



Ākonga-led learning and action gains recognition for Oruaiti

Oruaiti School on SH10 Mangōnui in the Far North has been on an environmental sustainability journey over the last five years that has led to achieving Enviroschools Green-Gold status. Having already been recognised within the Te Taitokarau/ Northland Region for Environmental Excellence, they became finalists in the Prime Minister's Education Focus category for Excellence in Environmental and Sustainability Education and have now been announced the winners of this for 2021! Here is their story about their achievements and challenges and some of their ākonga led sustainability projects.

Strengths-based approach

Our ākonga have repeatedly led their own inquiries into issues they have chosen. This learning has subsequently led to sustainable environmental projects at our school and invitations to members of our community to come along for the ride as both experts and learners themselves. We have engaged with our local environment to frame our learning in the classroom so that as much of our mahi in class is meaningful and purposeful to our tamariki. By taking a “strengths based” approach we have included the passions and interests of our students, teachers and their whānau. This has resulted in: improved engagement, achievement, and resilience – particularly for our tamariki tāne, both Māori and Pākehā; an increasingly integrated curriculum; improved critical thinking and problem solving skills; a school of responsible risk takers; and, a range of products: eggs from our school ducks, a published book, hīnaki to catch our eels for smoking, pest traps to protect our ducks and trees, our own kawakawa balm, furniture from recycled oyster farm and pallet wood, honey from our bees, bees T-towels, bee rings, beeswax wraps, recycled wood cell phone stands, a growing fruit orchard, rejuvenated wetlands area, and an outdoor learning space designed by our ākonga! And all from a little rural school with a big heart in the Far North of New Zealand.

A parent, Michelle, (also a kaimahi) shared the following about the Enviroschools Green-Gold recognition: *I just wanted to say that Kendal, who was a part of our environmental journey at the very beginning, was super proud (her words) of our green-gold award [status]. They were at the very start where putting sustainability into practice was really just a dream/ idea. I feel we now instill sustainability into our lifelong learners at Oruaiti School.*

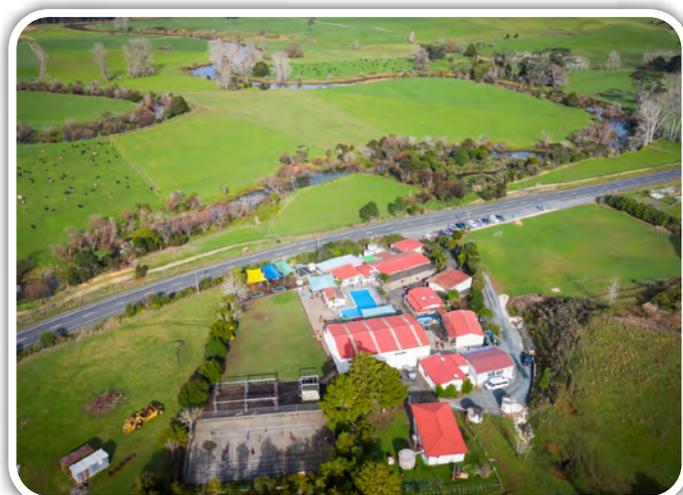


Our people, our place

Our ‘team’ is our whole kura and a large number of members from our local community. All our learners are involved, as well as all of our kaimahi, kaiako, and tūmuaki. A large number of our whānau, local businesses and organisations have been involved throughout our journey. Our local community is rurally based, combining a farming community with those living by the beach at Hihi and Taupo Bay as well as those travelling from nearby Taipa and Coopers Beach areas.

Oruaiti School is a full primary school, decile 2 with a current roll of 169 students. It has a proud history spanning 120 years, including those years when Elwyn Richardson ran the school as an *Experimental School*. (We have books and video presentations from these days). Part of our vision has been to enhance Elwyn’s legacy, with a more experiential place based local curriculum weaving all the Learning Areas of the New Zealand Curriculum together.

The school is on approximately twelve acres of land, it has six classrooms, and a collection of other buildings and teaching spaces including

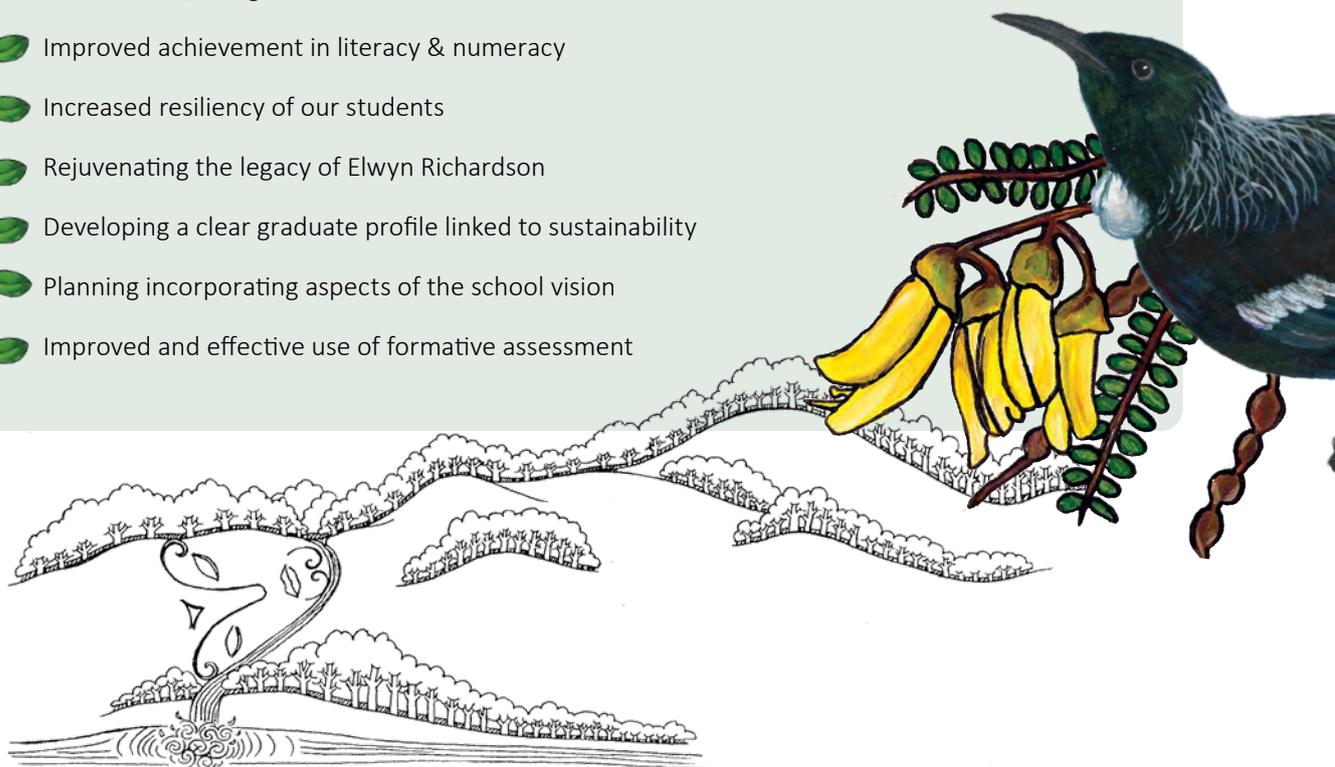


Oruaiti School from the air.

a gymnasium/hall with fold away staging and sound system, P.E equipment shed, changing rooms and toilets and a kitchen. As part of our long-term enviro inquiry projects, we have had a solar powered outdoor learning space built and a plant nursery. Several acres of our land have recently been planted with 1000 Mānuka trees and 500 Kawakawa trees. We also have land across the road from the school which is a wetland area. Our school motto is **Caring, Confident and Responsible Lifelong Learners**. This combined with our school vision to **Inspire-Create-Grow Together** and the NZC Key Competencies forms the basis of our school life and curriculum.

The educational outcomes that are important for our ākonga, whānau and community that we wanted to improve are:

-  Meaningful and relevant teaching and learning to increase engagement, using our local environment, using our local environment
-  Improved achievement in literacy & numeracy
-  Increased resiliency of our students
-  Rejuvenating the legacy of Elwyn Richardson
-  Developing a clear graduate profile linked to sustainability
-  Planning incorporating aspects of the school vision
-  Improved and effective use of formative assessment



A Vision for meaningful and relevant teaching and learning to increase engagement

Because we believe this is an important outcome for all our ākonga, particularly boys, we wanted to design the learning experience of students so they could naturally see the purpose of their day-to-day learning and that what they are learning is relevant to their lives now and in the future. If learning is relevant to our ākonga then they are more likely to be engaged in learning tasks and activities, inside and outside of the classroom, and they are more likely to transfer their ako to new situations. Using our unique local environment would also help develop our students' kaitiakitanga.

