

**Lake Cave famous for its suspended table formation and crystal clear reflective lake is a wonder of the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park. With its spectacular doline entrance and actively dripping crystals it is a truly mesmerising place.**

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## **PURPOSE OF THE EXCURSION**

Lake Cave is, to put it simply, a mirrored wonderland. Home to the "suspended table" a spectacular crystal decoration weighing several tonnes that hangs from the ceiling, almost touching the waters of the lake. It is thought that this may be the only decoration of its kind in the world. Lake Cave is the most 'actively dripping' cave in the south west, and it's the only cave on the Leeuwin-Naturaliste Ridge that has a permanent lake. The cave is one of the deepest on the ridge, with entry access through a spectacular 'doline', or sinkhole.. There is an interpretative centre onsite, designed to help you learn about the formation and history of caves within the region, throughout Australia and around the world.

Our tours combined with our education resource packs available from the cave or our website; provide a unique educational experience covering a suite of different education disciplines and core environmental values.

## **1. ASSESSING THE RISKS**

### **1.1 Environment**

- Lake Cave is located 20 minutes from the popular tourist town of Margaret River and 1 hour from Busselton.
- The Fully Guided Showcave Tour is an enclosed and stable environment comprised of a number of viewing platforms which participants access by stairs only, so unfortunately there is no facility for wheelchairs to enter the cave.
- There is a total of 650 stairs (return) on the cave tour, separated by rest and viewing platforms and participants will descend to a maximum depth of 62m on the Fully Guided Tours.
- We have first aid kits, oxygen and Ventolin inhalers on site in the rare event that an issue arises.
- Tours are tailored to suit student ability at all times, our school group guides are first aid trained and have Working with Children Certificates.
- We have emergency response protocols covering all aspects of our show cave tour products, these documents are available from our education officer upon request.
- Accommodation is available at a range of sites located near the cave, varying from National Park campsites to commercial campgrounds and a number of private residences for more details contact Margaret River Visitor Centre on 9780 5911.

### **1.2 Transport Arrangements**

- Lake Cave is located 3.5 half hours from Perth and only 20 minutes from Margaret River. Transport will have to be organised independently, however there are a number of charter businesses operating in the South West which can assist.
- Sealed access for cars and busses is by Conto Road.

### **1.3 Student Capacity**

- We cater for students from primary school to high school and beyond.
- Whilst we do tailor activities to include all students and to allow for different abilities, it is the responsibility of teachers to assess the level of ability for participating students.
- Groups sizes vary depending on activity, contact us for more details on how we can accommodate your class.

### **1.4 Supervisor/Supervisory Team**

It is the responsibility of the school to develop a supervisory team that meets their specific requirements in line with the recommendations for supervision outlined in this document. Supervising teachers/adults are required to actively supervise their students at all times. Some simple ways teaching staff or supervisors can assist us are:

- Meeting our ratios where applicable
- Providing the link between our team and the students (as the teachers from the school will have much better knowledge regarding their students' personalities)
- Discipline and pastoral care

### **1.5 External Providers**

Our school group staff have:

- Senior First Aid Certificate
- Working with Children Certificates

Lake Cave operating under the Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association has a 20 million dollar public liability insurance policy. Upon request, a copy of our 'Certificate of Currency' can be forwarded to you.

## **2. SUPERVISION STRATEGIES**

We prefer a ratio of:

1 teacher : 10 students for Fully Guided Showcave Tours

Speak to our guides to confirm numbers of students and teachers during booking process. All participants stay with guides at all times during guided activities.

## **3. IDENTIFICATION OF EXCURSION PARTICIPANTS**

This is the responsibility of the school; however students are always accompanied by guides and school supervisors.

## **4. INFORMATION TO PARENTS FOR THEIR CONSENT**

This is the responsibility of the schools.

## **5. COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

Students will be with guides at all times through tours. Following our tour structure protocols, we stop at regular times during all our structured tours to impart safety and site information.

In the event of an emergency, we have radio contact for 50% of the tour duration, and are never more than five minutes from assistance. We are able to contact the office, which has emergency phone service if further help is required from emergency services.

## **6. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING**

In the case of an emergency, please follow the directions of cave staff who are responsible for implementing the emergency response plan, including evacuation procedures.

Lake Cave has an extensive set of Emergency Response Plans. If you would like details of these emergency plans please contact us at [education@margaretriver.com](mailto:education@margaretriver.com).

Please note that our protocol covers:

- Emergency contact numbers for our company
- Local doctors/ nursing stations contact details
- Hospital contact details
- Fire, police and DPaW emergency contact details

## **7. BRIEFING STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS**

### **Tour Program**

#### **Prior to Tour**

- Check all safety equipment and communications
- Confirm numbers
- Introduce guides to students and teachers
- Divide into groups
- Depart office
- Onsite health and safety briefing

#### **Commence tour**

- Group stops at regular intervals to assess students' wellbeing and for further safety information

#### **Tour Close**

- Debrief
- Return to office

## **8. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**

Lake Cave has been in operation as a Fully Guided Showcave for the past 114 years. It has been managed by the Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association (formerly the Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association), since 1956, and remains one of the regions most visited attractions. More details are available at [www.margaretriver.com](http://www.margaretriver.com)

For all school enquiries please contact our Education Officer on 9755 2152

**This information is valid until 31st December 2017**

