Education Outdoors New Zealand

Out and About

This Issue

Issue 28 ▲ Winter 2013

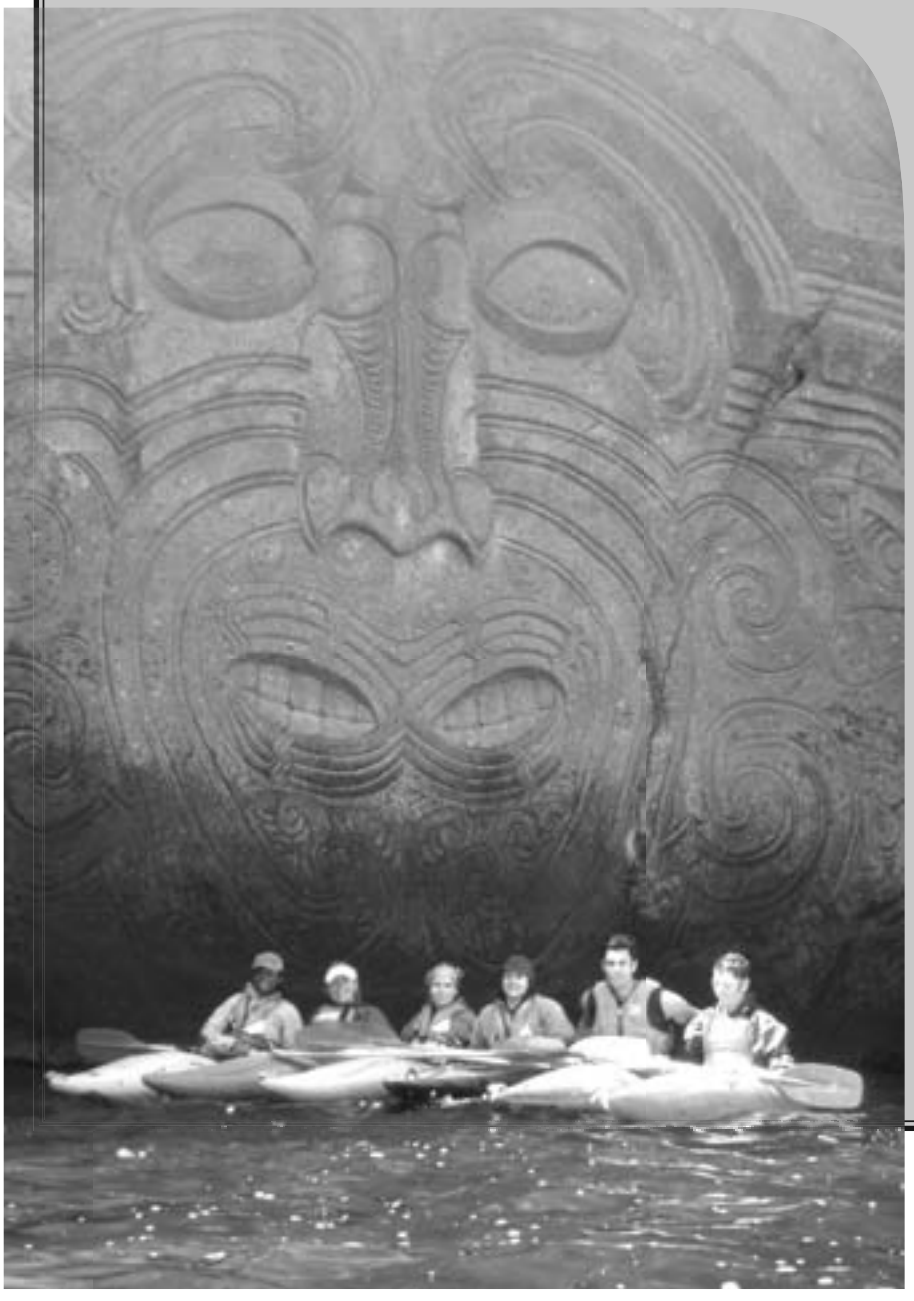
Education Outdoors New Zealand

Commitment to fostering and advocating for quality outdoor learning experiences which can educate for a sustainable future

Our mission *To increase participation in quality outdoor learning experiences.*

Our goals *Engagement in advocacy to advance education outdoors*

Education to build capability and improve practice



- **Advocacy**
- **E Newsletters**
- **Membership Magazine**
- **Training**
- **Professional Development**
- **Publications**
- **National Body Representation**
- **Networking**
- **Regional Focus**

Out and About

is published by

Education Outdoors New

Zealand (EONZ).

EONZ is committed to fostering

and advocating for quality

outdoor learning experiences

that can educate for a

sustainable future.

Editor

David Irwin

Phone: **03 940 8256**

email:

David.Irwin@cpit.ac.nz

Postal: **David Irwin,**

CPIT,

PO Box 540,

Christchurch, 8015

Design and Layout

Dietlind Wagner

Cover Photo

Liz Thevenard

Contributions

Material for publication

is welcome. Please send

contributions to the edior.

