

Enviroschools Ōtākou Newsletter 2 2018



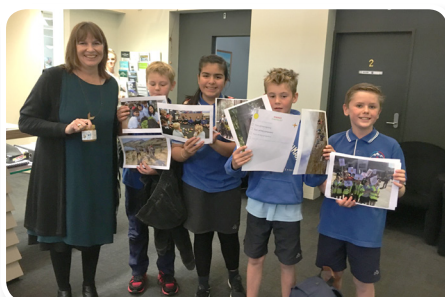
Students exercising their citizen muscle

Ban the Plastic Bag

The 'Ban the Single Use Plastic Bag' petition **Carisbrook Primary School** instigated in 2016 was delivered to Parliament in 2017. Finally in May 2018 they spoke to the Environment Select Committee about the issue. Ramona said the hardest part was "public speaking and getting the signatures". The best part for Hannah was "how far we have come. It was worth putting time and energy in. We feel like we made a difference. We put a different view into other peoples' lives, like changing things up." A big mihi for the two years the students and Ann Ruxton, their teacher, worked on this.



Hannah Gill, Ramona Mahutte and Caitlyn Petrie on the steps of Parliament



Queenstown primary EnviroSchool Leaders

Submission To Plan

Queenstown Primary students took the opportunity to let the QLDC know why being an EnviroSchool is important to them and thank them for supporting the programme in their submission to the Long-Term Plan.

Nau mai haere mai

Ōtākou EnviroSchools have been incredibly busy again in 2018. This edition of the EnviroSchools newsletter contains a few examples of the wide range of sustainability activities schools are undertaking. We continue to be amazed and inspired by the creativity and passion of students and teachers.

A big welcome to Bron Claridge, the new Waitaki District facilitator, and the 12 Waitaki District schools that have joined the programme. Thank you to all the organisations that support EnviroSchools in Ōtākou, especially the Councils that fund EnviroSchools and Central Otago REAP and Wastebusters who partner with the Central Otago District Council and the Queenstown District Council to deliver the programme.

Your facilitator is your best resource for all things sustainability – don't hesitate to contact them.

Robyn Zink
Regional Coordinator

Zero Waste

We have had a special focus on waste during the first part of 2018, including two teacher workshops focusing on waste systems in schools. We ran a hui with 40 students from Central Otago, Queenstown and Wanaka schools exploring waste, a teacher workshop attended by 24 teachers from Dunedin, Waitaki and Clutha Districts, and hosted The Rubbish Trip duo who are touring the country sharing their experiences living Zero Waste. One of the more challenging questions about school waste systems seems to be what happens in the staffroom. It is important to include staff as a part of any discussion about waste minimisation. Schools continue to work hard on reducing their waste. The **Taieri College** Envirogroup conducted a waste audit of the Junior Block. They found 70% of the waste, by weight, was food. The Envirogroup calculated that removing food from the waste stream would save the school about \$10,000 per year. They decided that worm farms were the best option for managing food waste at their school. The caretaker sees the benefit of getting food waste out of the system and the agriculture teacher is excited by the prospect of worm juice and

vermicast for the school gardens. The BOT agreed to fund the worm farms. The next steps are making signs, enlisting a team of bin monitors and putting announcements in the newsletter and notices so everyone knows how to use the bins.

Catlins Area School also did a waste audit. The students were really engaged in the whole process and have used the data to plan actions they can take in their school to reduce the amount of waste they produce.

Waitahuna School have been busy looking at how they can make change in their own community. Students have created posters and asked shopkeepers to display them to spread the message about single use plastics.

Hawea Flat Primary School took a high-tech approach to waste. The students used Minecraft to design the recycling centres of the future.

Lots of schools have been busy making beeswax wraps.

Check out the Zero Waste theme area for waste-related activities. Talk to your facilitator about a waste audit and implementing effective waste systems in your school.



Taieri College Envirogroup



Waitaki Girls Highschool Envirogroup with their beeswax wraps

Living landscapes

Schools have been busy outside. **Clyde Primary** students shared their experience of monitoring for lizards and pests at a community trapping forum. They are making their own chew cards. A grant from the Alexandra Rotary Club has enabled the school to purchase materials to build trap boxes.

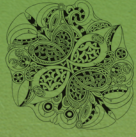
Tarras School created bug hotels and celebrated Matariki by planting garlic and singing waiata. The students are keeping an eye on

the lasagne compost heap they built in Term 1. They found lots of worms and beetles after the heap had been 'working' for about a month and are looking forward to spreading the compost on the garden this spring.

Looking for ideas for getting your students excited about their environment? Check out the Living Landscapes theme area or contact your facilitator.



Tarras students planting garlic with Anna



Holistic reflections

Holistic reflection helps us acknowledge and celebrate our achievements and think about next steps. **St. Leonards Primary School** reflected at Green-Gold early in March. Sustainability underpins everything that happens at this school. Parents and ex-students joined us for the day, showing the school's connection to its community and how much students value the sustainability focus. Principal, Jo Wilson, explained that "the whole school participates in a range of environmental activities every alternate Friday. Each day the students complete enviro-jobs after lunch. Education for sustainability plays an important role in all that we do."

Some **Waitati Primary School** students recently spoke about their Green-Gold reflection at the end of 2017. Even though it has been nearly a year since the reflection, the students still knew Enviroschool's five guiding principles and had some great examples of how these principles come to life in their school. They are proud of the things that have happened at the school over the last ten years and the things they are planning. One of the boys said "I'm really proud of how we got there. I feel I'm lucky that I was the generation that got to see the Green-Gold."

