

# Enviroschools Ōtākou

Enviroschools

Hakihea  
December 2024



Nau mai, haere mai

Term 4 is for Student Hui!

Ākonga across Ōtākou have been busy getting involved in a wide range of Enviroschools activities, with six separate hui across the region. Hui have been held in Queenstown (31st October), Waipahi on the Otago - Southland border (5th November), Oamaru (8th November), Alexandra (14th November), Dunedin (29th November) and Wānaka (4th December).

Student hui are an important part of the Enviroschools kaupapa in Ōtākou, where distance and significant differences in climate and biodiversity means lots of local challenges and solutions. Creating opportunities within local communities ensures that ākonga are being connected with experts in their area and are exposed to ideas and solutions that are specific to them in their place of being.

These six hui across Ōtākou have had significant community input from community organisations, local government, environmental groups, catchment groups, schools and businesses, and the collaboration is the key to the success of our hui. Being able to tap into experts and connect them directly with schools enables ākonga to drive their environmental journey forward in authentic pathways. Where interest in particular topics are high, Enviroschools Facilitators can support more connection and in-depth workshops at schools. After 22 years, Enviroschools facilitators work across Otago and reach 101 schools incorporating more than 24,000 pupils, in year-round programmes. Across a school year, Ōtākou Facilitators would hold around 4 hui locally every year aimed at both ākonga and kaiako.



*Southland Enviroschools Regional Coordinator, Josh Sullivan, shows ākonga best spots for planting during the Clutha Waipahi Wetlands Enviroschools Hui.*



*Queenstown Enviroschools Facilitator, Nicky Gray, shows ākonga a bundle of worms at the Queenstown Enviroschools Student Hui.*



*Waitaki ākonga learn about predator tracking by looking closely at footprints to identify potential predators at the Waitaki Enviroschools Primary Hui.*



*Poolburn ākonga find a cave in Jolendale Park, as a part of the Harakeke trail activity at the Central Otago Enviroschools Student Hui. Ākonga were encouraged to explore around the park, a place where many ākonga had never been before.*

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## KIA ORA KOUTOU

Ka mihi mahana ki a koutou

It has been an incredibly busy Term 4 filled with student hui across Ōtākou. We hold hui within our local communities to empower and encourage environmental leadership of ākonga and support them to make connections with local experts and organisations. If you have any photos that you'd love for us to share, please send them to [enviroschools@orc.govt.nz](mailto:enviroschools@orc.govt.nz)

From 2025, Holistic Reflections will become more authentic to schools environmental journeys and less focused on a stage based approach. Schools will be well familiar with formative reflection, and this is how we hope to encourage more reflection for schools across Ōtākou.

There have been a few changes in the Ōtākou team recently and we hope to share with you new faces and support that will be available to schools next year. We hope that you have a good holiday and are refreshed ready for an incredible 2025!

“Mauri tū mauri ora. An active soul is a healthy soul”.



**Leisa de Klerk**  
Enviroschools  
Regional  
Coordinator  
Lead



## Waitaki Boys EnviroDay



*Waitaki Boys High School Year 9 and 10 ākonga listen to Clutha Enviroschools Facilitator, Scott Martin, explain “The Apple as our World” activity.*

On the 25th of November, our Waitaki Enviroschools team helped Waitaki Boys High School continue their Enviroschools journey with a full day of environmental and agricultural activities and speakers. The day focused on togetherness and connection with the goal to get students to understand we are all connected to each other as well as the land.

10 activities for 10 minutes meant ākonga were able to get wide access to experts and environmental ideas from across Ōtākou and Waitaki. Activities were run by Ōtākou Enviroschools facilitators, NOSLaM, the Oamaru Penguin Colony, Otago Regional Council, the Waitaki Recycling Centre and the Waitaki District Council Community Engagement Team. The day started with an engaging presentation by Otago Marine Science Professor Chris Hepburn, showcasing the environmental impact that he has seen in his career and encouraging ākonga to consider a career in Marine Science.

