

2024/25

# Annual Report

ENVIROSCHOOLS TE TAI O POUTINI - WEST COAST



Kia ora koutou.

It's been an inspiring and energising year for Enviroschools on the Coast. Our network has grown from 20 to 23 schools and early childhood centres — reflecting our expanding impact and engagement across the region. Strengthening relationships has been a key focus, with 2024's successful partnerships hui series laying the foundation, and our new practical hui series bringing hands-on learning and collaboration to life.

This year, reflection and goal setting have been front and centre in our mahi, helping schools and centres deepen their journeys. Our schools have remained committed to creating a more sustainable world through actions like beach clean-ups, waste audits, and students exploring their natural environment.

On a personal note, I was on maternity leave for part of the year and am now glad to be back on board. During my time away, Facilitator Laura Neale did an exceptional job keeping the fires burning and nurturing strong connections with schools and the wider community.

A heartfelt thank you for your continued support. It's because of our shared commitment that this work continues to thrive. We're excited about the momentum we've built and look forward to what's ahead.

He mihi nui,

Lauren Kelley

*Regional Coordinator and Buller Facilitator*







## National Overview

Enviroschools is a nationwide network with over 1,600 schools and early childhood centres empowering learners of all ages to build resilient, connected communities through learning and taking action together. We are supported by Toimata Foundation and a large network of regional partners. Early childhood centres and schools commit to a long-term sustainability journey, where tamariki (students) connect with and explore the environment as part of their curriculum, then plan, design and take action in their local places in collaboration with their communities.



## Local Overview

There are 23 Enviroschools on the West Coast, 7 in Buller, 7 in Grey, and 9 in Westland district. This is 41% of all the schools and early childhood centres in the region. We reach around 20% of the regional population through our work with students, staff and school whānau.

We are supported by all three district councils and the Department of Conservation. We have also received funding from the Sargood Bequest to run an event at the Arahura River in 2025/26. Toimata is currently supporting the West Coast directly and has employed two local, part-time staff, made possible through funding from our regional partners. We welcome future opportunities to collaborate with the regional council and other potential partners to further strengthen and grow regional support.



# The Enviroschools programme is specifically designed to meet multiple local government outcomes and is supported by over 80% of New Zealand councils.

Through our five guiding principles and holistic, longterm approach, we foster sustainability and connectedness in the community and empower young people to participate in a meaningful way taking action for the future. Practicing our kaupapa of creating a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable world, Enviroschools contribute directly to West Coast councils' community and waste outcomes.

## Our actions and outcomes include:

### Environment

- Waste minimisation
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Improved biodiversity and water quality

### Culture

- Foster a strong connection to place
- Iwi and hapū led solutions
- Respect for diversity

### Community

- Youth engagement and leadership
- Community engagement and action
- Improved food security
- Lifelong learning in action

### Economy

- Reduced pressure on waste and water infrastructure
- Sustainable communities and businesses
- Empowering creative thinking and collaboration





# By District:



There are 7 Enviroschools in Buller - 6 of the total 9 schools (67%) and 1 of the total 4 early childhood centres (25%). We are in the process of bringing another school on board in Westport.

- Karamea Area School
- Granity School
- St Canice's School
- Maruia School
- Reefton Area School
- Reefton Early Learning Centre
- Sacred Heart School



There are 7 Enviroschools in Grey - 4 of the total 14 schools (29%), 2 of the total 8 early childhood centres (25%) and the education centre at Shantytown which reaches many schools each year.

- Barrytown School
- Paparoa Range School
- Grey Main School
- Paroa School
- Kidsfirst Kindergartens Karoro
- Wild Places Education
- Marsden Valley Education Centre







There are 9 Enviroschools in Westland - 6 of the total 12 schools (50%) and 3 of the total 4 early childhood centres (75%). Westland High School and South Westland Area School have recently joined our network.

