

Energy!

Ngā Huanga - Some great Enviroschools outcomes

Conserving Energy



In 2013, 43% of Wellington region's enviroschools are engaged in energy conservation.

- 40% are using energy saving devices
- 7% are generating some of their own energy

57% of the enviroschools taking this action are doing so in association with ongoing classroom learning.

Leading by Design at Paraparaumu Playcentre (Kāpiti)

When their 120-year-old building started to fall apart, Paraparaumu Playcentre didn't miss an opportunity to create a building that was good for people and for nature. With the help of their local community, they raised over \$450,000 for the project and are now enjoying a purpose built centre that brings sustainability to the fore.

Features of the new building include:

- positioning to take full advantage of the sun's passive heating and natural lighting
- double-glazed windows and insulation throughout
- a clerestory window for passive ventilation and to take advantage of the winter sun
- an airlock foyer that keeps warm air from escaping as people enter and exit the building
- timed water faucets and dual flush toilets for the children



They also plan to install automatic lights in the storeroom and outdoor shed to help conserve electricity.

While the costs of construction were more than if they had built without the sustainability features, the savings made over the life of the building through reduced electricity bills, for example, will help to offset the costs of the initial build.

The investment pays off in other ways too, with one of the five year old children saying "I like this more than the old place. I don't have to wear my jacket inside." Rebecca Morely, Enviroschools co-leader says: "The kids are happier, and it's warm and light; warmer than my house." Rebecca goes on to say: "The open space means the kids can see each other. And we don't need to turn the lights on."

The next step in the centre's revamp will be constructing the outdoor play area which is set to include a playscape made with recycled resources, a playhouse, a vegetable garden with captured rainwater for irrigation and a willow tunnel.

Paraparaumu Playcentre began their Enviroschools journey in 2011. The programme has helped them incorporate sustainability into the life of the Playcentre, and to start projects with community support. They value the connections they have made with other centres and support people through Enviroschools cluster meetings. They moved into their new eco-building in May 2013.