

Activities Catalogue



AONGATETE
OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE & LODGE

Aongatete Outdoor Education Centre is dedicated to the education, knowledge, and enjoyment of the outdoors.

The activities at Aongatete Outdoor Education Centre are continually being developed and upgraded. Below is a list of current activities. If there is something you particularly wish to do, and it is not on the list, please don't hesitate to discuss it with AOEC management.

Most of the activities can be modified to meet the needs and objectives of your group, no matter their age or goals. There is no classroom better than the outdoors. Discuss with the AOEC Manager as to the availability and requirements of the activity prior to your stay.

You can rely on the expertise and experience of skilled AOEC Instructors or you can run your own activities. **Some of our activities require a trained AOEC instructor, but we can also train up your group leaders or teachers to lead certain activities, that require more skill or knowledge. This is particularly useful if your group runs regular camps at AOEC. We provide activity instruction and responsibility sheets for all of the activities that you can run yourself. Due to the great volume of groups using AOEC and its associated activities, the wear and tear on the environment and on resources has highly increased, therefor all activities incur a small cost per person.**

You must let AOEC management know of your intended activities, as new Health & Safety and DOC regulations and management strategies have been put into place to protect our precious environment and people using it.

We are here to help you structure a camp program that you can use for years to come that delivers educational value and memorable learning experiences for your students. (and is easy and stress free to implement with very little pre-camp prep). We can help you structure your camp activities to meet your curriculum needs and camp objectives and train you up, if that is of benefit to you and your group/school.

Successful camp programs require planing, and planning often starts when you first make your booking. Take advantage of the experience of our experienced staff to help you plan your camp, it does not cost you anything but your time and often results in the difference of a otherwise stressful or mediocre camp to experiencing a successful camp filled with meaningful, fun learning opportunities and special memories.

Activity Package Deals Available - please inquire with AOEC Management

Bush Walks and Tramps

Aongatete is blessed with an abundance of differing landscape, and a number of tracks through varying bush. A well-planned walk can be an adventure for young and old and a discovery of what Nature has to offer.

Always follow the Outdoor Safety Code when you go for bush walks. Plan your trip, Wear appropriate footwear and clothing, tell someone where you are going, be aware of the weather and that it can change rapidly, know your limits and be sure you have sufficient supplies in your pack ie food, water, warm clothing (even on a sunny day) , first aid kit, and means of communications. Keep in mind that you may not have mobile reception on many parts of the Aongatete tracks.

- **Nature Trail:** A 20 minute walk through easy terrain following a track with signs about the areas Natural Habitat. This track is ideal for any other nature study activities.
- **Short Loop:** A 1 hour walk through intermediate terrain, this track is a B grade and is about 2.2km long. Load a QR reader onto your phone so you can use the interactive bird identification signs on the top part of the track. Make copies of our Aongatete Activity booklet and discover what nature has to offer on your way.
- **Long Loop:** A 3 hr walk with challenging parts and river crossings. A C grade track about 6.5 km long. A good challenge and a great walk experiencing different landscapes of the Kaimai Mamaku Forrest Park. Take copies of our Aongatete Activity Booklets on this walk to enhance your sense of discovery.
- **Swimming Hole Track/River Crossing towards North/South Track:** a 30 minute one-way walk to the river. Follow the track to the swimming hole or to the North/South track river crossing. Swim, have a picnic, play in the water, build rock sculptures or race twig boats... but do take care, rivers can be dangerous.
- **Upland Road Track:** The Upland Road track begins at the end of Upland Road Car Park and is an easy C grade. It takes about 2 1/2 – 3 hours to reach AOEC and is about 5km long and includes a river crossing and can be slippery and wet in places.
- **Wairere Falls (8 hrs one way):** Several schools start their AOEC camp by walking in from the Wairere Falls. This is about an 8 hour back country track that can be challenging but worth while. Be sure you are well prepared for this track.

