



Enviroschools West Coast Report for Buller District Council 2021-2022

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In partnership with:



Overview

Enviroschools is a holistic approach to the development of resilient and sustainable communities. The complex environmental, social, cultural and economic challenges facing us today call for a collaborative response. Enviroschools operates nationwide supported by Toimata Foundation and a large network of regional partners that includes 80% of councils.

Buller schools continue to work in a very challenging environment – flooding, Covid-19, lockdowns, mandates, staff illness and shortages, and school closures. External visitors have been limited and events and meetings have been postponed. Despite these challenges, Enviroschools West Coast adapted and supported teachers via Zoom, and used the non-contact time to refresh programmes, and plan.

We farewelled Enviroschools facilitator Sarah Harvey at the end of 2021 as she made the big move back to the UK. Recruiting a new Buller facilitator has been on hold while we investigate options for a larger sized role to support the anticipated growth of the Enviroschools Programme. In the interim facilitation is being undertaken by Regional Coordinator Zoe Watson.

We are very pleased that Buller District Council are increasing their financial support for 2022-23 to further develop the Enviroschools Programme in the Buller District including signing one more school in the district. We are now ready to start the recruitment process and hope to appoint someone ready to begin at the start of 2023.

West Coast Enviroschools and Toimata Foundation thank Buller District Council for their continued financial support of the Enviroschools Programme.

Current Situation

West Coast Region

There are 19 Enviroschools on the West Coast, 6 in Buller, 5 in Grey, and 8 in Westland. This is around 37% of the total schools and early childhood centres in the region

<i>Regional Coordination</i>	0.2 FTE position, interim funding from Toimata Foundation * DOC contributes funds for regional coordination
<i>Facilitation of Enviroschools & their communities</i>	0.5 FTE (across two people). Multiyear funding through partnerships with the Buller , Westland and Grey District Councils (funds from solid waste budgets)
<i>Regional events & projects</i>	One-off donation from West Coast Community Trust and Department of Conservation to support the 2021 Noho Marae event

** In most regions, the Regional Coordination role is held by the Regional/Unitary Council. As the West Coast Regional Council is currently not involved, Toimata are investing in the region directly from their national funding from Central Government (Ministry for the Environment).*

Highlights – collaboration and community reach

Karamea Area School joins the Buller network

Due to an increase in funding from BDC, Karamea Area School was able to join the Enviroschools Programme at the end of 2021. Highlights so far:

- **Two visits to Karamea** to run staff meetings: exploring the Enviroschools Programme and resources, planning the framework and a whole-school approach, and curriculum integration
- **Conducting a waste audit** resulting in a school-wide recycling system and student-built recycling station
- **Establishing an Envirogroup** of student leaders to steer the Programme
- Establishing a **relationship with Sustainable Coastlines** to set up a community beach survey and audit site
- Informing **strategic goals and policies**



Karamea Area School students with their 'Recycling Zone' creation

Waste Minimisation and Management is widespread

Enviroschools conducts an annual waste review with participating school and centres.

- **Five waste audits were conducted** in the 2021-22 period, no mean feat considering the number of postponements due to Covid-19 and significant weather events
- The **average number of waste minimisation actions implemented by schools in Buller was 31**
- Highlights: construction of recycling centre (Karamea Area School hard skills students); educating the wider community by writing a column on composting for the BDC Connect February newsletter (Sacred Heart)

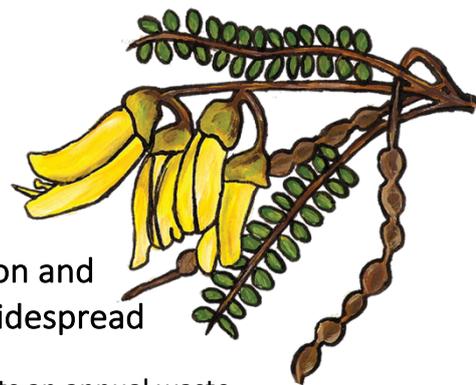
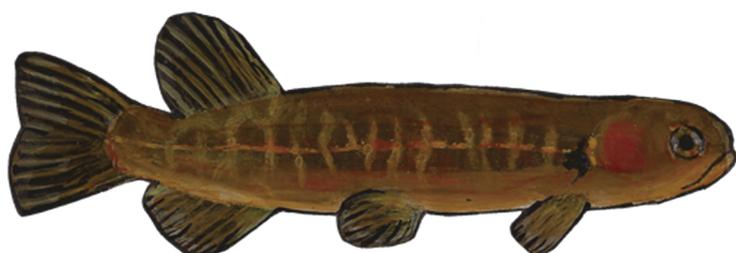
Holistic Reflections deepen practice

Holistic reflections are an opportunity for students, staff and the wider community to celebrate their mahi and inform the next steps of an Enviroschools journey.

- Reefton Early Learning Centre reflected at Bronze in Term 3, 2021
- Supporting Sacred Heart School to reflect at Bronze in Term 3, 2022



The Bronze reflection team at Reefton Early Learning Centre



Noho Marae deepens connections

Enviroschools West Coast held a Noho Marae (sleepover) at Arahura Marae. Around 30 students and staff attended, including Reefton area School, Sacred Heart, and St Canice's School.

The aim of the event was to:

- Form connections with mana whenua and deepen Māori perspectives
- Learn about the cultural and natural history of the area
- Build skills and knowledge for restoring native habitats
- Learn about the restoration of the Arahura River and how they could help

Supporting Reefton to work towards common goals

All of Reefton's kura are now Enviroschools: teachers can work together on community projects, collaborate and pool resources.

Highlights so far:

- Aim to meet once a term (Covid-19 has interrupted this flow)
- Developing a shared vision and guiding principles for Reefton
- Focus on supporting transitions from early childhood to primary through an Enviroschools lens

"We are all working towards a common goal and are able to collaborate on decision making, planning, and taking action together on projects. All Reefton's tamariki are lucky to be part of this wonderful programme and are taking back valuable knowledge to their own whānau and putting the Enviroschools Guiding Principles into action."

Linda Webb, Sacred Heart School



Enviroschools students and staff at Arahura Marae

Other Highlights

- **11 in-person meetings** - despite the challenges facing schools, most schools invited their Enviroschools facilitator to lead professional development for staff
- **Two days supporting Whenua Iti Nature Connection Programmes** with St Canice's School and Karamea Area School
- **Two national Enviroschools website stories profiling Buller Schools, 'Arahura Noho Marae Helps Deepen Connections and Build Skills' and, 'Confessions of a New Enviroschools Teacher'**
- **Regular meetings with BDC staff**

Next Steps

- Recruiting an Enviroschools facilitator and one new school in Buller
- Reflecting at Bronze with Sacred Heart School in September 2022
- Continuing cluster meetings in Reefton
- Staying connected and supporting Kaiako through offering online and in-person meetings once a term
- Conducting waste audits and supporting schools with waste minimisation initiatives