Prior to shifting to this way of teaching and learning, most students were not highly engaged, motivated or emotionally involved in their learning and the majority were not willing to take responsible risks in their ako. They were also less able to participate in meaningful dialogue about their learning. There was far less experiential and practical learning taking place. A learning approach driven by testing demotivated a significant number of our learners, especially those at risk.

Improved achievement in literacy and numeracy

We wanted to increase the number of students at or above in literacy and numeracy and our hunch (backed up by MoE) was that by providing experiences for students that hooked them in and gave them a true purpose for reading, writing and maths, their engagement would improve with positive correlation in achievement. We wanted to make sure we tested our hunches and modelled trial and error and inquiry to the students to also help them to be more involved in the decision making around their learning in these areas.

This was a conscious shift away from books being generic and not connected to specific focuses for inquiry learning that were important to our tamariki. Teachers had previously used ability groupings, which we felt was not actually supporting growth in literacy and numeracy for many of our ākonga. Our termly planning had focused on writing genres, rather than using the genres that were relevant to the context of our localised inquiry focus when they were relevant.

The legacy of Elwyn Richardson

We had a vision to rejuvenate the legacy of Elwyn Richardson, principal of Oruaiti School from 1949 to 1962. Elwyn wrote a book about the development of his educational philosophy whilst working at Oruaiti, called *In the Early World*. A former professor of education at Michigan State University declared that, "it may be the best book about teaching ever written." (Featherstone, 1971).

This curriculum was based around the natural environment, personal experience, integration, artistic development and the learning potential of every child - a driving force for the changes at Oruaiti in 2016. Staff could see the value in returning to a far more localised, experiential curriculum to engage students and allow them to feel more in control of their own learning.



Ākonga proudly show off their bug motel.

Increased resilience of our students

In 2015 ākongā were not the Confident, Connected, Actively Involved Lifelong Learners promoted by the vision of our NZ curriculum. Many of our students did not want to try for fear of failure and therefore did not put 100% effort into their mahi. We wanted to grow students who participated in their local community and learnt that failure was part of their learning journey. Our intention was to develop a growth mindset in our learners, alongside learning the importance of reflecting on how we can learn from our mistakes as humans on our impact on our natural environment.

Improved and effective use of formative assessment

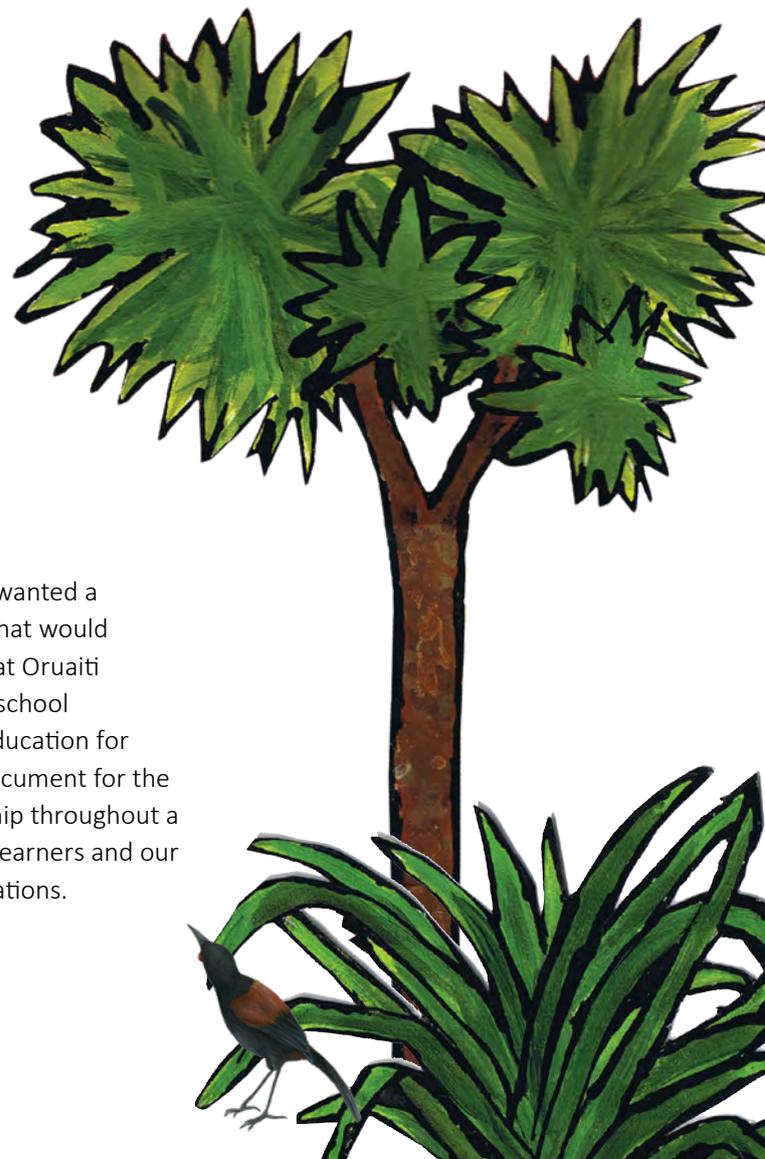
In order to grow lifelong learners as described in the NZC, enabling students to become owners of their own learning, our students needed to move away from being passive vessels that often remained half full or cracked or empty. Our students were used to being told what to do, when to do it and how to do it, and then being told how well they had absorbed information with summative quantitative feedback, rather than regular summative feedforward, which was our goal. As part of our whole school reflection using the Spiral of Inquiry (Timperley, Kaser, Halbert, 2014) and The Nature of Learning document (OECD, 2010) we determined that we needed to use more Assessment for Learning in our day-to-day practice. We wanted to make sure that we were clearly communicating intended learning to students with a clear rationale for why they were learning it and ensuring that students knew what to work towards for success. If the students were to be choosing their own enviro inquiries and learning pathways, they would need to understand this language and its application, as would our Kaiako. We wanted to establish a common learning language that would be used from our New Entrant class through to our Year 8s. We have been doing professional learning and development in this area since 2018.

“Through regular class visits I observed that next steps weren’t necessarily happening. So as a staff we discussed how students could identify their next steps. Now in my walk throughs I question students and they can regularly articulate their learning and next steps.”

Diane Bates
(Oruaiti School Principal) -

The graduate profile

We had previously no graduate profile for our tamariki. We wanted a map for our ākongā, kaiako and the rest of our community that would clearly show them their next steps in their learning journey at Oruaiti School, from Year 1 to Year 8, and how this is related to our school vision of **Inspire-Create-Grow Together** and our focus on education for sustainability. The graduate profile would provide a living document for the habits, mindsets, and actions we would nurture in partnership throughout a student’s life at Oruaiti School and would be distinct to our learners and our community, to our collective and individual needs and aspirations.



Community consultation on planning incorporating the aspects of school vision

In 2018, when we reflected on the year, we felt that whilst we had been increasing community involvement in the school, we wanted to make our connection deeper and include key stakeholders in the planning and reflection of our school curriculum, using the school's vision as our focus. We felt that at this time, with the work that had been done in the previous two years to grow and mend relationships within our community that its members would be more receptive to collaborating with us on the design of their children's' ako.



Hut building during Junior activities day.

Community is now consulted

At the end of 2019 and 2020 we have held planning days for the community to look at our strategic plan and discuss what we have achieved and what we still need to work on. Goals are shared with the community, and everyone adds things they would like included. These planning days then form the basis of our strategic plan as well as our term plan for the coming year.

"You don't know how to catch an eel?!" said the 10-year-old student to the 40-year-old teacher fresh off the bus from Wellington. "Whaaaaaat?!" came the cries from said 10-year old's ho.

And from there a seed was sown in how to hook in these tamariki tāne to their learning. Make them experts, and start with the hands on, then grow from there to a need and eventually a desire to read and write to further their understanding and expertise. First, the materials, then the design, then the building and then refine.