Winter 2013

Editorial

by David Irwin

Kia ora and welcome to this special edition of Out and About, published by Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ). What makes this edition special is that it has been distributed to primary schools throughout the country, as well as to our membership. I hope you enjoy the content, and if this is your first encounter with EONZ, we encourage your school to become a member of our community and to contribute to discussions about education outside the classroom into the future.

Recently I attended a workshop for environmental education teacher educators hosted at the University of Waikato. The key note at the workshop was given by the influential Canadian educator Professor Paul Hart who talked

• *Continued on page 4*

Contents

about how significant childhood experiences in natural settings provided the foundation for pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours constructed later in adult life. Although this comes as no surprise, it was a reminder of the vital importance that education outside the classroom (EOTC) plays in our education system, and particularly at primary schools. EOTC provides opportunities for children to play, adventure, enquire, explore, and discover in both structured and unstructured ways that brings the curriculum into their lives in very meaningful ways. Primary and kindergarten teachers have a degree of freedom that is not present in the secondary system; a freedom to create cross curricular learning experiences without the constraints of compartmentalised timetables and prescriptive assessment models. School camps have been a feature of primary school education for over a century, a right-of-passage for our young people because of the significant childhood experiences to be had there. Enviro Schools are also having a big influence on how we encourage young people think about their place in the world as a result of experiences focussed on local communities and environments. As teachers we need to celebrate the place of EOTC in our schools, but neither EOTC, nor our schools for that matter, should be taken for granted.

In Christchurch, the earthquakes continue to play out for people. As most readers will be aware, some suburbs have been decimated by unstable and/or sinking land and residents have been forced to leave, while other communities have grown as a result of being located on stable land. Consequently, school rolls have been changing on an almost daily basis. Some time ago the government indicated it would have to eventually deal with this redistribution of students, but the recent changes to the provision of schooling in Christchurch have never-the-less shaken many communities. On May 29th the Minister of Education announced the closure of seven schools, including Branston, Linwood and Manning intermediate schools, and Glenmoor, Greenpark, Kendal, and Richmond primary schools. Together, these changes account for the loss of 80 full time equivalent jobs including support staff, teachers and principals. Mergers of another six schools that affect an additional 180 staff were also announced: Phillipstown will merge at Woolston primary school, Burwood will merge at Windsor primary school, and Lyttelton West will merge at Lyttelton Main primary school.

Communities eager to save their schools have obviously lobbied the minister and participated in the decision process where they have been able. More visible street protests have also taken place, and it was with sadness that I witnessed Phillipstown parents and staff protesting the closure of their school and the distance that their children would face in their daily journey crossing busy roads to Woolston primary school some distance away. The political impact of such actions cannot be underestimated, and Chris Gallavin, associate professor of law at the University of Canterbury has publically encouraged communities to fight for their schools to remain open (Law, 2013).

The merging of schools is obviously very sensitive to Christchurch communities, for the loss of a school is the loss of what for many communities is their central hub or focus. The school is the site of many community activities and interactions, and when coupled with strong EOTC programmes, the boundaries between school and community are blurred, bringing students into the community and the community into the school. The school functioning as a focus for the community is more conspicuous in rural, and in highly mobile lower socio-economic communities such as Phillipstown, and the loss of their school is devastating.

Often smaller schools develop a distinct character that relates to the community within which the school is contextualised. As such these schools are well positioned to meet the needs of their students, and EOTC plays an important role in this process. It is this unique character that is feared will be lost in the transition to larger schools with wider catchments.

Also on the near horizon for Christchurch is the Act Party's charter schools initiative. Ideological in nature, without the requirement for qualified teachers, and not subject to the Official Information Act, the prospect of charter schools in Christchurch has educators wondering if the needs of students have been side lined in the pursuit of political

goals. It is the absolute failure to ensure transparency that is of most concern and without recourse to the usual mechanisms that ensure quality systems are in place, it is unclear how charter schools can be considered a positive step in the development of schooling in this country. Teacher training includes training in EOTC, and the staffing of charter schools with untrained teachers suggests the quality of all teaching including EOTC could be compromised.

On a national level and in the wake of the very sad multiple fatality accidents that have occurred at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre and at the Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre, I have been aware of much informal discussion that has focussed on risk and EOTC. More recently Spotswood College principal Mark Bowden has said "We can't let EOTC be taken out of schools, but at the same time we have to make sure health and safety are paramount" and "There needs to be a national debate around the tension that exists between the need for young people to experience the outdoors, and the need to ensure highly developed cultures around health and safety exist." (as cited in McMurray and Flemming, 2013). While the college has suspended all camps at the Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre, Mr Bowden has observed there was now a great need to publicly discuss the issues surrounding outdoor education in schools.

Tom Parsons, the president of the Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand, recently added to this discussion through his Comment 91 report, where he notes that "one of the most publicised failures in School Risk Management is that relating to EOTC" (Parsons, 2013). Obviously Tom's comments are as relevant to the primary context as they are to the secondary context. Although most primary schools are in a position to deliver all their EOTC activity, many primary schools engage external organisations to host school camps, and to provide instructors to facilitate the activities that are provided. Tom Parsons reminds principals and boards of trustees of the importance of the Adventure Activities Regulations 2011 (that come under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992) that will require commercial operators who deliberately expose student participants to risk of serious harm to have notified the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) of their activities and to have successfully undergone a safety audit by 1st November 2014 at the latest. Tom encourages all readers to visit http://eotc.tki.org.nz/eotc-home for guidance, and refers to the modules designed by Education Outdoors New Zealand in conjunction with the Ministry of Education that assist teachers to maximise their understanding and use of the EOTC guidelines. But Tom also makes several other important points: the Adventure Activities Regulations do not apply to schools, and do not apply to activities that are not taught or guided.