Outdoor Safety & Bush Craft

- **The Outdoor Safety & Environment Care Basic Session***: This is a fun interactive activity. Every person going into the NZ Bush, (no matter if it is a 20 min walk, a days hike or a longer tramp) needs to know how to be safe, what to do when things go wrong and how to respect the environment. This activity can be easily incorporated with other activities like your bush walk or shelter building and can be facilitated by an AOEC instructor or a member of your group can be trained on how to facilitate this activity.
- **The Outdoor Safety & Environment Care Pancake Challenge***: This activity is a led by a trained and experienced AOEC Instructor or we can train teachers or group leaders to lead this activity. This is a great activity to start your camp off. It is a great orientation activity, where students will become familiar with lodge grounds and surroundings, learn basics about orienteering and most importantly learn about outdoor safety and environment care. In the process they will also get to make their own pancakes. The duration of this activity is no less than 2 ½ – 3 hours depending on the size of your group.
- **The Aongatete Survivor Experience (Full Day)***: This program is a unique full day experience led by a trained and experienced AOEC Instructor. Students spend a full day in the bush where they learn and appreciate the main requirements of bush craft and survival in a fun and interactive way. This program includes #Trip Planning, #Outdoor Safety & #Environmental Care, #Navigation with Map & Compass, #Outdoor Cooking, #Shelter Building #Environmental Care and #River Safety
- **The Aongatete Survivor Experience (Half Day)***: This program is a unique half day experience led by a trained and experienced AOEC Instructor. Students spend 3hrs in the bush where they learn how to use a compass and navigate through the bush, build a fool-proof basic shelter and learn a basic method of cooking outdoors. This activity can be adapted to suit your group.
- **Shelter Building**: A simple session designed to learn how to shelter from the elements in different ways. This session can be adapted to suit children of all ages.
- **Fire Lighting**: led by a trained and experienced AOEC Instructor. All children love playing with fire. Here they learn various ways how to light a fire safely and respecting the environment at all times. A successful fire means toasting marshmallows or having a cup of tea or milo. *Strict Conditions apply
- **Outdoor Cooking**: Children love cooking outdoors! This can be combined with the fire lighting activity or children can cook on hobo or hexi stoves. An ideal way for everyone to cook their own lunch or dinner. Outdoor cooking equipment is available to hire. Easy things to cook are sausages, burger patties, corn/vegetable fritters, pancakes, popcorn, banana deserts or damper.

- **Navigation:** Aongatete Outdoor Education Centre offers a set of courses and exercises ranging from the very simple to the more adventurous. Courses can be set in a variety of terrain, using a number of scenarios to make the experience more interesting. Students not only gain in improving their map reading and compass skills, but also in personal confidence. Inquire with AOEC staff what navigation activities will suit your group:
 - ▶ Basic Map Orienteering on Lodge Grounds
 - ▶ Map Reading using a Topo50 Map
 - ▶ Compass Confidence Basics
 - ▶ Compass Navigation through the bush led by an AOEC Instructor
- **Camp Outs:** Many people of all ages, have not enjoyed the excitement of sleeping outdoors. AOEC offers the chance to sleep in the dormitories, in a tent, under canvas or tarpaulin bivvy style, or the ultimate, under the stars. All this can be done in a safe and controlled environment. You choose, depending on your goal and sense of adventure. Students will also learn the importance of taking care of the environment while camping. *Conditions apply

Aongatete River Activities

- **Aongatete River Challenge:** An adventurous walk up/down the river with experienced AOEC Instructors. Some exciting and challenging patches in this walk require teamwork and commitment. This challenge can give each participant a feeling of real achievement. It is cold but worth it!
- **River Studies & Discoveries:** If River study is in your curriculum, then this is a great activity. Find and watch eels, what lives in our rivers, plants that grow in or near the river etc. Bring some fishing nets and some magnifying glasses.
- **Dam Building:** Children love building dams or trying to divert the course of the flow of the river.
- **Rock Sculptures:** The lower part of the Aongatete River with all its river stones lends itself beautifully to build rock sculptures.
- **Boat Races:** Get creative and build some boats out of twigs and leaves and other natural materials and then float or race your boats down the river.
- **Swimming:** The Aongatete River has several areas that are ideal for swimming. Always keep river safety in mind.

Nature & Environmental Studies

- **Aongatete Forest Discovery Program:** A unique AOEC Instructor led, full day hands on program where students explore the forest, and learn about it's plants and trees, discover forest colours, learn about pest control and conservation and listed to and identify birds. This discovery program includes many fun games that help children develop a passion for the outdoors. The day is topped off with a night walk, exploring the night life of the forest with its many creatures.
- **Forest Discovery – Get to know a tree:** Learning about specific plants and trees and how to care for our environment through discovery and games.
- **Forest Discovery – Native Birds in our Forest:** A walk through the forest learning about Native Birds at Aongatete through discovery and games.
- **Layers of the Forest:** Discover the layers of the forest on a forest walk and learn how everything in nature works together. An extension of this activity incorporates team building activities and what we as humans can learn from the forest. This can be a basic activity run as part of your camp rotations in small groups or can also be an activity that can be extended with a team building lesson to last a whole morning or afternoon.
- **Pest Control & Conservation:** Students will learn about the effects that humans, logging, de-forestation/farming and pests have on our forests and biodiversity and the efforts now made to eradicate pests and restore our forests and biodiversity
- **Nature Trail:** A short track developed to aid the identification and appreciation of the native flora and fauna and how learn about the formation of the Kaimais and the relationships of the forest. This walk can take anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the detail and design of the activity.
- **Nature Crafts & Forest Art:** Nature Weaving and Leaf Creatures – great for rainy days and perfect to incorporate with bird/tree studies and to add focus and value to bush walks.
- **Rongoa Maori Medicine:** Learn about how the forest can heal **(with AOEC Rongoa qualified Instructor)**
- **Waste Management:** Looking after our Planet starts with Waste Management at AOEC **(Coming Soon)**
- **Night Time in the Forest:** Discover the forest at Night Time
- **Solos:** this exercise is designed to aid the student's awareness of their surroundings, solos can be an important form of self-development. They can be run day or night, for any length of time and in any area depending on your groups needs.