And this is what happened...Roadkill kōrero, a hīnaki, tuna and pest control

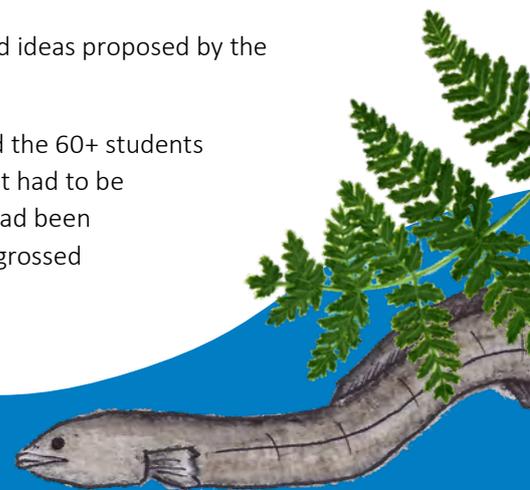
"We'll have to get some roadkill now, aye, Mister." "Roadkill?" "To put in the hīnaki to catch the tuna. "I'd better check with the principal."

First thing the next morning the teacher asked the principal, and her reply was:

"Oh no - I've just driven past a great bit of roadkill." "Did you mean this?" said Willie, the kaimahi, holding up a bag with a freshly squashed possum. "I knew she'd say yes."

Which is pretty much what she's said to all of the wonderful and sometimes weird ideas proposed by the tamariki and the teachers on our sustainability ride.

The buzz around this learning activity was visible and audible, as word got around the 60+ students at Oruaiti School, in 2016. Daily visits to the hīnaki showed flaws in the design that had to be addressed. Discussions ensued about what they would do with the tuna once it had been caught. "My poppa can smoke it for us, and we can have a feed." The girls were 'grossed out', but increasingly becoming more interested and the mana of the boys was steadily growing as they were the ones leading the learning for a change. Many



of the students had not eaten eel before, whereas many had grown up eeling in the local river. Through this one adventure the students and the teacher were beginning to learn more about each other than they had in their previous years at school. This led to students asking if it was OK to be catching eels, and genuine research on the part of the students and the teacher to find out if there were any laws around eeling. The outcome was that the group identified there were far more important things to be killing (but maybe not eating), such as rats, possums and stoats, that were pests to our native plants and animals.

Engagement and enthusiasm

Students wanted to start building the traps straight away. They were encouraged to think more critically around how they would build them, why they were building them, what would be the outcome and how they would measure their success. They identified that they needed to work on their questioning skills in order to ask the right questions >(Pest question building), so this gave an authentic purpose for writing. As a result they decided they would need to identify the most common pests in the area so they could build the most appropriate traps. Then came the research, and an authentic reason to read (to identify different types of text; to compare, contrast and select appropriate information; to find out the meaning of unknown vocabulary; to summarise findings; to write instructions)...HOLD ON... everyone is working... No-one is asking if it's lunchtime yet...?!

The students found out how to make tracking tunnels and made them using lots of practical maths (without even knowing it), positioned them, and the next day FOUND PAW PRINTS IN THEIR TUNNELS!!!!!! And guess what - they couldn't wait to write about it, and to find out (by reading) the best way to build possum and rat traps.

Rob invited in a trapper from the regional council who talked to the students about how to trap and provided some pre-made traps to get started. The students then had a prototype from which to design their own traps. Another reason for writing arose when the students found out that they needed money to build the traps. The students wrote letters to the regional and local councils to ask for funding. A great incentive to improve your letter writing skills and persuasive text.



Helping with trap construction.



Reflection time

As the year progressed the teachers of the senior school decided that they wanted to open up this opportunity to all Year 4-6 students and EnviroDay was born. > [Enviro Journey 2018](#)

Once a fortnight on a Friday, when the Year 7 and 8 students bused off to the intermediate school in Kaitia for Technology, the other senior students got their hands (and feet and faces and clothes) dirty working on a number of different projects around the school to improve their environment. One thing led to another and so many ideas and issues appeared. Listed and described below are some of these projects:

Purposeful learning and action - More trapping of predators

Sustainability focus: To reduce non-native predators so that native flora and fauna can increase.

Budgeting for and sourcing materials, using literacy and numeracy skills as well as mahitahi to design and build and place the traps and checking and resetting of traps on a regular basis along with tuākana tēina all became part of this teaching and learning.

The outcome was to see students independently use the design cycle to plan, measure, build using tools and test prototype pest traps. They understand the importance of protecting our natives from introduced species and how it is our responsibility as kaitiaki to repair the damage we have done.

Quote from student - Liam (having moved from another school) "I love this school... I haven't had friends for two whole years and now I like learning about the ducks, but also learning about the trapping... 'Cause I like building, and for enviro I chose trapping and we're building traps..."

Quote from whanāu - Liam's mum "He really is a hands-on learner so building all the traps is really beneficial for him. It's what makes him excited about learning."

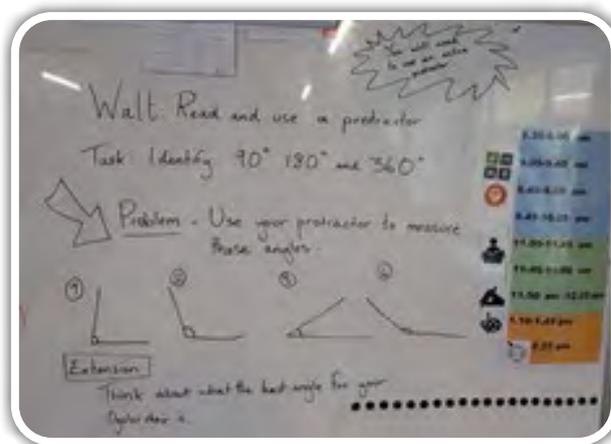


Building knowledge and skills through pallet chairs

These were made from both recycled pallets and recycled oyster farm wood.

Sustainability focus: Taking choices and actions to reduce harmful actions by reusing pallet and oyster wood by upcycling it into furniture to sell.

Students researched different types of furniture they could build using the discarded wood. They surveyed adults to find out which item they would be most likely to purchase, which was chairs. They then looked at different chair designs and decided to use a Cape Cod style. Part of the learning involved them finding out the comfiest angle for the back rest to be. Students also had to determine dimensions of the chair to get the most out of the wood they had with the least effort. They then worked in teams to assign roles, such as cutting, drilling holes, screwing fixings and adding price tags for sale at Kerikeri Garden Safari. The chairs proved so popular that they had to take orders to make after the day as they sold out!



Developing concepts and designs.

They raised the necessary funds to purchase the ducks. They reflected that the time and effort involved in making the chairs was not profitable enough for them to continue with this venture, as it took too much time out of their learning.



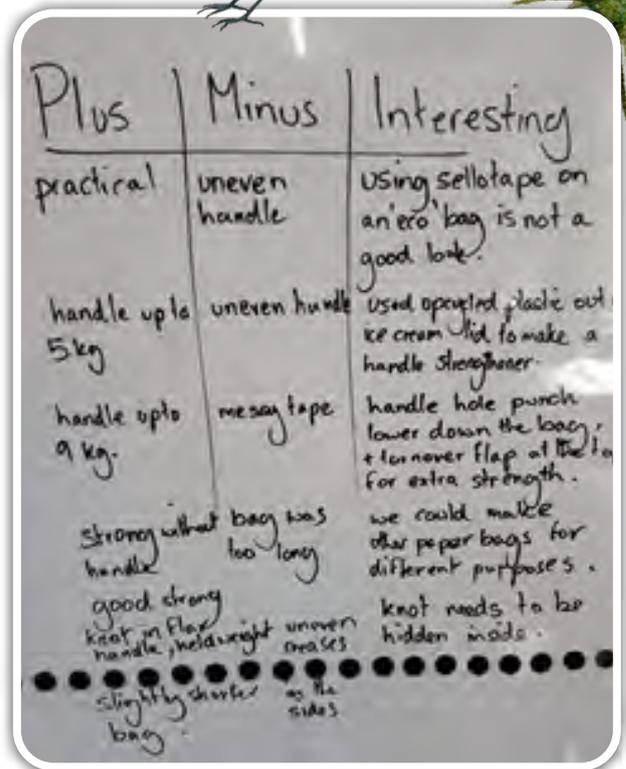
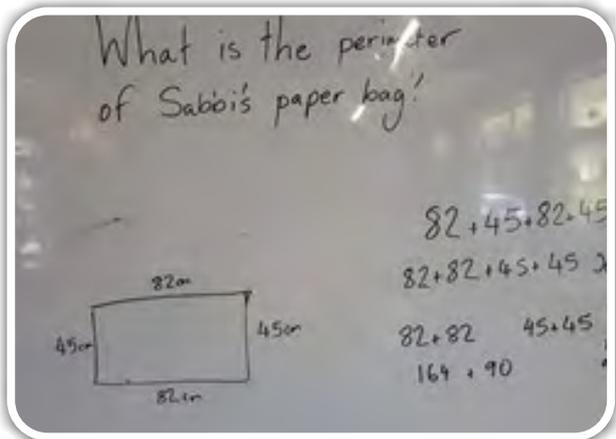
The completed (and popular) pallet chairs.