- Hokitika Primary School
- Westland High School
- Kidsfirst Kindergartens Hokitika
- Active Explorers Hokitika
- Harper Park Early Learning Centre
- Kaniere School
- Kokatahi-Kowhitirangi School
- Sout Westland Area School
- Haast School

## Funding Summary

### Buller District Council

*Funding Received 2024/25: \$39,000 + GST*

*Confirmed Funding 2025/26: \$43,000 + GST*

*Confirmed Funding 2026/27: \$47,000 + GST*

Thank you for your support — it means the world to us. We look forward to your continued support in the future as we grow together.



**23**  
Enviroschools  
(+3 in 2024/25)

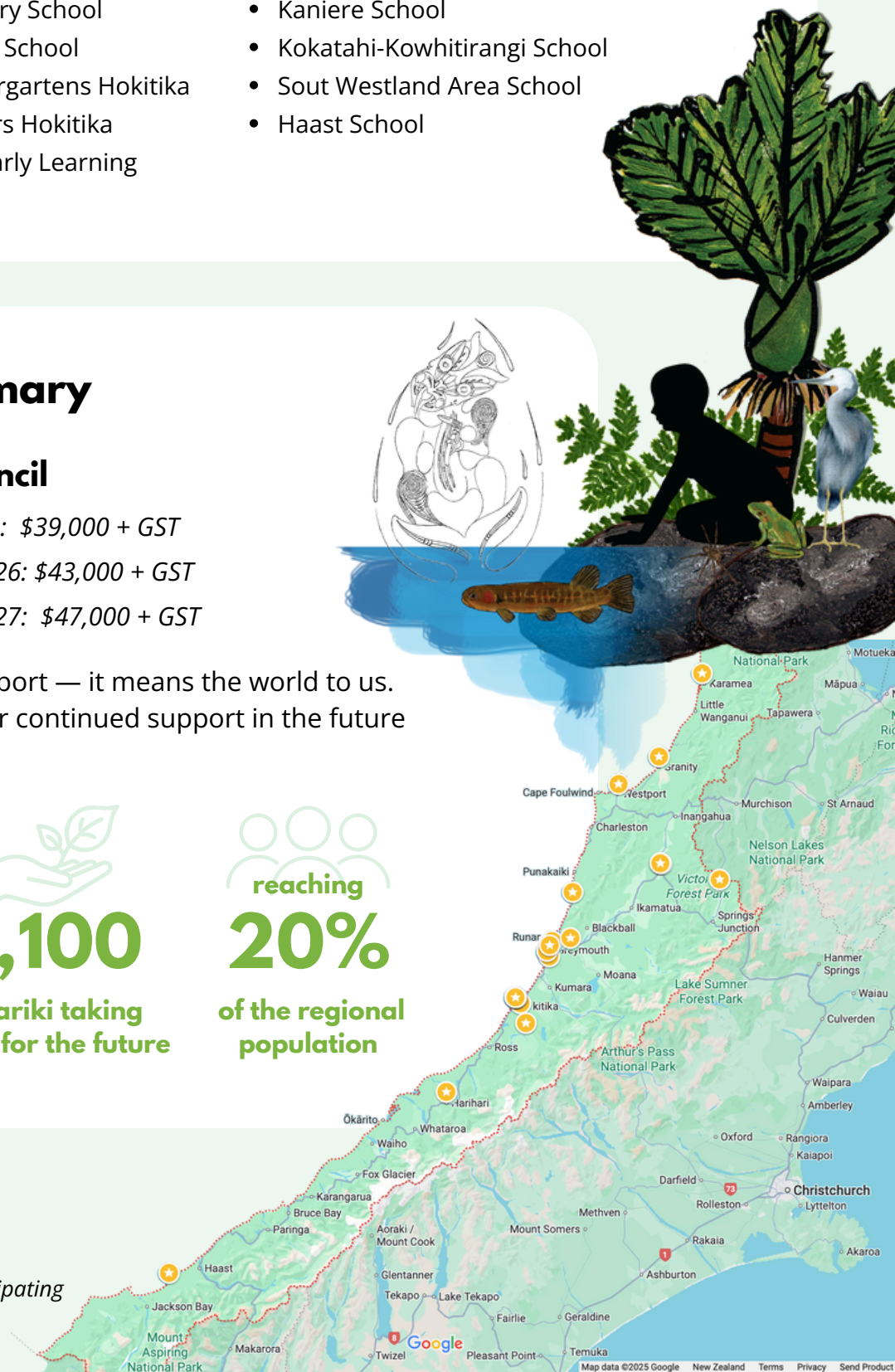


**2,100**  
tamariki taking  
action for the future



**20%**  
of the regional  
population

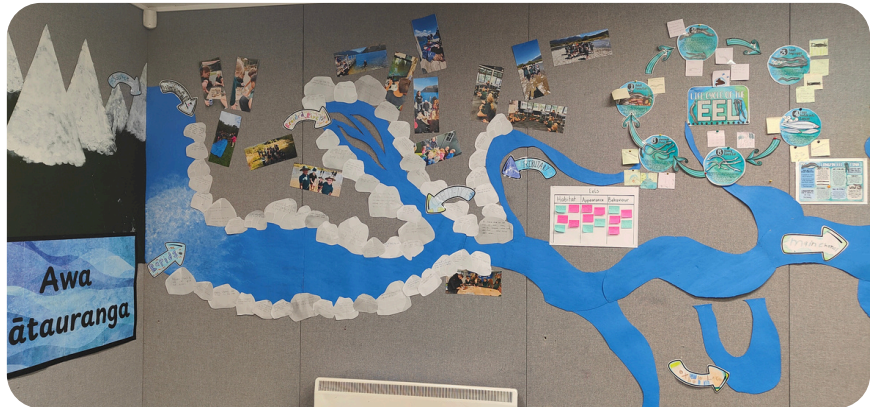
Map showing regional spread of participating  
Enviroschools (starred), July 2025



# Enviroschools in Action - Our Highlights

## Diving into freshwater ecology

Maruia School has been on an exciting journey this year exploring freshwater ecology and their local river. They've created a beautiful Awa Mātauranga—an entire classroom wall dedicated to capturing and celebrating their learning. It has grown throughout the year, providing a space where students can add their discoveries and where friends and whānau can easily see and share in the progress of this journey.



## Waste – Thinking beyond the 3 Rs

There is so much to celebrate around our Zero Waste Kaupapa. We've been exploring alternatives to the traditional waste hierarchy and how our waste is managed locally through practical hui with Kaia Beal from GDC (Term 3, 2024) and with David Louw from WDC (Term 2, 2025).

Enviroschools across the Coast have also been auditing their waste, thinking of ways to reduce it, and picking up rubbish from our beautiful beaches and natural areas.