There should be no doubt that the future shape of EOTC is in the spotlight, and over the coming months and years there is likely to be much pressure in the form of compliance and regulation brought to bear on schools whenever students leave the school grounds (watch out for a future article in the Education Gazette on the lessons learned from Paritutu from the MBIE). It is vital that educators engage with this discussion, but there is a need to acknowledge that there are other pressures as well, that from my perspective are more significant than managing risk. This is because the students who are currently in our care will live in a world that is very different to the one that we have become accustomed to. For example the last year has seen extremes in weather, record floods events and wild fires, and wide spread civil unrest. The United Nations has predicted the displacement of many millions of people as sea levels rise, and the development of economic and ecological impoverishment takes hold.

Over the past decades there has been an increasingly critical discussion around the purpose of education that can be reduced to the simple question posed by David Orr (1994): What are we educating for? As we enter into the second decade of the 21st century and the cumulative impact of human existence upon the planet becomes more apparent, educators need to urgently consider this question. In the context of educating beyond the classroom, what purpose EOTC, what purpose outdoor education, and what will the needs of our students be in the challenging times ahead. These ideas are what

drove the bold thinking behind the vision and principles of the New Zealand Curriculum (MOE, 2007). When these themes become drivers for EOTC, then managing risk becomes much less of a concern. This is because it is very hard to justify exposing students to high risk environments where there is a potential for multiple fatalities to occur when curriculum related learning is central to the decision about how to engage students outside of the classroom.

The EONZ executive is acutely aware of the need to respond to these questions and has produced a position statement (see inside back cover) in response to conversations we have had.

The key theme of this edition is EOTC in primary schools. The feature articles include discussion about forest days for kindergarten students in Switzerland by Chris North; the engagement of senior primary and intermediate students in an investigation about how nature has shaped our place by Mike Taylor and Louise Gusterson; discussion about connections between curriculum and school camps by Jennifer Diggle; and making links between two South Canterbury primary schools and their local places by Hilary Iles.

Other reading includes a discussion about ratios in EOTC by Catherine Kappelle, a reminder about new qualifications and online professional learning by Fiona McDonald, and responses to questions posed by Shazza and Brucie by Libby Paterson. I hope you enjoy this special edition of Out and About.

I wish you well for what remains of 2013.

David Irwin, PhD

Sustainability and Outdoor Education

CPIT

References:

Law, T. (2013, May 16). University lawyers offer free advice to schools. *The Press*. Retrieved from http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press.

McMurray, K. & Flemming, H. (2013, June 13). Call to Debate outdoor education in schools. *Taranaki Daily News Online*. Retrieved from http://stuff.co.nz .

Orr, D. W. (1994). *Earth in mind: On education, environment, and the human prospect*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

Parsons, T. (2013, May 8). President's Comment 91. *Secondary Principals Association of New Zealand Inc.*.

A word from the Chair
Liz Thevenard

"If tomorrow's caretakers of the earth are to love and

understand the natural world they need to

explore it, enjoy it and recognise our reliance upon it"

(Dept of Conservation 2012, p. 1.)

How can we build the caretakers of tomorrow, promote and support teaching and learning in the outdoors?

What is the ethos that underpins our desire to promote, support and celebrate safe, innovative and sustainable education outside the classroom (EOTC)? This Out and About publication celebrates and promotes learning outside the classroom and focuses on the opportunities available for primary schools to explore, enjoy and learn in the outdoors. We are particularly interested in helping children engage with the natural world, using their senses such as observation, touch, feel and smell. In today's world many children gain much of their understanding of the world through the computer screen, ipads and the many technical devices. They are the wired generation. Many children are having less direct time in natural environment and spend more time indoors. The opportunity to regularly spend time exploring school grounds, local parks, beaches or creeks first hand are important experiences which connect children to nature. The more local and accessible these places are the more opportunities there are to revisit and observe them regularly. Many of us are kinaesthetic learners and we need to be immersed in the experience through the senses. Much of the learning today is through technology and often in someone else's world. Learners become spectators rather than hands on, feet on and personally engaged in their own learning. Our challenge is to encourage these learners to engage with their surroundings and support them as they live, play and explore.

EOTC should enhance, enrich and compliment learning.

A teacher in the EOTC Guidelines (MOE, 2009) articulated her thoughts about learning outside the classroom: "*you can talk about something, plan for something, and show them photos, but nothing beats the real deal."(*p. 7) Learning in 'real' environments helps students make sense of the world around them and allows teachers to add value to the learning that occurs in the classroom. The idea promoted in the EOTC Guidelines Professional Learning Development (PLD) of 'inside, outside, inside' illustrates the benefits for both the teacher and students of building knowledge and understanding in the classroom, reinforcing the learning with hands on experiences outside the classroom then consolidating new learning through reflection on return to the classroom. From my perspective it is not until I experience something that I really understand it. For example it was not until I visited an area such as Otari Wilton Bush that I appreciated the full learning potential of the

area and the safety considerations needed when organising a group field trip to that place. Yes, people can explain things, show me diagrams, photos and examples, but nothing helps me understand more than experience.