Self-Confidence/Personal Performance

- **Challenge Course:** The AOEC Challenge Course has been designed for team building, personal development and adventure based learning. In general there are 2 types of sessions occur on this activity: 1. Informal sessions are deemed as play time similar to those at school. However Adult Supervision and Spotting is required. The rules of this activity should not be ignored. 2. Formal sessions are those with set goals and objectives
- **Archery:** An internationally popular outdoor activity that requires setting a goal, focus, discipline, and patience. With skilled instruction, participants discover the thrill of hitting the target, a degree of skill set by them. As the session develops, this degree of skill can be increased so that the thrill is repeated. Due to the nature of the activity, an AOEC trained staff instructor is required to take this session.
- **Indoor Climbing Wall:** The Lodge has an all weather wall within the Activities Centre, participants learn about safety, respect (for their equipment, their team-mates, the environment, and themselves), responsibility, and achievement.

Night Time Activities

- **Burma Trail:** a simple navigation activity usually run at night. Participants are led along a rope in the dark through varying tactile obstacles. The Burma Trail is easily dismissed as an evening time filler to “scare students” and often does not get the respect it should. If run properly, it can greatly increase the self-confidence and awareness of a student, develop confidence in the dark and a greater connection with mother nature.
- **Night Walk:** discovering life in the forest after dark. Equipped with torches, some magnifying glasses and some night creatures identification cards discover glow worms, spiders, wetas, more porks and other creepy crawlies
- **Candle Trail:** a great activity to increase the self confidence and awareness, develop confidence in the dark and a greater connection with mother nature, following a trail of lights through the forest.
- **Camp Concert:** we can provide you with environment care and outdoor safety scenario skid cards if you want a fun camp performance with an outdoor/nature theme to reinforce the skills they learned during their camp
- **Camp Fire:** Everyone loves sitting around the camp fire sing some songs, cook sausages on sticks or roast some marshmallows. ***Strict Conditions apply**
- **Bouldering:** (on the indoor climbing wall) this activity can only be run with the presence of our rock climbing instructors. It is a great evening activity or time filler, especially for those children who are determined to get across the wall, from one end to the other, without falling off, to earn a badge.

Team Building Challenges

- **Pancake Challenge:** This is a popular activity combining simple orienteering and cooking skills. Groups must locate the components of a stove and the ingredients required to make a pancake, before cooking and presenting their pancake. They are then judged on any number of categories set by the organiser. A fun way to earn your supper. All components are supplied except ingredients for the pancakes.

Below are collection of short challenges commonly used as team development activities. They are physically non-threatening and cooperative in nature and can also mainly used as icebreakers for new incoming groups. Each activity takes 15–20 minutes depending on the age and capabilities of the students.

- **Tram Tracks:** The whole group must move from one end of the tram tracks to the other, following a set of rules using only the equipment provided.
- **Lava Flow:** The entire group must cross the lava flow without touching the lava, by constructing a bridge within the bounds of the rules and using the collective initiative of the group. Move the entire group across a lava flow without touching the lava
- **Tyre Shift:** All the tyres must be transferred from pole 1 to pole 3 and back again following a set of rules and in a given time frame.
- **Stacker:** Transfer the 5 discs from peg A to peg C, within the rules, so that they are stacked as on peg A.
- **Spot Maze/Swamp Crossing:** Navigate the entire group one at a time through the maze/swamp, without making a noise or stepping off.
- **Balancing Pole:** To walk your group across the balancing pole without touching the ground, passing another group coming from the other end or standing your group on the pole and the last person passing all the others to get to the other end without touching the ground.
- **The Wall:** Get your whole team over the wall with only team effort and no other resources
- **Pipe Line:** Participants must roll a ball (or water) down the pipeline along a given course
- **Tarp Flip:** A seemingly simple task. While standing on top of a completely open tarp, the group must create a plan to get everyone on the opposite side of the tarp without stepping off.

Gap Fillers and other activities

- **Fire drill:** Although important, this is often forgotten. When organised as an activity in a competition formate, this can often be an exciting way to start a stay at Aongatete. or fill a gap, when students need to be refocused. This can be a quick 20–30 minute exercise or you can spend a good hour learning about and using the fire hoses and systems.
- **Bouldering** (on the indoor climbing wall): this activity can only be run with the presence of our rock climbing instructors. It is a great evening activity or time filler, especially for those children who are determined to get across the wall, from one end to the other, with our falling off, to earn a badge.
- **Camp Journal:** printable PDF journal available to down load, to reflect on camp activities and experiences
- **Nature Crafts:** Nature Weaving and Leaf Creatures – great for rainy days and perfect to incorporate with bird/tree studies and to add focus and value to bush walks.

Activity Package Deals Available - please inquire with AOEC Management

Instructor Availability will depend on the size of your group, the duration of your stay and amount of instructor led activities you choose. Camp planning starts when you make a booking. Experienced AOEC staff will help you put together your camp program to fit, to create many meaningful learning opportunities for your students and a stress free camp for parents and teachers. **It is important that we receive your camp program One Term ahead of your camp to insure Instructor availability.**

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