

PARKES RADIO TELESCOPE

We are going to the Parkes radio telescope. It is just a little outside the town of Parkes. There is an information centre and a number of things for us to look at.

The radio telescope isn't like a normal telescope that you might use to look at the stars. In fact, it looks like a giant metal satellite dish on the top of a tower and lots of people just call it "the dish". It is really famous because it helped people watch the first ever moon landing. We cannot go inside the tower, but we will have a great view of it from the information centre. It is huge!

When we first arrive we must turn off our mobile data . This means we can't watch online videos or use the internet on our devices while we are there. This is really important because the signals from our phones and other internet devices might interfere with the work they are doing with the radio telescope.

The information centre is where we will spend the most time. There are things to do both inside and outside. We will walk through a lovely garden at the front of the information centre. It has all kinds of interesting facts and details and it might be fun to explore.

Inside the information centre is a small gift shop, a theatre that shows documentaries, and a range of displays about the telescope. The displays are "hands on" so we can touch and interact with them. The information centre is not very big, so on busy days it might get crowded or noisy. That's okay because we can always move outside where it is quieter. If lots of people want to use the displays we will wait our turn.

On the far side of the information centre is a large open field where we can look at the radio telescope. It is a great view and an awesome spot for a photo.

It's going to be fun exploring the Parkes radio telescope!

Guided Questions

- Have you ever looked through a telescope?
- What do you know about the moon?
- What are you looking forward to learning at the telescope?
- What are you worried about?

Things to Consider

- The information centre is small, but there is plenty of outdoor space and it is easy enough to manage if your child is worried about crowds.
- The cafe is right outside the visitor centre, where you view the radio telescope. The toilets are on the opposite side of the visitor centre (near the front).
- The telescope is a short drive from Parkes, but a long drive from anywhere else. Pack accordingly for a road trip if you are travelling to visit this destination.

