

Nau Mai / Welcome

In our final GREENchat newsletter for the year we acknowledge some of the mahi that schools and Kindergartens have been doing in their gardens. They have been busy repurposing garden beds, making compost and planting out new seedlings. While others have been out getting their feet wet in the awa.

If you are looking for ideas and inspiration for the new year, then don't forget to check out our websites and collection of Padlets;

- <https://enviroschools.org.nz>
- <https://www.enviroschoolsmarlborough.co.nz>
- <https://padlet.com/EnviroschoolsMarlborough/MarlboroughMenu>

Go well over the Christmas and New Year period nurture Do what nurtures your hauora whether it be with whānau or friends, eating good kai or getting out in nature. Make time to breath easy and reconnect. Celebrate the year that has been and welcome the opportunities that 2023 has to offer.



Discovering the treasures of Tangaroa and Tānemahuta

Term 4 is traditionally a great term for getting out-of-doors and into the ngahere or awa, especially if you are on camp! That's exactly what Rm 2 from Seddon School did this term. On camp at Pine Valley, they walked up to Mill Flat to study the diversity of life in the awa and in the ngahere surrounding it.

Focusing on the wonderful diversity of native insects and freshwater life, they were excited to find an array of species that called Mill Flat their home.

The cool, clear waters of the awa made it the perfect location to uncover Dobsonfly nymphs living under stones at the bottom of the awa. Sometimes called toebitters due to their large serrated mandibles used to catch other stream invertebrates, the Dobsonfly are amongst the largest of our freshwater insects.

Along with Mayflies and Cased Caddisflies, a plentiful number of Dobsonflies are an indicator of a healthy awa. With cold feet and keen eyes, the students were able to find all three invertebrates along with many others.

Time passed too quickly and if it hadn't been for numb toes, the students would have gladly stayed longer to uncover more of the amazing diversity nurtured by tangaroa and tane mahuta.



Garden Transformations

Fairhall School has had a year of construction. They have built a beautiful new space where the whole school can meet. Unfortunately, that meant a new place had to be found for their Kids Edible Gardens and a long wait until they could use it again.

However, after a very successful 4 term in the garden, a massive hedge became lush gardens. The caretaker raised the beds and an Enviroschools Action Fund meant that they could fill these with fresh oneone, compost and mulch.

They purchased a rain water storage tank to resolve their problem of access to water being too far away and this allowed them to water the seedlings and garden. And lastly they brought a new cart to make it easier for the younger children to pull and be involved.

When the time came to plant the new garden they didn't let the cold day and Tawhirimatea stop them getting their hands dirty. The whole process has sparked interested amongst the children and they have enjoyed getting back into it with their facilitator Amber.



Springlands Kindergarten have expanded their garden with the addition of two new planter boxes that were kindly built by one of the children's' fathers. The tamariki worked together as a team transferring soil and adding compost before planting them with new seedlings brought in by the tamariki and Kaiako. The old wine barrel planters were then replanted with lavender and peas.

Later in the term they had a working bee which saw whānau coming in on a rainy weekend to paint, clean and build. The team at Springlands Kindergarten are incredibly grateful for the support of their community in transforming the environment as it has created more spaces and opportunities for tamariki to learn about sustainability.



Natures Recycling System

When Seymour Kindergarten reflected at Silver they identified the development of their edible gardens and compost area to be a next step. With this in mind the tamariki and Kaiako began learning about composting and what can go in their compost bins - food scraps, newspaper, leaves etc.

The tamariki have been involved in adding scraps, turning and moving compost in the bins. Recently they screened their compost to put it into planter boxes in the new Mara Kai area (previously known as the chicken coop). This is a space that kaiako and whānau worked together on over the holidays to make it a workable area. They are now looking forward to planting their seedlings which we have grown from seed. This was done as a part of learning about Tupuānuku during their Matariki celebrations.



Enviroschools Whole Centre Vision workshop

Ramona and Angela facilitated the second of the Enviroschools in ECE Pilot Programme workshops earlier this term. The focus was on developing a Whole Centre Vision. After an inspiring visit to Renwick Kindergarten they worked through several vision mapping activities that involved both practical hands on mahi and a bunch of thought provoking questions. Teachers were led through the process of mapping out their environment and gathering ideas from everyone involved.

This workshop will be available for all Enviroschools Schools and ECE services in term 1.

Our team

There are three of us working in the MDC education team to support you and your students, as well as Ramona Millen, who facilitates the Enviroschools programme in kindergartens. We also have some talented people in our organisation and community that we can link you with, and good connections with the team at DOC.



Annie McDonald | Education Officer & Enviroschools Regional Coordinator

Annie is an educator, has taught at primary and secondary schools, and is passionate about showing schools how they can integrate education for sustainability into the curriculum. She gets a thrill from working with students to grow environmental leaders.



Angela Wentworth | Environmental Educator

Angela is a horticulturalist, and regularly has her hands in the soil with students. She also trains our Kids' Edible Gardens facilitators and supports schools with inquiry learning into things green.



Ramona Millen | Early Childhood teacher and Facilitator

Ramona has strong links with the natural environment having growing up in the Marlborough Sounds, and strives to include this love and passion through her educational role with young tamariki. Ramona strives to empower those around her with the knowledge of how to look after themselves and Papatūānuku.