Principal, Stacey Honeywell, said achieving Green-Gold status was "a huge milestone for Waitati School. The environment and sustainability are considered in most of the school's decisions. Tamariki, staff and the community of Waitati are super proud of our achievements and continue to find new ways to build on these strengths."

It is great to reflect every three years to measure progress, celebrate success and lay a pathway for next steps.

Talk to your facilitator about holistic reflection and set a date for your next reflection.



St. Leonards students, ex-students, parents and Enviroschools Facilitators with their Green-Gold certificate at the end of the reflection day



Senior students at Waitati School at one of their favourite spots in the school after talking about the reflection process

Eco buildings

Some Otago students have been imagining future housing. **Waitati** students drew pictures of their own houses and compared these to houses from other countries. They looked at how different houses were suited to their environments and the culture of the area. They had to imagine houses of the future – an underwater house and a house on Mars were among the ideas.

Goldfields Primary School students were also looking at housing in Term 2. The big ideas they explored were:
What are houses made of?
What makes a good house?
How have houses changed over time?
They learnt about measurement and geometry, investigated the purpose of objects and the cultural contexts in which they were made, tested building materials and engineering, and looked at housing of the past and the future. The students designed and built houses for the junior students' play area.

The Ecological Building theme area is being revamped and will be out early next year.



Goldfield students building their house



Junior students checking out their new play houses

Waitaki District Schools

The Waitaki District Council is now funding Enviroschools and 12 schools have joined the programme.

A very warm welcome to **Waitaki Girls High School, Oamaru Intermediate, Papakaio, Fenwick, Totara, Maheno, Flagswamp, MaCraes Moonlight, Weston and St. Joseph's Primary Schools and Maheno Kindergarten and ABC Oamaru.**

Bron Claridge is the Enviroschools Facilitator. She lives in Oamaru with her husband and daughter and various pets and is a primary school teacher who has been relieving since having her daughter. She said Enviroschools is a perfect combination of schools, kids and sustainability!

We are really looking forward to seeing how Enviroschools evolves in Waitaki.



Energy

Year 2 students at **Queenstown Primary School** have been looking at energy. They started with the problem: "The world is running out of resources. We need to learn to use less." The students learnt about renewable and non-renewable resources. They mapped the electrical appliances in their homes and identified lots of ways they can take action to save resources, from turning off lights and taps, putting thermals on under their uniform, closing doors and looking after the things they use so they last longer. They built model houses powered by sustainable energy. They shared this learning with the rest of the school, their families and QLDC councillor Craig Ferguson.

The Energy theme area is at the printers now and should be coming your way soon.



Queenstown Primary students vision for sustainable energy

Enviroschools census results

The Enviroschools programme is growing across the country. There are now more than 1100 Enviroschools (34% of schools and 6% of early childhood centres). Around 152,000 children and young people and 15,700 school and centre staff participate in the programme. 72% of Enviroschools believe the programme has a substantial positive influence on interactions with families/whanau and the wider community. Some of the things that make Enviroschools a highly effective and valued programme include:

- tamariki-led action
- the long-term nature of the programme
- focus on community involvement
- support from the Enviroschools facilitator
- integration of Māori perspectives
- links made to global issues
- the Enviroschools visioning process.



You can find a summary of the census results on the Enviroschools website at enviroschools.org.nz/outcomes_and_benefits

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the census.

Senior secondary hui

Senior secondary students from Dunedin Envirogroups got together for a day to explore strategies for bringing about change in their schools early this year. We looked at ways to create a buzz and tell a

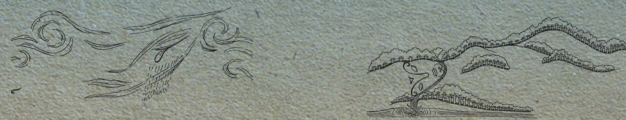
good story to get their school communities excited about sustainability. DCC Councilor Aaron Hawkins and Fiona Jenkins from Unstitched Fashion Revolution shared their experiences.



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Keep in touch

Check out ideas and resources on the Enviroschools webpage www.enviroschools.org.nz/
Keep in touch with local news and events at Ōtākau Enviroschool's new look facebook page www.facebook.com/EnviroschoolsOtago/



Clutha District Empowerment Fund

Clutha District schools had the opportunity to apply for a \$300 Empowerment Grant, courtesy of the Council's waste minimisation levy. The **Catlins Area School** is using the grant to install a worm farm, **Waitahuna Primary** is getting compost bins, **Rosebank Primary** is building garden beds and getting more garden tools. **Waihola Primary** is providing teacher release to allow the retiring teacher who has been driving Enviroschools to share her skills and knowledge with the teacher picking up the reins.

Taking time to have fun together

We are constantly amazed at the passion and hard work of Envirogroups in Ōtākou schools. The students' actions make a big difference in their schools and communities. It is important to remember to celebrate achievements and have fun together. Students from **Bayfield College** recently organised a film night. They watched Wall-E and enjoyed pizza together. The film sparked robust discussion about climate change.

Learning about water

Otago Enviroschools staff were joined by ORC and Marine Studies Centre staff for a Water Day. Mark Oster, the Environment Southland Enviroschool's Facilitator shared Southland's water education programme. We spent the morning exploring the Enviroscape, a catchment model, and then headed down to the river to learn about a range of water monitoring activities. Enviroschools has access to lots of water resources, including the Water of Life theme area and the Enviroscape. *Get in touch with your facilitator to find out how they can support you if water is an inquiry topic at your school.*



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