

DAWN'S SURPRISE

TEACHER INFORMATION

📍 *Calthopres House | ACT Historic Places*






DAWN'S SURPRISE

Invite your students to step into the world of seven-year-old Dawn at Calthorpes House. In this immersive program, students investigate, question and compare childhood in 1930s Canberra with their own experiences through hands-on, object-based learning in the very spaces where history unfolded.

Please note: Dawn's Surprise is currently offered as a full-day program at Calthorpes House only. Due to conservation works at Mugga Mugga, the previous dual-venue option is not currently available.



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

-  **Time:** 10am-2pm
-  **Year Level:** F-2
-  **Location:** Calthorpes' House
-  **Capacity:** Max 60 students
-  **Ratio:** 1 teacher to 10 students

BEFORE VISIT

- You will be contacted by our team 2 weeks in advance of your excursion. Please confirm student numbers and advise of any access or learning needs.
- Arrange supervision (1 adult per 10 students).
- Divide students into even groups (max 10 per group).
- Review booking [Terms and Conditions](#).
- Prepare your students for their visit by reading the [Dawn's Surprise Storybook](#) beforehand, introducing key objects they will identify during their guided tour.

ON THE DAY

- Warm/waterproof clothing in cooler months. Sun protection recommended.
- Students to bring filled water bottle and packed lunch.
- Students to wear name tags.
- Bring a first aid kit.
- Rubbish must be taken with you as there are no waste facilities on site.
- Buses cannot enter the grounds of Calthorpes' House. Disembark on the nature strip on the Calthorpes' House side of Mugga Way—staff will place witches' hats to guide you.
- Encourage restroom use on arrival and during breaks.
- Students will have a fruit break on arrival at 10am and lunch break at 12pm.
- One Calthorpes educator will lead each student group. A teacher or designated school representative must accompany and support each group.

PROGRAM ROTATIONS

CALTHORPES HOUSE TOUR

Students tour Calthorpes House, exploring how the Calthorpes family lived in the 1930s, comparing past and present lifestyles to understand change over time.

LAUNDRY CHORE

Students will view the historic Calthorpes laundry before taking part in an authentic laundry task, as part of an experiential learning activity exploring household chores and daily responsibilities from the past

COURTYARD AND LAWN GAMES

Students engage in play-based physical learning by experiencing traditional courtyard and lawn games from the past. They explore how leisure time, equipment, and social play have changed over time.

DAWN'S SUITCASE

All objects in the suitcase are hands-on, inviting students to investigate family life and childhood from the past. Filled with items similar to those used by Dawn, the suitcase offers a tangible connection to her everyday experiences.

GARDEN TOUR

Students explore the gardens at Calthorpes' House—including the formal front garden, children's hedged play garden, and orchard—while examining sustainability and self-sufficiency through comparisons of past and present food practices. They then complete a postcard design activity reflecting on Dawn's life, consolidating their observations through a creative response.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

10:00am Calthorpes staff greet bus

10:00–10:20am Fruit break

10:20am–12:00pm Morning rotations

12:00–12:30pm Lunch

12:30–1:50pm Afternoon rotations

2:00pm Departure

Times are indicative. Our staff will adjust the schedule as needed (e.g. for late arrivals).



FAQS

WET WEATHER PLAN

Our outdoor programs proceed in wet weather. In wet conditions, all activities are moved to sheltered locations, except the garden tour. A decision will be made in consultation with your staff on the day to proceed with the walk in light rain or replace it with an alternative activity. Students will have access to a sheltered area for breaks and bag storage, and wet weather gear is strongly recommended. Please refer to the [Terms and Conditions](#) for information on cancellations and postponements.

CAN PARENTS ATTEND TO HELP MEET SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS?

Yes! Parent helpers are welcome to support schools in meeting the required supervision ratio of 1 adult to 10 students.

HOW WILL THE DAY RUN?

- Please arrive at Calthorpes Hosue at 10:00am.
- Calthorpes staff will welcome your group, guide students to their fruit break, and provide a briefing to your team on the day's schedule.
- Students will then begin their first rotations, break for lunch at midday, and complete remaining rotations in the afternoon.
- Timings are flexible and may be adjusted by our presenters in response to late arrivals, weather, or other unforeseen circumstances.



CURRICULUM LINKS

Foundation Humanities & Social Sciences, Visual Arts

Geography

[AC9HSFK03](#)

the features of familiar places they belong to, why some places are special and how places can be looked after

Visual Arts

[AC9AVAFC01](#)

create arts works that communicate ideas

Year 1 Humanities & Social Sciences, Visual Arts

History

[\(AC9HS1K01\)](#)

differences in family structures and roles today, and how these have changed or remained the same over time

[\(AC9HS1K02\)](#)

continuity and change between aspects of their daily lives and their parents' and grandparents' childhoods

Geography

[AC9HS1K03](#)

the natural, managed and constructed features of local places, and their location

Visual Arts

[AC9AVA2C01](#)

use visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to create artworks

Year 2 Humanities & Social Sciences, Visual Arts

History

[AC9HS2K01](#)

a local individual, group, place or building and the reasons for their importance, including social, cultural or spiritual significance

[AC9HS2K02](#)

how technological developments changed people's lives at home, and in the ways they worked, travelled and communicated

Visual Arts

[AC9AVA2C01](#)

use visual conventions, visual arts processes and materials to create artworks