Designing, making, testing and selling paper bags to the local Indian takeaway in Kaeo.

Sustainability focus: Part of the movement to eliminate plastic bag use. In conjunction with Plastic Free Kaeo.

Students rang the local takeaway Spice Grill in Kaeo and asked if they would be their tester for their prototype paper bags. Sabbi, the owner agreed, and the students got to work designing paper carrier bags that could hold up to four plastic takeaway containers (filled with sand instead of curry, much to the dismay of the teachers, who provided the empty containers).

Paper was too expensive and as Sabbi's became more popular we became busier. Great learning, great hands-on minds on maths! Sabbi found an alternative paper bag producer and never went back to plastic bags, even though this was before the plastic bag ban, so a positive environmental influence on our local community too.



The bag inquiry

Making kawakawa balm

Sustainability focus: *Understanding traditional uses of native plants in rongoā Māori.*

As a part of a rejuvenation project of our natural school environment, students enquired into the benefits of certain native plant species. This led to the replanting of a large number of kawakawa plants. As well as supporting the biodiversity of our school gardens, these plants were to be used for traditional rongoā Māori uses such as kawakawa tea and balms. A local skin care maker supported students to develop recipes and methods to create a quality product. These balms were manufactured and marketed (using plastic free packaging) to be sold at our local market day and garden safari. Students also learnt about marketing and designed several logos for their balm, choosing the one in the photo to have made.

Students have increased knowledge and appreciation for endemic plants. Tamariki were empowered to develop and sell a quality, sustainable product to a real market which supported fundraising for more enviro projects. This is also now one of the items we give in a pack to visitors to the school as a koha.



Kawakawa balm ready to be given as koha.



Cloth bags and T-shirt bags

Sustainability focus: *To reduce single use plastics in our environment.*

The plastic bag ban of 2019 led to an inquiry into the effects of plastics on our environment. Students wanted to develop alternatives for single use plastic bags. We drew on the expertise of a community group “Plastic free Kaeo” who taught tamariki and kaiako to sew their own cloth shopping bags. Alongside the sewing machines, students researched and developed t-shirt bags that could be made by hand. Students then became the experts and taught others to make their own bags, ensuring all families were supplied with a plastic free alternative bag.

One of the outcomes of this was that students were empowered with a new skill of sewing. They were motivated to create bags for their community and in doing so spread solution-based thinking to a significant environmental problem.



Sewing cloth shopping bags.

Further reflection

After a year of Envirodays the teachers again reflected on how we could further strengthen the awesome mahi that was happening in our little kura. To give students more choice, rather than rotating around different projects each fortnight, which had offered exposure and multiple experience, we decided that the students could instead choose which projects they wanted to focus on during Enviroday. From 2019 this is how we operated the Enviroday, with a teacher supervising a project, and students opting in at the beginning of the day to work on that project for the whole day. Interestingly many students chose to stick with the same project for several weeks, some for the duration, and other students initially liked to do different activities each time for more of a ‘taster’ experience. The variety of different projects has allowed us to use a strengths-based approach to empower students to find what their passion and strengths are. We made a note of who was taking leadership in the projects, and which students were still in need of more resilience training. This fed back into our classroom programmes where we focused on building the *Habits of Mind* of our students.

During 2018 we had reflected on our literacy and numeracy results and seeing improvements, decided to integrate more of our Enviro learning into our other teaching and learning. As each of us were at different stages in our use of sustainability as a focus, we decided that whole school PLD would not be appropriate. Instead, we each had termly (or more frequently if desired) coaching sessions with a PLD provider who had expertise in curriculum integration and sustainability at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. We did this to ensure that we were choosing the most appropriate next steps for our ako as teachers, which was more personalised, and reflected the aim we also had for our students’ learning. This also ensured that we established a clear plan and vision, with measurable outcomes.

Beeswax wraps

Sustainability focus: *To reduce single use plastics in our environment.*

In 2019 Oruaiti School began a ‘Litter Free’ lunch school. We encouraged students to bring “naked” lunches to school with a reward system. To support this, we needed to offer an alternative to plastic food wrap. We drew on the expertise of our whānau and created beeswax wraps for all families. Students also produced and marketed these for our annual market day, Kerikeri Garden safari and to go into our koha pack for visitors to the school.

Students proudly used their own creations in their lunch boxes. Tamariki were empowered to spread the importance of reducing plastic and could offer their whānau a solution to their daily plastic use. Lots of Grandparents received them as gifts at Christmas, spreading the Enviro message far and wide.



Student quote - Georgie - “We made beeswax wraps ‘cos you can use them instead of clingfilm and foil and baking paper and just give them a wipe instead of throwing them away and adding to landfill. Plastic stuff takes ages to decompose so wraps are better as you use them again and again and they don’t cause pollution. We can use the wax from our honeys so we are using something that might get thrown away.”

Teaching the students at Whangarei Girls High

Sustainability focus: *The choices and actions we can take to prevent, reduce, or change harmful activities to the environment.*

A group of our students visited Whangarei Girls High School to show them how to make beeswax wraps, kawakawa balm and T-Shirt bags. These were Year 4 and 5 rural school students teaching Year 9 and 10 city school students. Whangarei Girls High were setting up similar Enviro student-led mahi and a past student of Oruaiti at the school asked if we could go down to support them. This opportunity increased confidence and self-efficacy of the Oruaiti students.

Quote from whānau and kaimahi - Michelle: Kendal [her daughter] went on to a very large school. In primary industries when the idea came up about using beeswax wraps instead of Gladwrap. Kendal said, "I know people that can help with this." She organised Rob, her old teacher to connect and along went Oruaiti (Rob and a car full of little teachers) who taught secondary students how to make the wraps and all about why they were so good. Considering they travelled 2 hours down to Whangarei I think we are definitely engaging with the local and wider community about environmental issues, and we are also creating proud students who leave our school with an immense amount of enviro knowledge which they are not afraid to pass on.

Honey from our beehives

Sustainability focus: *Producing kai for us and our community, looking at a Sustainable business and making links with our community*

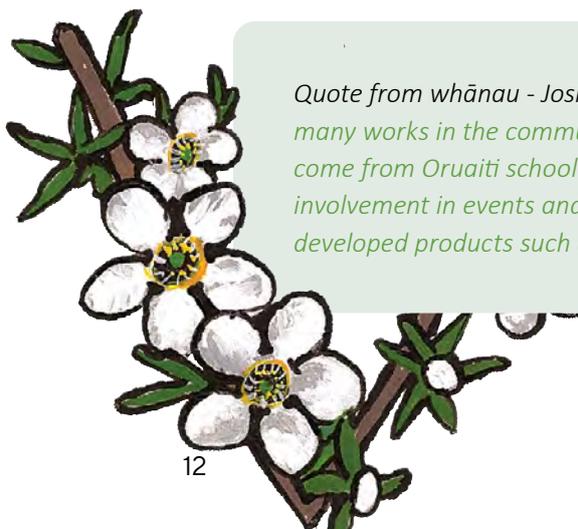
A local beekeeper, Harlan, donated hives to our school and came and taught students about bee keeping. He helped with harvesting the honey, loaned the school equipment for warming and extracting the honey and has been checking in with us when we need it for the last few years.

A Parent, who is a trained food technologist, taught students about proper bottling conditions and correct nutritional and food grade labelling to be able to sell commercially. The whole process of producing, bottling and selling the honey was a truly collaborative mahitahi effort.

Our students have again taken action around a sustainability issue they have been learning about in class - the decline of bees. This has also given them another potential employment pathway for the future.



