



Floating vessels made out of rubbish at Pukehou School, Central Hawke's Bay.

Pukehou School has won a Green-Gold Enviroschool award twice, along with numerous other awards for conservation. Education for sustainability is embedded in the schools' curriculum and ethos.



Sam Phillips (left) and Zane Berge, feeding the chooks at Pukehou School, Central Hawke's Bay.



## Children discover recycling is fun

Greenmeadows Kindergarten children looking at the strawberry plants.

**G**reenmeadows kindergarten is proving that it's never too young for children to start becoming environmentally conscious.

"The children are very receptive to recycling and are really learning," says head teacher Alison Dench.

The kindergarten was introduced to the Enviroschools programme by the Napier Kindergarten Association which has been proactively supporting the initiative. So at Greenmeadows kindergarten find a worm farm, composting system and a veggie garden.

Alison explains that the programme has become a two way information system between kindergarten and the home. "Children are encouraged to bring back food scraps for the worms whilst taking information home to parents to encourage recycling education."

Delving into a gooey worm farm is fun for young sticky fingers. There is a bokashi bucket to kickstart compost whilst broccoli, broad beans, carrots and silverbeet gathered from the garden become raw vegetables to accompany tasty dips. Litter free lunch boxes are mentioned along with talks about sustainability and the 3 Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle.

Litter bins each with an appropriate picture encourage the children to recycle plastics, paper and landfill materials.

At Greenmeadows Kindergarten 70 children are discovering that recycling and sustainability are fulfilling and fun.

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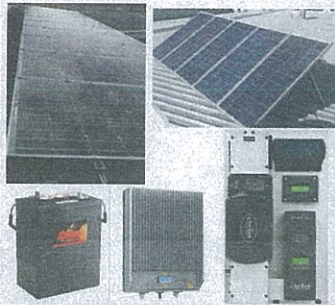
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# What are Enviroschools?



Imke Kitchin (left) and Hannah Rawnsley, with an Eco-Hut at Pukehou School, Central Hawke's Bay.

**E**nviroschools is the combination of a philosophical vision and hands on application. A kindergarten to college programme designed to integrate environmental education into schools. It aims to create learning opportunities by working towards a healthy, peaceful and sustainable environment, with outcomes that benefit the school and wider community.

There are five guiding principles: empowering students; sustainable communities; learning for sustainability; Maori perspectives and respect for diversity and culture. Accompanying theme areas are: zero waste; living landscapes; energy; water of life; ecological buildings.

Collectively they're a blueprint for a holistic approach to life, supporting young people to become active citizens and providing the tools for future leadership in sustainability.

It's a vision of creating healthy, resilient,

peaceful and sustainable communities where young people become catalysts for change within their families and the wider community.

The Enviroschools Foundation is a charitable trust that is implemented through a partnership model involving over 80 organisations nationally. In Hawke's Bay we have Regional Partners Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Nina EJ Braithwaite Charitable Trust, Heretaunga Kindergarten Association, Napier Kindergarten Association, Forest and Bird - Napier and the Ministry of Primary Industries.

More than 854 schools

and Kura are currently involved in the Enviroschools network. This includes primary and secondary, mainstreams and Kura Maori, and schools of all deciles. There is a growing number of early childhood centres.

A network of over 60 facilitators and kaitiakiawaenga work alongside the students, teachers, whanau and community to establish and support schools in their action-learning journey.



Deven Adams, paper and cardboard recycling at Pukehou School.

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Greenmeadows Kindergarten children Xavier Babbington (left) and Lucy Powdrell (right) check out the worm farm.



Angela Atkins, Waste Minimisation Officer at the Hastings District Council pictured at the worm farm.

# Compost, glorious compost

**T**he Sustaining Hawke's Bay Trust Environment Centre in Russell Street, Hastings is an inspirational place to visit and learn all about leading more sustainable lifestyles. There's a wealth of information on sustainability, organics, gardening, eco-building and much more. For example, Trees for Hawke's Bay Nursery, sustainable business and courses on a wide range of sustainability issues. It also provides a drop off point for recycling of waste such as household batteries, E-Waste and fluorescent light bulbs. It's especially good for those interested in worm farms, bokashi and other composting solutions. There are many benefits of composting and it saves money, reduces rubbish collection costs, harmful effects of organic waste in landfills and the use of harsh chemicals in the garden.

## Worm farming is fun

Environment Centre Acting Manager Sarah Millington is particularly enthusiastic about composting and worm farms.

Sarah and her team of volunteers can discuss the pros and cons of each of the four worm bins for sale, ranging from a modest \$65, which uses recycled plastic, up to \$295 for The Hungry Bin - the BMW of worm farms! It's also possible to make a worm bin yourself - old baths are particularly good. Tiger worms, as distinct from garden worms, are recommended for worm farms and you can also buy them from the centre.

## What is worm farming?

It's a method of composting that's sometimes known as vermi-composting. Worms eat food scraps then excrete vermicasts and worm tea, both of which are high in nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium.

It's a simple process to get started. First there's a layer of bedding like cardboard, then the worms are added, then food is added. Worms like fruit and vegetable scraps, tea bags and coffee grounds, dirty paper, hair and vacuum cleaner dust! Like many people they don't like spicy food, garlic or citrus fruits. The bin is covered, the worms eat and after several months it's time to remove the casts and the worm tea. Worm farms usually have two or three layers which can be removed allowing the casts to be taken away. The tea is often extracted with a tap on the bottom of the bin, much like a tea urn.

The casts and the tea are great for fertilising plants. It's excellent for leaf growth, root and stem strength and fruit and flower growth. The tea is normally diluted 1:10. Some people even sell excess worm tea which is useful pocket money!

## Did you know?

That approximately 31% of average household waste is compostable?

## ZingBokashi

Bokashi is a generic Japanese term which means "fermented organic matter". ZingBokashi is a totally natural way to recycle organic household waste and is rapidly growing in popularity since its introduction in 2003 by Neville Burt, an organic farmer from the South Island.

With the system it's really easy to turn food scraps into compost very quickly and it can be done indoors, say under the kitchen sink, or in a dark cupboard. It's unobtrusive, doesn't smell, and is user friendly. The process produces a natural liquid fertiliser and physical compost.

Food scraps and waste are put in a container which are then covered with Compost-Zing. Each time food is added more compost is sprinkled on the food. The lid is closed and fermentation occurs. The juice can be collected from the bottom of the bucket. After some time the fermented food waste can be mixed into the soil in your garden. Bokashi buckets and Compost-Zing are available for purchase at the Environment Centre.



Left & above: The ZingBokashi composting system.

**EnvironmentCentre**  
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