

# Envirobus Tour Report

On Thursday 23 September 2010 an excited group of 50 students and staff boarded the Envirobus for a tour of four of our Enviroschools

The purpose of the tour was to show many of our new schools the action projects that had been undertaken at schools and how schools progress on the Enviroschools Journey from a Bronze school to a Green- Gold school.

Our tour guides at each school were students from the enviroteams with support from their lead teachers.

## First stop was Renwick School. Renwick School has a Bronze Award.



Renwick school joined the programme in 2008. They did a whole school programme on the Me in My Environment term 1, 2009. This was then followed with a whole school unit on Living Landscapes. Some exciting decisions came out of this. One was to take out their school pool and turn the area into a large edible garden, orchard, compost area and plant nursery. This was a decision the students came up with and was supported by the school management. The Parent Committee also strongly supported this project by providing significant funding for this to go ahead.

The Green Ferns welcomed us to the school and told us about their projects and journey in the Enviroschools programme.

The tour looked at their edible garden, the orchard planting that has been completed, their recycling shed and the new native garden area under development that represents the awa (river) and their learning journey.

After a yummy morning tea and a bit of an explore on the adventure playground, we were back on the bus towards our next stop.

## Second on the programme was Fairhall School.

Fairhall School has a Silver Award and has been in the programme for five years. Fairhall School has done a number of theme areas as a whole school. These include Living Landscapes, Zero Waste and Energy. Each of these theme areas has led to projects being undertaken by students as part of the action learning cycle of Enviroschools.

We were greeted by members of the Enviroteam from Fairhall and divided into two groups to see their action projects and their great scrapbooks in the library. The highlight was Fairhall School's native creek area. Their native gardens were a whole school programme. All of the students were involved in a dance/drama production called Legend of the Garden that looked at the history of the area and the



regeneration for the future. Tour guides also showed us the junior edible garden, the recycling shed, their bokashi system and their ingenious idea for peeling and coring apples so that juniors created less waste.

A quick play on the adventure playground was next and then it was onto Witherlea School

### Third on the programme was Witherlea School.

Witherlea School has been involved in the Enviroschools programme for over five years and involved in Environmental education projects for over 10 years. Witherlea School is a Silver School. Witherlea School has done all the theme areas as whole school programmes over the last five years and has Education for Sustainability as one of their learning pillars.

We were welcomed to the school by the awesome Kapakaha group and then given a pamphlet to show us the projects Witherlea School has been involved in, including the native forest, stream restoration and walkways development, edible and butterfly gardens, the scented triangle, bokashi and worm composting, a



propagation shed, the Green Door Recycling Centre and the rainwater collection systems. We were then given a tour of these exciting projects finishing up with a presentation by Room 6 on their Open Orchard project. At the end of the tour each school was given a kowhai seedling to take back to their school.

Next stop on the Envirobus tour was tree plating at Harling Park. As responsible environmentalists we had decided to offset our carbon emissions by planting on the bank in one of our Council parks.

We were met by Robin Dunn, Council's Reserves and Amenities Officer who told us about the park's history and purpose and why we were plating this native area to help create a corridor for the Tui to Town programme. With some help from the contractors, we planted 100 native trees and grasses.

### Then it was off to Springlands School

Springlands School is a Green Gold School. They have been in the Enviroschools programme for four years. Springlands School has a strong focus on inquiry and sustainability is a core part of their programme. Their Kahikatea programme has many opportunities to learn sustainable practices and they have a strong leadership model around environmental responsibility and making a difference in their school and community.

We were welcomed by the Eco Warriors in the hall and given a PowerPoint presentation and a talk on their achievements in the Enviroschools programme. Then we were divided into four groups and given a tour of



all their projects. Springlands School has a progression of environmental programmes at different year levels. As part of a student's induction to school they are given information about litter-less lunches and can by some great reusable packaging.

Juniors are involved in the edible gardens, middle students run the orchard programme and harakeke gardens and senior students are involved in zero waste and leadership. There is a gifting programme in place where senior students plan, design and gift something back to the school each year. The biggest project for Springlands school this year was their Ecohut which involved the school school in the building process and included some of last year's year 6 students coming back from intermediate to lay the foundations. The Ecohut took a whole term to construct and is situated in Nga Here (the native forest area). It was awesome.

Sadly this was the last school on our tour and it was back on the bus to our starting point with a much welcome snack provided by Mother Earth who also funded the Envirobus, the trees we planted and teacher release time for the day.

Students were asked to rate the day on a scale on 1-10. 10 being the highest. We topped the scale with a resounding 12 as the answer!

A big thank you to the schools who hosted us, to the students and staff from the envirogroups who took part in the day, to Robin and the contractors who helped with the planting and to Mother Earth for funding our great day.

We all learnt off each other and agreed that Barrack Obama's quote was a good one for us.

*“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for. We are the change we seek”.*

ANNIE MCDONALD  
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Record No. 10236239