Quote from whānau - Josie "I have seen many works in the community that have come from Oruaiti school such as children's involvement in events and marketing developed products such as the honey."



Writing and publishing a schoolbook

Hakuturi Wings for School Production: Kia Kaha Kiwi and Hakuturi: Guardians of Puketū Forest Book

Over the course of the year many classes at Oruaiti and Taipa art students collaborated on a book to promote environmental awareness of our precious Kauri trees. While this was happening, we also had a school production, so we made Hakuturi wings from litter collected around the school. For the book printing and publication, we raised \$2000 from The Northland Regional Council Environmental Leaders Award and we raised the other \$1000 needed from selling tea towels and honey.



The book starts to take shape.



This integrated curriculum approach engaged and educated students about guardianship of our space and environment and the desire for less litter at school. The students realised that anything was possible, and they could achieve the unimaginable if they wanted it and worked hard for it.

Outdoor learning space - STAGE ONE

Sustainability focus: Providing a safe environment for parents and students outside of the normal classroom parameters.

Students at Oruaiti School have raised over \$3000 towards powering our outdoor learning space with solar and wind energy. They have designed, produced and sold their own branded products such as tea towels, lip balm, mānuka honey, garden chairs and written and published a children's storybook. We have had support from local shops at traders who have sold our tea towels, honey and books at Cable Bay Store and Kerikeri Market.



We worked with MoE to create our outdoor learning space based on the students' designs. The intention is to create a hub surrounded by our core enviro projects; riparian planting and wetland rejuvenation, bees, ducks, vegetable, mānuka and kawakawa planting and pottery production. This outdoor learning space is going to be a hub shared by whānau for extra activities and learning outside of school hours, as well as providing exciting opportunities to learn new skills in class time. We have been supporting the wellbeing of our students and whānau in various ways (duck egg breakfast club, vegetable planting and community pantry) and this is a next step for us. The learning we have had throughout this process is as valuable as the final product. This has been a 3-year project - passed down from class to class to provide a central hub for all of our enviro projects.

This space is designed to enhance the skills and mindsets of students who thrive in an outdoor setting and to promote equity for students and whānau who can struggle within the confines of the classroom setting. The outdoor learning space was originally a project for year 4/5 students to design a space that they would love to see at school. The idea they came up with was to create a treehouse feel in the orchard. After we asked a local draughts person to come up with a scale plan of our ideas we submitted a proposal to the Kerikeri Rotary for support. It was decided that it was a bit too much of a commitment for the Rotary members, so it remained a dream for a couple of years until the MoE allocated School Investment Package (SIP) funding of \$60,000 for the project last year. The designs we already had produced were still closely followed and the project started in earnest at the start of 2021 and is just being completed now.

Quote from whānau - Atawhai

"I think the New outdoor Enviro class is spectacular, definitely a classroom our tamariki will use very often."

> Original application to Rotary

Our new outdoor learning space (OLS) brought in local draftsmen, builders, and the Kerikeri Rotary club to work with our students on the design, costing and building. It will be a hub for the local community to use, including for our whānau support programme where whānau members come in weekly to be taught with and by their own students so they know how to support their tamariki at home. The outdoor learning space is solar-powered and collects its own water. It has been built around a Totara tree, in the middle, which is pretty cool!



Clearing the land behind school to plant our orchard next to the OLS

Sustainability focus: *To reestablish a use for our orchard space that had deteriorated over time for lack of use and care.*

We wanted to clear the area and to this out the bush space so that the area had a clear line of site to the rest of the school. The actual orchard space also was earmarked for fruit tree planting to reestablish a usable and functional orchard so that future generations could use the fruit from the new fruit trees.

We held a few working bees with the help of parents and Rotary members as well as whole school help. The local farmer and local fire service also lent their time and support to clearing the debris.

This is a space ready to be built on and planted. Students have developed self-efficacy for engaging in meaningful mahitahi.

Planting over 1000 mānuka and 500 kawakawa with local Rotary members

Sustainability focus: *Tamariki understanding the importance of native plant species in a biodiverse environment.*

The Rotary Club of Kerikeri funded our 1500 saplings and provided extra personnel to do the planting with the students and teachers. We now have significant areas of our school property which are replanted in native trees. Tamariki are kaitiaki of these plants as they understand the importance of the seedlings they planted. The trees are promoting biodiversity and encouraging bees and native birds back into the area.



Designing signage for the Northland Regional Council which was then used at our local beaches

Sustainability focus: *Promoting importance of protecting endemic species.*

Our students have developed a real understanding of the threats to our endemic species. This has been through our classroom inquiry/literacy programmes, various experts sharing their knowledge on field trips to our local forest areas and of course developing our pest control systems within our school. Subsequently, Northland Regional Council approached us to design posters to help educate our community about how to be responsible pet owners in order to protect our native birds.



Reflection time...



With the improved resilience, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga being displayed by the students, we felt it was an appropriate time to re-introduce another of Elwyn's legacies – animals. At first we thought we would get chickens, as we knew they were easy to look after, some of the tamariki had them at home and could therefore lead this learning with other students, and it would also promote sustainability by providing the school with healthy kai, but the thinking changed towards ducks!

We also reviewed how our implementation of improved assessment for learning practices was going. Through a group coaching session we identified, as we had above with the integration, that each teacher was at a different stage in how they were implementing AfL. We agreed as a staff on some consistent practices that we wanted to carry on right from our New Entrants class through to Year 8, which were making learning really clear, communicating and checking for understanding of learning intentions and success criteria, so that all students could confidently answer the questions: What am I learning? Why am I learning it? How will I know I have been successful? In our critical friend partnerships we arranged to periodically check in with each other's students to collect data to show if this intention was being realised, which gave us further evidence for what was working and what wasn't. Our coaching sessions with our PDL provider focused on which area of AfL we would like to improve, and again this allowed us to decide exactly where our efforts would have the biggest impact, with a clear plan and markers.

Jorja had learning conversations with each student around their next steps in maths, which she made into a laminated card with a photo of the student to pin on the wall. This provided a clear guide to the progression the student was on as well as a resource to use with other students in the class and future classes. It also encouraged students to talk to each other about their learning as they were all working on different focuses, and so there was no competition or comparison between learners as you commonly get when all students are working on the same thing at the same time, with winners and losers and very fixed mindsets.



School ducks

Sustainability focus: *This is one of the projects that we really wanted to show the students a lived example of the whakatauki and philosophy of Education for Sustainability in the NZC:*

We purchased 7 ducks in 2019, then a further 4 in 2020, which live in our school dam. We have also had a few ducklings, which unfortunately have not survived to adulthood. The students are responsible for raising funds to purchase the duck food through other Enviro projects. Each term there are students who hold the responsibility of being 'Duck Monitors'. They take the duck food up the hill to feed the ducks before school, and they collect eggs that have been laid overnight. The eggs are given to the 'Breakfast Club Monitors' who make them into scrambled eggs for breakfast club before school, under the supervision of a teacher.

Students are kaitiaki of our ducks and are proud to have this responsibility. The students realised that over the weekends and holidays the ducks were not getting fed for long periods of time. They decided to design a duck feeder that would be able to be left so that the ducks could dispense the food themselves when they needed it. Their final design worked and is still in use now. In the holidays students also volunteer to come into school to check on the ducks.

"Mō tātou te taiao ko te atawhai, mō tātou te taiao ko te oranga."

"It is for us to care for and look after the environment to ensure its wellbeing, in doing so we ensure our own wellbeing and that of our future generations."



Feeding the school ducks and students

Student quote - TK - "I like enviro because we get to feed the ducks and it's helped me learn more about nature. I like working outside because we can smell fresh air and we've got a nice breeze."

Student quote - Sam - "I decided to feed the ducks because I hadn't been very involved with them before and I saw that everyone else was helping out like Levi and Cooper, feeding and finding eggs and that made me want to get involved. It's fun and sometimes annoying as you are in Kaitaia, and you still have to come and feed the ducks because I know they would starve and then not lay eggs if we didn't feed them."

Levi - If we didn't feed the ducks there'd be no breakfast club. We got them to get eggs. We made a duck feeder with a hole and a yellow bucket and a tray where the food comes out of the hole and not the tray so the ducks can eat. This meant we didn't have to feed them under the fence. I've learnt loads here about how to protect our environment and I can do it myself now.