EOTC is an important part of NZ school life

The EOTC Guidelines (MOE, 2009) define EOTC as curriculum-based teaching and learning activities that go beyond the walls of the classroom. It includes any curriculum-based activity that takes place in the school grounds, in the local community, or in regions further afield including overseas (p. 4).Taking students outside the classroom has been a part of schooling in New Zealand for over a century (Lynch 2006) and is a key component of school life (Haddock, 2007; Zink & Boyes 2005/6, 2007) as it offers a wide variety of experiences. The guidelines highlight the need for "students to learn in a variety of contexts in order to gain the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required to enjoy a healthy lifestyle". It also encourages students to "take responsibility for their own safety and form positive and respectful relationships with their peers, teachers and the environment" and suggests that participation in EOTC helps "in the creation of safer communities" (MOE, 2009, p. 3).

A recent Education Review Office (ERO) report on Education Outside the Classroom (2011) further reinforces the place of EOTC stating that "education happens both in and outside the classroom. It also indicates that curriculum-based learning outside the school helps students make connections between what they learn in the classroom and the world beyond" (p. 0). In the ERO Report schools acknowledged EOTC as an important part of the school culture and curriculum and illustrates how EOTC provides significant benefits for students by promoting an appreciation of local, national and global heritage, increasing students understanding of the traditions and values of the tangata whenua, enjoying and participating in the environment, and increasing opportunities for school staff to interact with parents and whanau and the wider community (p.22).

In the discussion on outcomes for students, students talked about how EOTC experiences had helped teach them how to manage themselves, be more organised and to support others. They also helped develop their abilities to work in a team and get on better with others in their group. The discussion also highlighted how the new experiences and life skills developed beyond the classroom improved students self-knowledge and confidence (p. 34).

This reinforced Zink & Boyes (2005/6) findings that the most important learning gained from outdoor education includes; group co-operation, improved self-esteem, consideration of others and safety knowledge. (p. 16). They also identified that outdoor settings provide an opportunity for leadership, team work and self-reliance as well as an opportunity to see people's different strengths or needs.

The outside world is a place of discovery

"It is a place for adventure, exploration and imagination as well as deepening care and connectedness with our environment." (D OC. p. 1.)

The care and love of the world around us begins from early childhood and should grow

throughout our life. It is a life long journey and the more we know about our natural world the more we can appreciate it, care for it, explore it and adventure through it. David Sobel has also written much about learning in outdoor environments and has been a champion of 'place-based' education. He believes the town is the classroom and the river is the text book and he promotes the use of local areas in the building of a sustainable culture. He believes we need to focus on local issues rather than the broad global issues as this allows students to take ownership and responsibility. It also means they can see the results of their action. Wattchow & Brown (2011) in their extensive studies of place-based learning in New Zealand also noted that people develop and experience a sense of attachment to particular locations and build quality connections and deep engagement with local environments (Irwin, Straker & Hill, 2012). This process provides a sense of purpose and creates real meaning for students. Richard Louv (2005) in his book *Last Child in the Woods* highlights the Nature Deficit Syndrome (NDS), developed through lack of contact with the natural world and green spaces. He maintains that allowing children to reconnect with the natural world has huge benefits for child development for both physical and emotional health. The growth of Forest Schools around the world (see the article by North in this edition) has been a response to the desire to reconnect with nature and we will see the growth of this movement in the near future.

The Enviroschools movement in New Zealand is an excellent example of a home grown movement. Many schools and early childhood centres around the country have embraced local environmental projects and encouraged students to connect with their local environments. I have been amazed at the vast and varied projects the Enviroschools have achieved. I was very impressed when I visited the Kapiti Coast Sustainable Home and Garden Show recently. Early childhood centres, primary and secondary schools had marvellous examples of sustainable garden projects and the student guides were enthusiastic and totally immersed in their work. I was struck by the innovation and the effective use of the recycled materials found around the schools and the community. The Raumati South School were particularly impressive and I must congratulate them for their success at the Elleslie Flower Show. A visit to the Enviroschools web site is a must www.enviroschool.org.nz.

Personal Experiences

I remember vividly my interest in nature from a very young age. We used to watch the slaters under the wood piles, the tadpoles turn into frogs and I even had a pet Weta Christopher who lived with me for many years. One of the things that provided me with a real interest was the subject called Nature Studies and a school adviser Mr Fayhe who stimulated our interest and curiosity by exploring and adventuring with us in the local creeks, parks and rivers. His enthusiasm and questions helped us to make sense of our world.

Home garden plots were a feature of my primary school days. The seeds were supplied by the school and the school judging at the end of the summer required a written journal that monitored and recorded growth patterns, weather conditions, watering requirement, soil conditions and changes etc. The garden plots provided opportunity to grow a variety of vegetables and

this became a great family project. We learned to love the land, the seasonal changes and the joy of gardening. We explored, enjoyed and learned much and this has become a life time interest. We had ownership of our project and the success or failure rested on our own shoulders. This school to home to garden model would work just as well for students today.