## Budding new whānau

We welcomed **3 NEW Enviroschools** on the Coast this year: **Marsden Valley Education Centre**, lovingly known as Shantytown, **South Westland Area School (SWAS)** and **Westland High School**.

The Marsden Valley Education Centre works with many schools from around the region and the motu. They actively teach about our local history and environment.

South Westland Area School has some very excited and motivated kaiako (teachers) and they've begun their Enviroschools journey by revisiting and caring for the native plant areas around their school grounds.

Westland High School is beginning with trapping at Lake Kaniere and native planting on local farms.

We look forward to supporting them on their Enviroschools journey.



## Taiao Warriors

Students at Hokitika Primary have started an Envirogroup called, 'Taiao Warriors' and they're working on developing their school māra kai with support from Laura, their Enviroschools Facilitator. They're focusing on the science of soil type, and identifying which insects are present — and what this tells us. They're also planning to connect with whānau and the wider community for a working bee to tidy up the space and find some keen adults to support the project.



## Funding flows for rainwater irrigation system

In May, Sacred Heart School in Reefton received funding from Air New Zealand's Every Corner Project to install a rainwater irrigation system. They plan to catch rainwater from the roof of a shed and store it to irrigate their garden when it's dry. This means they'll have ready access to water in their garden area and they won't need to tap into treated town water to keep their garden growing. Through this project, students are learning about the freshwater cycle and how to make the best use of a precious resource.