Protecting the ducks

1. Building a floating duck platform (three iterations!)

Sustainability focus: *The students understand that their actions both support the ecosystems and habitats in and around our school, but also the sustainable nature of producing fresh kai on school grounds with the resources available to us. Both rafts were made from bits lying around in sheds at school and nearby farms.*

This involved student inquiry, problem solving and integrated curriculum. There was high interest in these real-life contexts. Like the other projects described, students designed, built, tested and refined their floating duck houses.

The first one sank as it was too narrow. The second one lost a barrel but turned out to be fortunate as the ducks were able to swim straight onto it as it was partly submerged on one corner. The students are now looking at partly filling the barrels, adding a roof and moving the raft to the middle of the pond so that they can rest away from all pests.

The fact that students are using the design cycle repeatedly to solve novel problems, coming up with creative solutions, is allowing them to grow their critical thinking skills far more rapidly than they may otherwise without these practical experiential problems.



There are lots of stories to tell about the school ducks!

Quote from whānau, Phil:

"Enviro learning has given Eli some practical skills to help him later in life... doing practical things keeps him interested and want to keep learning. He loves the building projects, which helps with his hand/eye coordination, but also makes him think outside the box and come up with solutions. As this is something he enjoys, it has also helped his confidence with working within a team."

Quote whānau, Josie:

"I especially love the innovative work that goes on in the extended classroom that incorporates all curriculum areas into real life situations. i.e. caring for the ducks and eggs - my child's class researched why a few of the ducks could be disappearing and developed a shelter using science, math, English, social and practical skills to construct a shelter for the ducks protection."

Quote from student, Cooper:

"I worked on the sinking Titanic project! So, we built the floating duck house because all the ducks needed somewhere to hide from the hawks, the rats and stoats, but the floating house sunk and we called it the Titanic. Then we built another raft, and it was sinking Titanic 2, but only one side. The ducks got on easier, but we still need to get a shelter for it from the sun. Sometimes there is a sort of end to the projects, but mostly there is always something to do. Even in 20 years' time."



2. Fencing the ducks

Sustainability focus: *Learning about the interaction between people and the environment. Students are again taking action as they can see the impact this action will have on their school, it's tangata and the whenua. They see the knock-on effect of their actions - both positive and negative.*



The idea was that we would be keeping pests out and keeping our ducks in. As lovely as it was to see the ducks waddling down the hill each morning to greet the students rolling off the school bus, it became a problem when the ducks started making their way into classrooms and pooing on the concrete play areas. With the money we raised from our eco products we researched fencing options. The students ordered the fencing directly from one of their chromebooks with the support of their teacher (and the principal's credit card!) It took a couple of weeks to complete but we have kept the ducks in ever since!

Now there is no duck poo on school grounds, happier teachers, ducks are better protected, and we have kept the same number of ducks with none escaping since. A new problem is that pūkeko can get in and eat the eggs, so we have a new problem to manage.

3. Making hawk scarers

The ducks were being attacked by hawks and so the students researched the best way to prevent this. Several options were not achievable and so they decided the most practical and cheapest option was to make hawk scarers using core flute real estate signs and free milk cartons. The information had stated that the shinier the scarers were the better, and rather than use aluminium foil, one student pointed out the inside of the cartons were silver, and so they could be repurposed. The scarer is doing a great job!

Reflection time...

Our focuses of improving literacy and numeracy were still in place, as well as building engagement, resilient and meaningful learning. Elwyn's kaupapa was being brought alive again and more and more of the community were actively joining in on a number of our Enviro projects. However, we felt that the junior students in our Year 1-3 classes were not as actively involved as we would like, which was a gap if we wanted to grow Enviro-agents from Year 1. During 2019 the Year 3 students joined in with the senior students on Enviro Day, which increased the already strong tuākana tēina happening, with both Year 3 and 4 this year starting Enviro day for the first time. We came up with ideas as a whole staff of how our youngest tamariki could be involved, which resulted in the following projects:

Building veggie planter boxes with Bunnings

Sustainability focus: *Students are gaining knowledge and skills to produce their own food.*

We wanted the junior students in our Year 1-3 to be more involved in the whole school Enviro projects and so we contacted Bunnings and they donated some time and resources to come and build three raised planters. Our older students helped with the construction - some of them telling the Bunnings staff what to do! Since they were built last year, the junior students have been raising seedlings, planting them and harvesting them, so that they can also contribute to kai for the school.



Our school now has 6 planter boxes which we rotate for seasonal planting. Students are learning lifelong skills to ensure they can feed their whānau in a healthy and sustainable way. This is a great access point for our junior students to contribute to our Enviro ethos.



Quote from whānau – Leanne: “I was at the school with my eldest son who is 32. My youngest boy is in Year 7 now and they are doing way more outdoors learning, like planting trees, working in the wetlands and growing veggies.”

T-towel screen printing

Sustainability focus: *The Year 1 students worked collaboratively to produce a T-towel that represented their diversity through their artwork with an Enviro theme, as Elwyn did in his time at the school. The Year 1 students were all involved in sharing decisions about the colour and layout of the towels in order to become confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners within the Oruaiti School Enviro group.*

Our younger ākonga each drew a bee, which were then put into a pattern that was made into a screen print. The students helped to do the screen printing on each Bee-towel, sold at Kerikeri Garden Safari and the school market day to contribute to the school Envirofund.

The youngest students in the school are increasingly playing their part in the Enviro focus and learning how they can take action to improve the wellbeing of themselves and their community. This was also a great authentic writing prompt.

Any excess food grown in the junior schools vege planters, or extra eggs or honey go into the pātaka kai for the local community to take, which is empowering for our tamariki to know they are helping to support the more vulnerable in our community. The pātaka



kai has been a learning focus for our Year 2 students this term incorporating Te Au Māori, Te Reo Māori and Sustainability.

Elwyn had also been a keen potter – something that formed a large part of the arts focus of the school back in the 20th century. With Enviro funds the students bought a kiln and started making pottery, which was a product sold at market day. Some junior students also experimented with making ‘Bee pots’ to use for our honey, but found this project too time consuming, expensive and too difficult to make food grade, so decided to stick with the glass jars.

Other Elwyn themed Enviro-Art projects have been the making and painting of concrete seats for the students, and a huge hand painted Oruaiti sign that has individual native bird pictures painted on by every student in the school.

The 2020 reflection has led to the Year 7 and 8 students changing their tech day to a Thursday so that they can become involved in Enviroday too, and their area to improve and sustain is the wetland area just over the road from the school.

WaiRestoration

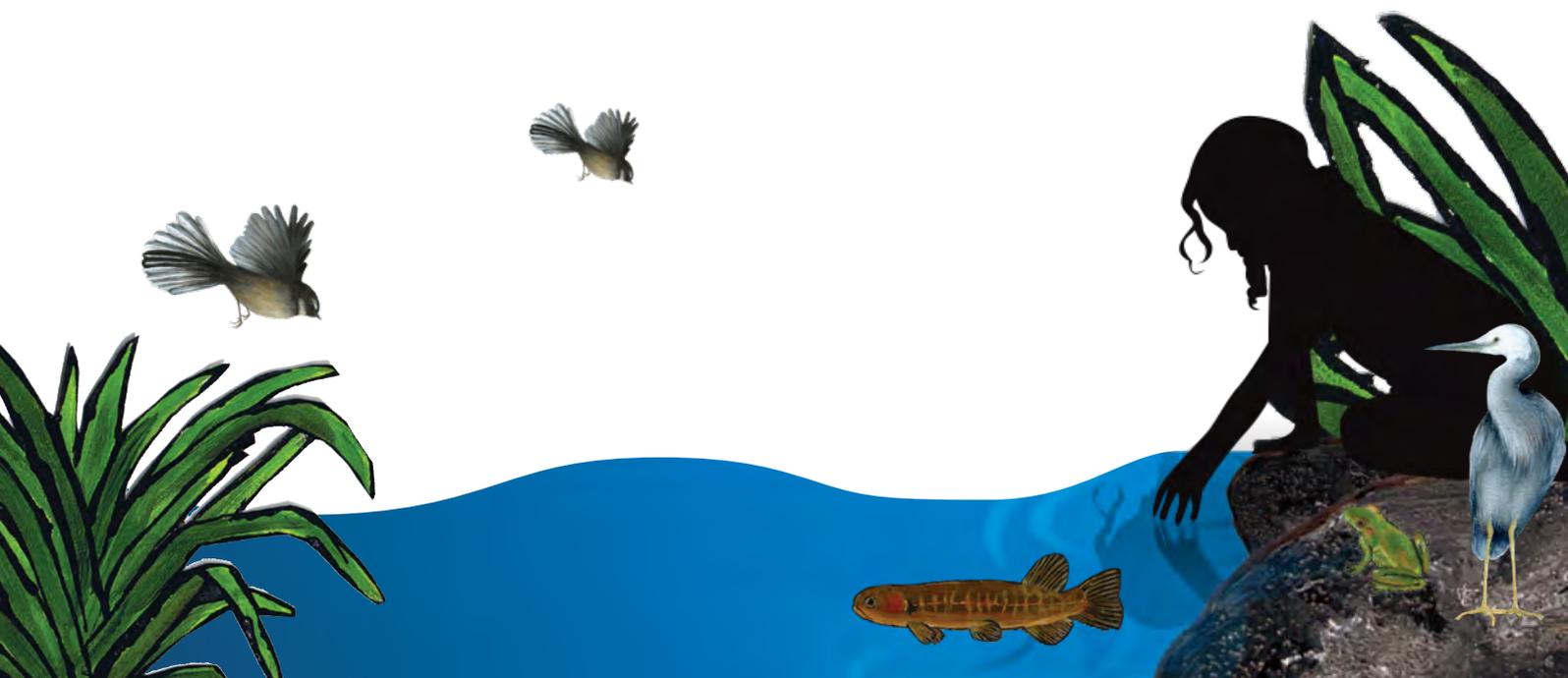
Sustainability focus: Water, land and ecosystems. Taking action to improve our interaction and effect on our environment.

