2 – Aboriginal Artefacts and Weaving 11.30am-12.15pm

Focus:

Hands-on learning about the cultural knowledge embedded in artefacts and practices.

Structure:

- Students sit in a yarn circle
- Aboriginal artefacts are introduced and passed around for close observation
- Discussion of each item's use and cultural context
- Animal and bird specimens (discussion on hunting, totems, and conservation)
- Seasonal calendar – Understanding traditional ways of reading and responding to the seasons
- Nuwi (canoe) – Significance, materials, and construction

- **Weaving Activity** – Students use raffia to learn basic weaving techniques
- **Boomerang throwing (optional)** – Safe demonstration and practice
- Students choose their favourite artefact and present it to the group using a **listening stick**, encouraging respectful speaking and listening

Lunch-12.15pm-12.45pm

Activity 3 – Burriburi Dreaming Story and Rock Platform Exploration 1.00pm-1.45pm

Focus:

Understanding cultural stories, sustainability, and coastal resource use through exploration and storytelling.

Structure:

- **Storytelling** – Begin with the Dreaming story of *Burriburi* (the humpback whale), a powerful cultural narrative that connects land, sea, sky, and spirit. This story teaches respect for marine life and reminds us of the importance of balance within ecosystems.
- **Beach and Rock Platform Exploration:**
Students will investigate how Aboriginal people sustainably used the resources of the beach and rock platform for thousands of years. Encourage close observation of the environment—how the texture, sound, and features of the area help tell a story of deep cultural knowledge and connection to Country.

Discussion and Activities:

- Shell fishing hooks – Comb the beach for shells and identify which shapes and types could have been used as fishing hooks.
- Food sources – Discuss traditional food sources from this environment, such as shellfish, crabs, seaweed, and fish.
- White clay – Share the story of how the Gweagal clan were the protectors of the white clay found in the area, and explain its cultural significance, including its use in ceremony and trade.
- Tidal knowledge – Observe tidal pools and discuss how the knowledge of tides and moon cycles informed safe harvesting practices.

Optional Sensory and Engagement Activities:

- Rock platform mapping – Students sketch or mark features on a simple fieldwork sheet (optional), noting where food, shelter, or other resources might be found.
- Sand drawings or shell mandalas – Use natural materials to create respectful representations of what they've learned.
- Quiet listening – Spend a few silent minutes listening to the sounds of wind, waves, and birds, then share one thing they noticed or felt during that time.

Key Messages:

- The coast and ocean are integral to Aboriginal identity, survival, and storytelling
- Dreaming stories like *Burriburi* are living stories that connect generations and guide how to care for Country
- Aboriginal peoples' knowledge of marine and coastal ecosystems is deep, science-based, and sustainable
- This area remains a culturally significant site for the Gweagal clan

Wrap up and reflection 1.50-2.00pm**Additional Notes for Staff**

- Ensure sunscreen, hats, and appropriate footwear are worn
- Bring water bottles and snacks/lunch
- Students should be encouraged to listen respectfully and ask questions throughout
- This program is flexible – activities may be adapted depending on weather, student engagement, or guidance from the Aboriginal knowledge holder