The day ended with ākonga creating short media clips encouraging their local government to take more action with environmental causes they care about. Topics included marine wildlife, coastal erosion and deforestation with many young people at Waitaki Boys specifically concerned about coastal erosion - a topic close to home for the school. The clips were brought together and shared with the wider Year 9 and 10s and will be presented to the Waitaki District Council.

This years EnviroDay was so successful that already plans are in place for 2025 making it bigger with more schools involved. We look forward to seeing what comes next!

## National Energiser Hui



For the first time in a number of years, Enviroschools facilitators, educators and coordinators came together in Tamaki Makaurau for a hui aimed at energizing us all across the motu. Hosted at the beautiful and welcoming Te Mahurehure Cultural Marae, we learned new activities, connected with new and old friends and made plans for what we want for Enviroschools in the future.



## Reflection celebration for Papakaio School



Leaders of the Papakaio School Envirogroup with their key teacher, Nikki Wheeler, proudly hold the certificate during their celebration of all their hard work with Enviroschools this year.

Papakaio School has had an amazing year of growth with Enviroschools and last week, they celebrated their journey with a whole school and community event as a part of their holistic reflection. The school has embarked on an incredible environmental journey of growth starting with a vision map so they could see what it was they wanted to change in their school. This was completed by ākonga, kaiako and their whānau and helped shaped the ideas of the Envirogroup and their plans. They also embarked on a waste audit that has meant their rubbish bill has decreased significantly every month. They've been planting and have even visited other schools to see what they do, in particular with compost. Well done, Papakaio School! Your celebrations are well deserved!

## Enviroschools on Air!

Ōtākou Enviroschools has been featured on the Waste Minimisation and Resource podcast, RETHinking Waste, from recycling to resources, talking about how young people are leading the way in waste reduction initiatives and encouraging their peers, whānau and hapori to get involved. Tess, our Ōtepoti Facilitator, spoke about the Enviroschools kaupapa of young people leading the way for environmental action.



Ōtepoti Enviroschools Facilitator, Tess Mackay (centre), takes a photo with RETHinking Waste Co-Hosts Rob Riddell Tigear and Leisa de Klerk.

## Experiencing hapori and connection through student hui



Year 7-10 ākonga got to experience the Ōtākou Harbour up close during their Enviroschools Hui in Ōtepoti on the 29th of November.



Ākonga learnt the history of Ōtākou Harbour and the impacts of human activity on the harbours health and biodiversity.



Primary School ākonga got to put tuakana-teina relationships into practice by supporting ECE ākonga in their Enviroschools hui adventure in Wānaka on the 4th of December.





# Enviroschools Ōtākou



## Goodbye to Tess!

Ōtākou Enviroschools is sad to say goodbye to one of our Ōtepoti Enviroschools Facilitators, Tess Mackay. Tess has been a part of the Dunedin Enviroschools team for the past 2 years and has been an integral part of the Dunedin Enviroschools team as well as an enthusiastic facilitator for the wider Ōtākou team.

The Ōtākou team will miss the wonderful wit and humour that Tess always brought to our meetings and hui. Her organisational skills and attention to detail is incredible! We wish Tess all the best in her future endeavours and look forward to spotting her around the community, where we are sure she will continue to have a positive impact.



*Tess has successfully evaded being in many photos during her time with us, but we have captured this great one of her facilitating at a student hui in 2023.*



## Ōtākou Catch up

This term's kanohi ki te kanohi catch up for our wider Ōtākou team was based in Ōtepoti Dunedin with Beccy Dove from the National Enviroschools team supporting us with our wider regional objectives. We have come away from this catch up with some solid plans for 2025 and 2026 and we look forward to sharing with you in the new year!



*Some of the Ōtākou team take a photo after an exploratory walk in the town belt with Town Belt Kaitiaki Coordinator, Maureen Howard.*

## Enviroschools Ōtākou Tīma



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