This project involved clearing a huge wetland area of weeds, planting of native species and controlling pest species such as rats and stoats.

In one term the Year 7 and 8 students have transformed the wetland area. They are using the word “convolvulus” as if they had been studying bindweed all their lives, such is the amount they have had to clear to make way for the native planting. These students have gone from being slightly apathetic about science and technology to really engaging and persisting as they are seeing the measurable outcomes of their work in the wetland area. They are enthused about what their next project will be to further improve this area. They are now hugely driven to design their own natural weed killer with one student stating, “We know the first one might not work, but we are going to re-design it and test it again and again and again until it does.” The children are able to continue to trap pests to help care for this valuable resource where we are able to monitor the water quality through the aquatic life and water testing kits. The WaiRestoration project is also helping to clean up the local river, supporting our farmers.



Oruaiti wetland



Rubbish video

Sustainability focus: Promoting correct waste management to our community. Tuākana-tēina, working together to take action.

Year 1 and 2 students starred in a reduce, reuse, recycle video written, filmed and edited by the year 6-7 class. Waste management is an ongoing issue for our ever-growing school. In 2021 staff and students identified a need that our school community needed a reminder on how we work together to recycle correctly and reduce our waste being sent to landfill. Two classes came together as tuākana-tēina and worked to develop an engaging video to remind our community how and why we protect our environment from rubbish. The video was created and edited by the senior students. The two teachers of the Year 1-2 and Year 6-7 class are new to Oruaiti this year. They have fully embraced the Enviro kaupapa of the school, which is demonstrated in this collaborative project.

Students of all ages are empowered to teach their community solutions to the waste management problem that is having a big impact on their environment. This quote from Sarah Mendham, the new Year 2 teacher, highlights how the school is now positioned in having embedded the sustainability kaupapa:

It has been truly wonderful to enter into a school community who support each other wholeheartedly in this continuing journey for our tamariki. I have felt supported and empowered to engage students and help guide them on their learning journeys since joining the team here at Oruaiti School. It is truly a collaborative environment with many elements coming together through perseverance and hard work of staff and community members, to produce a rich and supported program all students are able to access. On a personal note, it has been inspiring to be able to join a community of educators who have similar personal beliefs around the importance of teaching our tamariki to become kaitiaki and help to ensure the wonderfully rich and diverse environments we have in the far north remain so for generations to come. I see so many extra hours and resources go into enriching daily programs, and as a result truly engaged and excited students who feel empowered to explore their own concerns and interests, making their learning journeys relevant and meaningful to their own local experiences and environments.



Quote from whānau, Atawhai - "Tena koutou katoa Nga kaitiaki O Oruaiti, Mīharo o koutou mahi... Tino Rawe enei kōrero" (Facebook)



Reflecting on our journey

Five years ago, Oruaiti School decided to use more of their local environment, doing practical integrated learning to stimulate prompts for literacy and numeracy to better engage their ākonga. The projects had an environmental sustainability focus and led to gaining Silver Enviroschools in 2019 and 2021 Green-Gold!

Our students have gone from being passive recipients of teacher-led learning, to driving and owning their own learning. They have learnt so much about their local environment and the importance of protecting it, which they now know they can. They proudly take visitors around the school to show them the mahi they have been doing and talk about what they have learnt – including the mistakes that they made along the way. Tamariki Tāne who were previously reluctant readers and writers now have an authentic purpose for their literacy and numeracy activities. They have also fostered a growth-mindset and are not afraid to ask other ākonga for help. The focus of this mahi has also increased the tuākana-tēina relationships and ako at the kura, with many of the less academic students becoming the experts using their practical knowledge and skills to awahi other students and teachers.

In addition to the achievement of the intended outcomes described the school roll has grown from 61 students in 2016 to 169 students today, a 177% increase in roll in 5 years. We believe that to see the transformation we have in this time period, with this roll growth, considering the physical size of the school and the lack of adequate classrooms is something to be very proud of, and worthy of recognition.

Meaningful and relevant teaching and learning to increase engagement, using our local environment

Students can talk about their learning with confidence and can see how their literacy and numeracy connects to a real-life focus. They have autonomy in their learning through choice of issues and actions, as well as gaining mastery in the areas of focus through inquiry involving trial and error. The students feel a genuine connection to their learning and community now, which has really increased engagement and motivation. Bella, a senior student said, *“Planting is good ‘cause when you are older you will know how to do it.”*

It is not just the engagement of the students that has increased, but the whānau too. They feel like they have something valuable to offer to the school now in practical terms. Previously many of our farming parents would not attend events or celebrations at school when invited as they were working, but with the hands-on enviro focus they are keen to come and pass on their knowledge, skills and expertise and get stuck in too. This has also resulted in parents and grandparents feeling more comfortable to drop in to regular class time too as they feel welcome and part of the school community. One grandparent, who has also had his children go through the school has commented on how much the school culture has changed. He wrote the following post on Facebook after the Green-Gold EnviroSchools presentation (which a former student commented on with “Cool Skool”!):

Quote from whānau, Sonya - I believe the learning at Oruaiti supports my children really well as they progress and grow. Their school has a great outlook on being caring & confident & responsible. It has a warm, fun, calm yet energising family and village feel. I love helping out on school trips & events where families are invited to be involved. There are numerous opportunities for parents to help their children in their school activities... The community realises Oruaiti as a wonderful school for the children ...& it is quickly continuing to grow. Our Children are happy & confident & proud to be pupils attending their school. This definitely gives positive & prosperous future development in many levels for our community.

Quote from ākonga, Camryn - “Learning about enviro things makes me more aware of the environment and the things I do that will impact on the environment and if I should be doing it differently. It has made things easier for learning because it wasn’t just about maths or reading. It was about how many rats we got, how many trees we planted. It was different from other learning.”

Using a specific purpose (Enviro), moving through the progressions has been given an authentic objective to better achieve the motivating purpose. These have included: writing to the local council to ask for funding for future projects and the outdoor learning space, letters to the local Area School in Taipa to ask the senior students if they could help us with the illustrations for the book, letter to thank people for their support such as the builders for our outdoor learning space; writing a report to send to the local council to summarise how funding had been used; writing scripts to make a video to enter the competition for Sea Week about our efforts to reduce waste to protect our oceans; writing for our senior speeches had a similar focus for convincing people to invest in our students and their outdoor learning space; [Whakawhanaungatanga](#); writing instructions to teach other students to do the enviro projects writing blog posts to reflect on learning and next steps; writing questions in advance of visitors coming to the school to talk to classes.

There have been numerous numeracy opportunities through our Enviro learning, including: measuring for making items, e.g. pallet chairs (angles for comfort and strength), fencing for ducks (\$/meter for materials), how many

people can feed per Duck egg, weighing (ingredients for kai), measuring volume (fertiliser for plants) area (planting seeds and seedlings), diameter (floating duck house), statistical info for a number of projects (e.g. surveying the types of projects people want to do next, e.g. pump track, senior trampolines, flying fox) making tables for data, graphing, data analysis.