The quote from the Department of Conservation at the beginning of this article highlights the vital importance of education outside the classroom in ensuring future generations connect with their natural surroundings and therefore understand how to use them in a sustainable way.

In summary EOTC is vital to our communities now and in the future because:

- Learning beyond the classroom has been part of New Zealand culture for over a century and is a key component of school life.
- We must celebrate and promote the outdoors through exploration, adventure and personal engagement with the natural world.
- Direct authentic experiences are essential to help learners understand and make sense of the real world.
- Exploring, enjoying and learning in locally accessible environments such as school grounds, local parks, bush, streams and ponds, builds confidence to adventure further afield safely. Engaging the learner through personal ownership in projects and experiences benefits each individual as they are able to see the impact of their actions and engage all their senses.
- Close observation can develop an appreciation of the little things in life and bring a focus to the journey rather than the destination.
- Learning beyond the classroom provides natural opportunities for team work, leadership, supporting others, building life skills, confidence and friendships.
- It promotes a holistic appreciation of the unique histories, geographies, cultural understanding and traditions associated with the environment, whether it is the river, the lake, the bush, creek or park.

It is essential that we engage with the natural world, to care for it, learn from it, to enjoy it and appreciate it if we are to recognise how much we rely upon it. Connectedness and appreciation of our environment is essential to sustain our world for future generations.

The outdoors is the teacher and the environment is the textbook.

Liz Thevenard
Chair EONZ
Senior Lecturer
Health & Physical Education
Victoria University of Wellington

References:

Department of Conservation (2012) *Exploring Nature With Children Nau mai, haere mai to Ao Turoa.* Department of Conservation Hamilton 3240, N.Z.

Haddock, C. (2007) *Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) survey. Primary Schools Report,* Wellington New Zealand, Ministry of Education.

Louv, R. (2008) *Last Child in the Woods,* Algonquin Books, USA.

Ministry of Education (2009) *EOTC Guidelines, Bringing the Curriculum Alive Learning Safely.* Learning Media,Wellington, N.Z..

Ministry of Education (2007) *The New Zealand Curriculum,* Wellington, New Zealand, Learning Media.

Education Review Office (2011) *Education Outside the Classroom: Schools' Use of EOTC Guidelines,* Education Review Office, Wellington 6140.

Irwin, D. Straker, J. & Hill, A. (2012) *Outdoor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand,* CPIT, Christchurch.

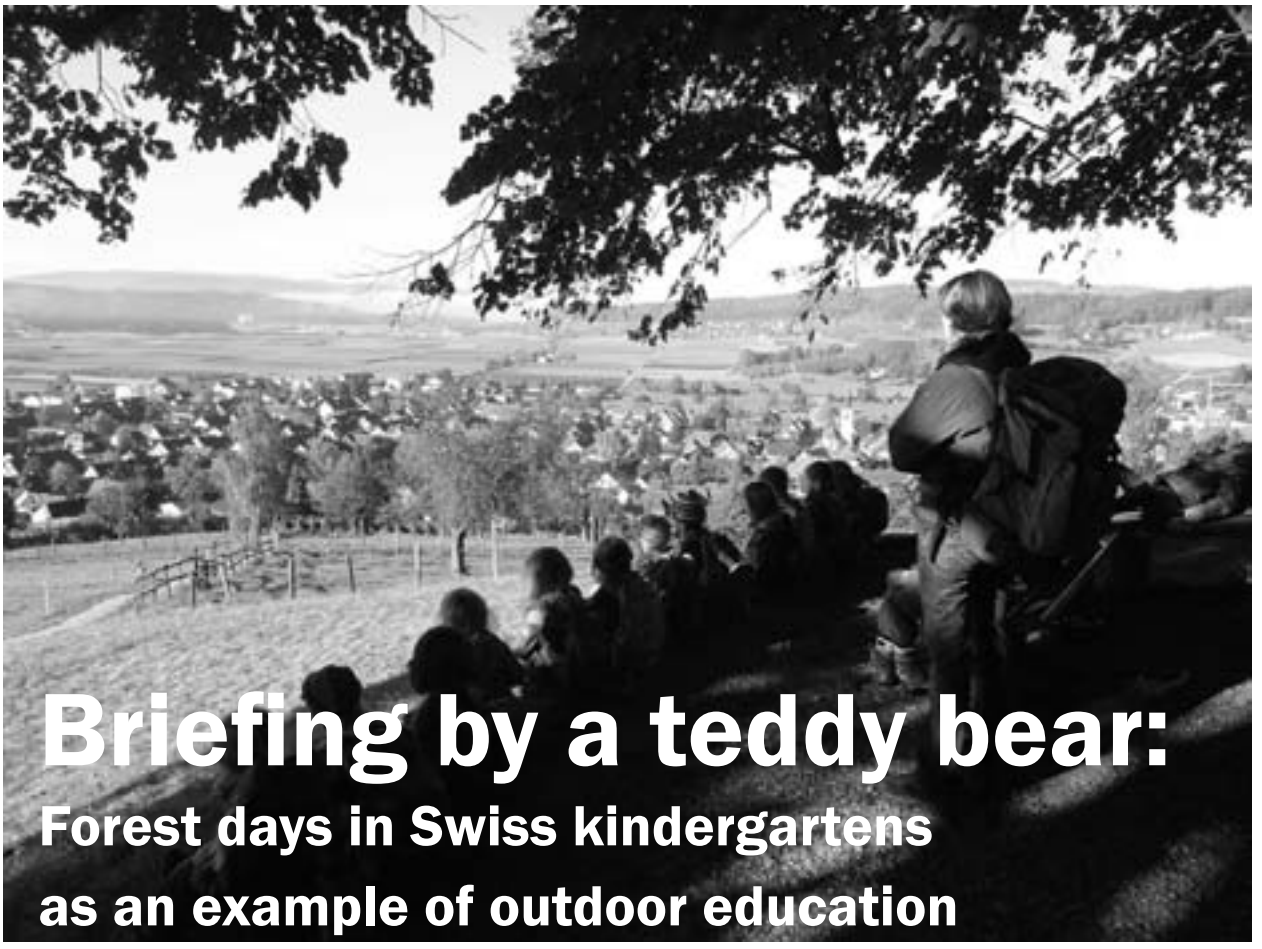
Louv, R. (2005) *Last child in the woods: Saving our children form nature-deficit disorder.* Chappel Hill, N.C. USA.: Algonquian Books.