## Going wild

Wild Places Education, the newest early childhood education provider on the Coast, and one of our newest Enviroschools in Grey District, has been hard at work strengthening community connections while developing their site to increase native planting, biodiversity, and establish veggie gardens with fruit trees. Founder and lead teacher Tim Eden-Calcott hopes that the bush kindy's space at Paroa Lagoon can become a hub for environmental education and community connection not just for the tamariki of Wild Places but also for the community and students from other local schools.



## Writing to Wellington

Haast School pupils recently wrote to Wellington seeking support to remediate the old Carters Mill landfill near their school because storms and high tides have been washing hazardous material onto the beach where they learn and recreate. They have also been writing to relevant organisations to raise awareness about the issue. Through this action, students are learning about civic engagement.

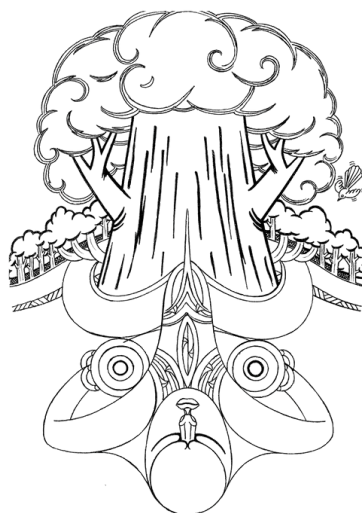


## Trapping and planting for the future

Kaniere School students have partnered with the Lake Kaniere Property Owners' Association on a trapping project targeting introduced predators. Westland High School students are also trapping around Lake Kaniere and have been planting natives on a local farm in partnership with the farm owner, the West Coast Regional Council Catchments Team, and Development West Coast.



**West Coast**  
Catchments Team





## Growing practical skills through gardening

Students at Karamea Area School have been actively using their school garden as a hands-on learning tool across classes and curriculum subjects. From planning and building raised garden beds to planting, caring for crops, and harvesting, students are applying practical skills in real-world contexts. The project integrates mathematics, science, and financial literacy, as students measure, monitor growth, analyze data, and manage produce sales. This approach not only enriches learning but also helps students see how classroom concepts apply in everyday life.

Barrytown School students have also been developing their veggie garden and are participating in the Garden to Table programme. Children at Maruia School, Grey Main, Active Explorers Hokitika and Harper Park Early Learning Centre have been busy in their gardens too, integrating growing with art, building bug hotels and using natural resources like harakeke.

This year we offered a māra kai workshop for teachers to grow their gardening skills for their school gardens.



## Taking action together

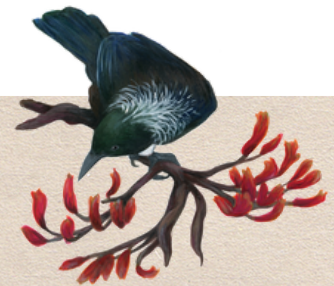
Grey Main School had a very successful action day in Term 1. Students from across the school planted trees with Grey High students from the Trees for Change project, learned how to sort their rubbish, cleaned out their veggie garden, explored te ao Māori, created art from recycled plastic, and studied their bush area for birds and bugs. They also got to see what lives in the creek with a Regional Council freshwater technician. They plan to host future action days to build on their experience.



# Our future

As we reflect on another vibrant year of growth and connection, it's clear that Enviroschools on the West Coast continues to play a pivotal role in fostering young leaders, supporting resilient communities, and strengthening ties between people and place. With new partnerships forming and enthusiasm growing across schools and centres, we are excited to build on this momentum.

Looking ahead, we hope to bring even more hands-on, locally led sustainability projects to life. With your continued support, we can facilitate opportunities for tamariki and communities to take meaningful action, enhance local biodiversity, and develop solutions that align with our kaupapa of a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable world. **Thank you for being part of this journey — we couldn't do it without you.**



## Connect with us

We aim to keep our schools and community up to date with Enviroschools activities and opportunities. Please sign up to our pānui (newsletter), which is sent out once per term, by clicking the link below or using the QR code.

[Click here to sign up to the West Coast – Te Tai Poutini Pānui](#)

For more information about the Enviroschools programme, visit [www.enviroschools.org.nz](http://www.enviroschools.org.nz).



## Your West Coast Enviroschools team:



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