The literacy and numeracy outcomes have improved for our ākongā over the last five years too, so we are growing life-long learners who will hopefully continue to be inspired by their learning. With our school's roll growth from 61 students in 2015 to 169 today this improvement in both writing and maths is exceptional.

Our literacy and numeracy data has consistently achieved above the other schools in our Kāhui Ako.

[This link](#) shows the full report.



Increased resiliency of our students

Our students have improved academically in literacy and numeracy, but more importantly they've grown in resilience, and have learnt that they can make a positive difference to their world. Students understand and can describe how mistakes and failures are part of the learning process. They can provide lots of examples when questioned about how they have taken action around environmental issues, what they have learnt and what they would do differently next time. They are open to making mistakes as their resilience has grown as they can see that they learn more through getting it then getting it right. Further developing the entrepreneurial skills of our students beyond market day and honey will be a next step in this area. This work has made sustainability conversations a normal part of kōrero at Oruaiti. An example of this was last week when one of our students came to school on crutches and at lunchtime was chatting to a teacher and talking about designing better ones and selling them. An entrepreneur in the making!

Quote from whānau, Liz - "When [Sam] was with Rob the ducks were amazing. We had problems with his confidence and resilience. The ducks gave him responsibility. He loved it."

On our EnviroSchools Green-Gold day, Sam was the student representative who talked to four rotating groups including our 3 visiting facilitators, 4 whānau members and 16 students about the work the students have done with the ducks. He spoke clearly, confidently and knowledgeably about the sustainable practices that have been put in place in this area. Definitely no confidence or resilience issues now.

Quote from Year 5 student, Eelia - "I reckon it's good cause we're actually learning about environmental stuff and we've got the opportunity to do it... Last year we made a fundraiser for the solar panels... by selling our honey at the garden safari, market day, Cable Bay Store - that money goes towards environmental projects. We have to persevere, never give up... we need to maintain it so we need to persevere and keep doing it."



Stacey leads in aligning evidence with the Guiding Principles at their Green-Gold day

Rejuvenate the legacy of Elwyn Richardson

Once the Principal, Diane Bates had assembled her new teaching staff they were made aware of the history of the school. It was this acknowledgement of the past that set us on our journey of curriculum integration and project-based learning in a place-based context. Each year we became more and more proficient, and it is now embedded to such an extent that environmental learning is implicitly valued at all levels of our pedagogical practice.

> [Outdoor classroom honours legacy](#)

A clear graduate profile

Our graduate profile now has clear links to our school vision with indicators of what students will be doing towards our sustainability kaupapa at each age level and for each value.

Improved and effective use of formative assessment

Each teacher has increased their use of formative assessment through PLD on Assessment for Learning and through goal setting in 1:1 coaching sessions. Reflecting on our practices on a regular basis as a group has helped us to identify where we could improve in this high impact pedagogy. To increase formative assessment, we have also greatly reduced the amount of summative assessment we use and are no longer using timed tests, spelling, STAR reading, and timed basic facts. We have started using learning progressions to frame the teaching and learning. The teaching team has moderated easttle writing samples for the past few years and recognise the value of discussing our teacher judgements collaboratively. We were also frustrated that our written reports to parents still resemble an age of National Standards. At the beginning of last year teachers had individually resolved that using PACT as an assessment tool would help to formulate a wider outlook of our teacher judgments. To break this into manageable professional development we have begun collaboration of our evidence of learning with specific reading aspects in the Reading Progressions. After understanding these aspects, we will then move to using the PACT tool.

Quote from Kara, Year 1 teacher, re use of formative assessment:

Having a teaching inquiry focus on formative assessment has really magnified teaching and learning in my practice. When I notice that students don't seem to be making progress I reflect on two things: my relationship with those students and do they know what I am expecting them to learn? I can get very focused on learning tasks, completing work and getting students to a certain level. So often I know I should be sharing the learning, allowing students to self and peer assess and ask questions that probe learning, but when I actually reflect I notice that I am missing these simple aspects in my teaching.

I enjoy reading articles and watching videos about formative assessment. This inspires me to be a better teacher. I am really glad my principal promotes a focus on formative assessment through walk through observations, supporting professional development and funding coaching sessions which empower me to reflect honestly on my teaching practice.

Other positive outcomes:

We are showcasing the great work that is coming out of Te Tai Tokerau to the rest of the nation:

- We have had our Outdoor Learning Space project featured in the Ed Gazette, > [Education gazette article](#)
- Our Beeswax wrap mahi was featured on Breakfast on TVNZ. > [School newsletter about TVNZ visit](#)
- Sport Northland featured an article on our Litter Free Lunches campaign > [Sport northland news](#)

Improved achievement in literacy and numeracy

One of our students, Rourke, had the following to say about the Enviro focus: *“It helps us write more faster because we know what we’re writing about, like the ducks.”*

Our assessment and tracking has shown how our writing and maths has improved over the last five years. Literacy and numeracy are absolutely essential for our ākongā’s success here at Oruaiti and beyond. This is an area we will continue to grow but we are confident that we have made a significant impact through our sustainability and Enviro focus to date.

Dlane Bates, our Tumuaki, has summarised our journey as follows:

I came to Oruaiti School as Principal in 2015, at that stage we had 60 students with three classes. At the end of that first year the staff we had all went off to other teaching roles and we were in the position to hire new staff. As the school roll had started to increase our BOT agreed to fund a fourth teacher until we had the numbers needed for the ministry to fund this.

One of the teachers we employed at the start of 2016 was Rob Arrowsmith. This appointment was pivotal as Rob’s passion for environmental learning has been part of the driving force for our environmental/ sustainability journey. Rob has continued to engage students through ‘hands-on’ learning developing areas in and around our school.

As we have continued to grow, we now have 169 students in 7 classes, (we really need 8 classes but have no more available space) we have been fortunate to have had more amazing staff join our team: Kaiya Lafotanoa (DP) in 2016, Jorja Walden in 2016, Mark Pickard in 2017, Kara Fleming and Meg Van der Laarse in 2018 and Cindy Wihongi and Sarah Mendham this year. Having a stable staff who share our vision for the school is amazing, and as the roll has grown and new staff have come on board, we are now all working towards the common goal of doing our best for our students, giving them as many skills as possible to adapt to our changing world, caring for our environment and sharing their learning with others.

As Principal of Oruaiti School I feel very privileged to work with such a dedicated team. I believe the staff, students and wider community really are the best that any school could have.



Increasing depth and breadth of what we do

One of our parents, Liz, who attended the Green-Gold sharing day, commented, *"I think the school is great with all the environmental activities. We got the green/gold award. And now we have our next steps."* So our community, ākongā and kaiako know that this journey is set to continue.

We have many aspirations for our school in the future. We know that it is imperative that we maintain our position in our community as a hub of environmental projects and learning. Our hope is that by continuing to develop enterprise with sustainability at the centre we can show our community that it is possible and something that our future generation holds valuable. We are working on ensuring that sustainability is threaded through all of our learning areas. Our upcoming drama production will have an environmental message, we will continue to strive to provide waste free school events. We believe that this will allow our tamariki to educate their whānau and have an even bigger impact on our local environment.

The tamariki would like to continue their inquiry learning with an aim to enhance their own environment. Growing up in a small rural community they have a significant need for extra-curricular activities within and outside of school hours. They hope to create a pump track, rope swings and a natural adventure playground which can be shared with their community and provide a safe and healthy place to play and socialise. Teachers are excited to support tamariki to drive these projects as they see this as having potential to continue to develop student agency as well as encouraging them to continue to love their outdoor rural lifestyle. It is important to our kura that tamariki feel they have left a legacy at their school within the physical environment as they leave with a sense of pride about where they have come from.

We also understand the importance of sharing our mahi and learning from others. Students are keen to engage with other schools and learn from each other. Teachers know that it is important for our rural tamariki to understand how their contributions impact at a global level. We aim to expose our students to global movements and to help them to see what other schools are doing globally. We think that this will enhance our students further – to move from local to national and international projects.

- Video file > [Seaweek Oruaiti School](#)
- 2021 Prime Minister's education excellence Awards > [Education Focus prize winner video](#)



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