Lynch, P. (2006). *Camping in the Curriculum.* Christchurch, N.Z.: PML Publications.

Sobel, D. (2005) *Place-based Education Connecting Classroom and Community*, (2nd ed). USA: Onion Society.

Zink, R. & Boyes, M. (2005/6) What's going on in New Zealand schools. Some findings from the EOTC survey. *Out and About,* 15.

Zink, R. & Boyes, M. (2007). The nature and scope of outdoor education in New Zealand schools, *New Zealand Journal of Outdoor Education*, 2 (2) 57-80.



Briefing by a teddy bear:

Forest days in Swiss kindergartens as an example of outdoor education

By Chris North

Teddybear 'Bo' is so excited he can hardly get the words out quickly enough. His head and hands are sticking out of a boy's backpack in the kindergarten and all the children are gathered around. Bo tells the group of 4 to 6 year olds that he wants to run ahead and go crazy, but the children remind him that he needs to stay with the group. Next Bo asks what kinds of things that he should have with him, and once again the children give him advice. Bo can be a bit thoughtless sometimes and the children have learnt to let him know how to behave in different situations. This is how the first forest day starts for the children in my village Kindergarten in Switzerland. Among the children is my daughter and I am a parent helper for the day.

In this article I describe my first forest day and then look a bit more at teacher motivation and children's learning in the forest. I also ask two Swiss educators to help me with this from their perspectives: teacher educator Barbara Gugerli-Dolder and my daughter's kindergarten teacher, Frau Huber.

There is also the chance to answer another question. Back in 2008, Marg Cosgriff introduced an article by describing the experience of a Kiwi teacher in a Swiss school going into the forest in this way "To her absolute amazement, each of the five-year-old students in her class had casually pulled out their Swiss army knives and carefully whittled the end of the stick they were going to use as their marshmallow roasting tool over the fire" (p.14-15). Marg then used this as a way of thinking about what defines outdoor education in New Zealand. I remembered this quote as I sat with the kindergarten children and thought that I had a chance to investigate more fully. As I am reasonably fluent in Swiss-German (less so in German), I have translated the interview with Frau Huber and also some of documents myself (this is my disclaimer about the accuracy of my translation).

First a little context:

Switzerland

Switzerland is approximately one seventh the size of New Zealand, and is stereotypically famous

for cheese, chocolate, clocks and banking (among many of other things). The population in Switzerland has just reached 8 million, and interestingly, just over two thirds of the people live in urban areas compared with New Zealand's 86%. From the population and land area, it could seem crowded, but crowding really depends on your perceptions. For example, Swiss towns and cities are much more densely populated than in New Zealand and many people live in apartments. There are few wilderness areas in Switzerland, and the forests and alps are characterised by farm houses (chalets), extensive walking track systems and regular opportunities to stop at small restaurants/pubs for lunch or refreshments. There isn't really a settlement versus nature divide in the Swiss landscape, and there isn't a national park system like there is in New Zealand. If you want a walk without signs of humans, then Switzerland isn't for you. On the other hand if you want local nature, then I would argue that most Swiss have more opportunities than New Zealanders, for they have walking access to forests. These local forests have been fiercely protected over many centuries and survived the fuel hungry industrial revolution that saw most of Englands forests used up. The forests are managed and greatly modified for human use (e.g.firewood), but that said, I frequently see deer in the forest and even saw a badger once.

Back to the Forest Day:

After our briefing by Bo the teddy bear, we pair up and walk up the hill to the big Chestnut tree, where children collect horse chestnuts for five minutes (for making models of animals with toothpicks back at kindy). Pairing up again, we walk up the steps through the vineyards to the top of the small hill in the edge of the forest. A child slips on the wooden edge of the step which is still wet from the dew. Fr Huber shows how to walk so that you don't slip - "by putting your toe on the gravel behind the wooden step". The walk has taken us about 15 minutes and we are now 100m above the village. The view covers the whole area and as we rest, Fr. Huber points out the kindergarten and helps the children find where they live.

The hilltop is forested with clearings, a picnic table, fireplace with a grill and wood supply. We put our bags down and Fr Huber walks with us along the track pointing out features and the boundaries. From the track there is a short bank down to a paddock, at the other end is a track and a clearing marks the other boundary. At the clearing, Fr Huber stops by some plants and asks:

"Do you know what kind of berries these are?" After various answers a child says,
"blackberries"
"are they edible?"
"yes"
"OK but I don't want you to eat any berries you find do you know why?"
"they might be poisonous"
"Good so it doesn't matter what kind of berry you find, you don't eat them"

We then start the fire and the children go and play. Frau Huber asks me to help tip over the two seats at the picnic table (one year the students sat on the table and knocked over the heavy seat which almost caused an injury). I ask about incidents, and Fr Huber explains that she used to come up alone with the class but now she is required to have a second adult. As parents have shown a great willingness to help, this requirement hasn't limited the forest days in any way. Also, apart from a child who disappeared and wandered home, Fr. Huber hasn't had any accidents in the many years she has been coming up here.

Children give us their sausages. A couple of children give the sausages in plastic wrapping and Fr. Huber asks them to make sure that they put the sausages in lunch boxes next time to reduce rubbish. We put the sausages on the fire. Most children don't have the patience to toast their sausages on sticks at this age, so we cut initials into the sausages and put them on the grill over the fire.

Fr. Huber calls the children over and they eat their sausages. I ask about running some activities (having just attended a workshop for teachers on forest days) but Fr. Huber says she prefers to let the children make their own play. If she has behaviour issues in a group, she sometimes runs activities.

Soon it is time to head back down and as we walk back, we say goodbye to the children at various streets, shake their hands and they head home individually or in small groups. By the time we get close to the kindergarten, there are almost

no students left. Parents have given permission to let their children walk home after the forest day. Interestingly, this initiative came from Fr Huber's son who thought it was silly to walk all the way down to the Kindergarten then all the way back up to his home again.

My experience of the first day in the forest ends with me looking closely over my daughter for ticks. I enjoyed my first forest day and was impressed by the way Frau Huber ran the experience, the way she set it up so children could learn about the forest and her safety focus. I was also amazed by the behaviour of the children, the sunshine through the trees and a freshly BBQ'd sausage. But there are other perspectives to consider here as well. In the next section, I ask some questions of Frau Huber and Barbara Gugerli-Dolder about forest days, how they started and why they have become so widespread.

Interview with Frau Huber – kindergarten teacher:

When did you first find out about forest days?

I used to come together with other kindergarten teachers and children several times a year and the other teachers were talking about taking children into the forest. So I learnt about it from them. I also liked going into the forest with my own children and thought it was a good idea to go with my kindergarten class.

Is there any expectation that teachers will take children into the forest?

No, while there is a learning area in the kindergarten curriculum called "nature, technology and mathematics" , there is no requirement from either the canton, or the community. We just had a discussion between the teachers at our kindergarten and decided to start doing forest days.

What has made you keep going?

There are many reasons: Almost all the children really like going into the forest, and it is always interesting in the forest in different days, seasons or weather, hot, cold, wet, snowy, dry…

Forest days don't require more preparation than a day based in the kindergarten. We notify parents, take the backpack, turn the sign on the door to "in the forest" and head out.

I also enjoy forest days because there is less conflict between

children. There are no toys to fight over, or need to take turns. There is much more space so each student can find their own place, choose to play closer to the teacher or further away. While conflict is generally reduced, this extra space can have a downside in that sometimes the children don't play nicely because they know they are out of sight of the teacher. This type of behaviour doesn't happen as much in the kindergarten because they are much more visible. Generally there is less conflict in the forest.

What do you think the children learn?

Children learn about their locality. From the hill we can see almost all houses in the village and I point out houses and the kindergarten which helps children get oriented to where they live relative to others.

Children learn about the plants and animals. For example, one year in the forest there were so many beetles. The children loved to find the beetles and watch them and this was an opportunity that they would not have gotten in the playground. I carry loupes (magnifying glasses), but I tend not to use them because I believe that less equipment is better in the forest. If children are interested in what plants are called, then I will work with them but I tend not to do it with the whole group.

For some newcomers to the village or to Switzerland, they may not know anything about the forest. I think it is good to show the children that they can play outdoors in the fresh air even in bad weather and have fun. It is better than always being inside in front of the TV. I want them to realise that you don't have to go to the zoo or the trampelino (fun park with trampolines) to play. I like it when children say to their parents "let me show you where we played" and lead them into the forest.

Children also learn motor skills, running and jumping over roots, scrambling up steeper slopes or trees.

In the kindergarten, the play areas define the way children play; blocks are for building, dolls and clothes are for playing Mums and Dads… In the forest, the places don't define the type of play that can happen there, the children are much freer to make up their own games and this fosters creativity and imagination.

Children can learn about fire lighting by watching and the ritual of cooking a sausage is nice. While having a fire means I have to be at the grill, children can still choose where they play. Some children really focus in on the fire and sausage cooking while others prefer to play elsewhere.

Children in the forest tend to stay together, so group management is not generally a problem although I keep an eye out to make sure they are all still around.

I have never had any negative comments from parents (I don't get many positives either though).

Is there anything else you want to add?

In the spring, we go into the forest everyday for a week. Last year we went with a forestry worker and children from other kindergartens. We walk deeper into the forest during this week and are there from 9am-2pm for 5 days. We provide a variety of activities, for example last year, with the help of the forestry worker, we built a moss sofa and painted some tree stumps to look like dwarves. For preparation, we asked the parents to do some extended walking with their children. The parents have responded very positively to the forest week.

Interview with Barbara Gugerli-Dolder – teacher educator.

How did Forest days start in Switzerland?

Forest days originated in Germany (probably influenced by the Friluftliv approach to schooling in Scandinavian lands) and diffused southwards. The first kindergartens were full-immersion- outdoors in all weather and in all seasons. When the forest kindergarten idea arose in Switzerland over 20 years ago, there were a few full-immersion forest kindergartens, but a new modification called integrated forest-kindergartens evolved. These kindergartens have nature experiences (forest days) as an integral part of their programme, but they are based in buildings. In the Canton of Zurich, roughly half of kindergartens go into the forest regularly (weekly or twice a month), about a quarter go monthly and another quarter go rarely if at all (Gugerli-Dolder et al. 2004).

This is quite an amazing uptake rate for something that isn't required. What made it possible?

A conference in 1999, when teachers who already took children into the forest came together was probably important in the Canton of Zurich. Stories from presenters at the conference were very inspiring. Teachers then tried out forest days and had positive first experiences for both teachers and children. Also, before the conference, there is a long tradition of teachers going outdoors with children for walks, so forest days fitted well within some established traditions.

Teacher education has been influential. Over the years, we have taught many teachers forest opportunities through teacher education. We provide in-service workshops for teachers as well as trainee teachers on how to use the forests for learning. This has probably contributed to the uptake of forest days as well.

Education documents also encourage nature experiences. There is a learning area "Nature, Technology and Mathematics" where it states that children need space for movement and a diversity of movement experiences, as well as rich experience-rich encounters with earth, water, air and warmth, so that all their senses and the perceptual skills can develop healthily (Zurich Kindergarten Teachers Association, 2002). In 2008, forest experiences were promoted further with the statement that children have few opportunities to experience nature, kindergartens can provide these experiences and central to this are real experiences in nature such as those provided by forest days (Education Department Zurich, 2008, p. 20). The document recommends repeated visits to forests allow students to experience seasonal changes and see ecological connections. So while forest days are not required, the term forest days (Waldtagen) has become more firmly incorporated in these documents.

What do you think the children learn?

The unstructured material in the forest leads (inspires) creativity.

Senses such as sight and hearing can be overwhelmed indoors, for example the noise levels in many kindergartens are very high and sight and hearing are generally overstressed in today's society. This can leave senses such as touch and smell underdeveloped. The forest provides many sensations, rough, heavy, wet, crunchy, and allows for other senses to be more fully developed. Lohmeyer writes that the diversity of forms of nature, the smells, colours, the play of light through the forest, the lack of any mechanical patterns stimulates our tactile, visual, audio and smell senses in a way that arouses and relaxes simultaneously (in Wipfli 1993).

In the forest we can experience stillness. In modern life, stillness is rare, because of street noises, and often constant noise of radio and TV. The sounds of children playing don't get amplified as they do indoors, and the peace of the forest acts as a counterbalance to the everyday lives of children (Bickel 2001).

The size and choices a forest offers allow more play space for gross motor skills. Through diverse terrain (for example moss, stones, twigs, banks etc) children learn about balance and muscle use. (Bickel 2001).

The direct experience with other life forms, plants, earth and stones awakes curiosity and readiness to learn (Mühletaler 2002). Children learn that not everything is made by people. Where else other than in nature can they experience this?

Children learn that they can play regardless of the equipment that is available and this makes them more confident and independent. Experiences that children have playing in forests also provide an important aspect of addiction prevention (Schede 2000).

In the forest children find logs that need the help of several children to move or help with digging which is very different to drawing or building in the Kindergarten. Social learning is therefore fostered.

Children are able to be alone in the forest (to discover and investigate nature on their own). This quiet time is important for development as there can be a pressure to achieve in the kindergarten, and even more in the early years of school. The forest offers a break from these pressures.

Conclusion

While the spread of forest days through the German speaking parts of Switzerland is specific to the time, place and initiative, it is interesting to note how quickly and broadly the practice has been taken up by teachers in kindergartens. There are some interesting connections to different theories such as Metzler, Lund and Gurvitch's (2008) research on the diffusion of innovations, and research from New Zealand into professional development of teachers (see for example Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007).

Clearly the teachers see advantages in the learning and experiences that take place in forests. The children also support forest days and these factors are sufficient to allow forest days to continue. The largely undefined experiences in forest days means forest days can be many things to many teachers and children, not just environmental education but also social and physical education. Perhaps this flexibility has allowed the forest days to be so enthusiastically embraced.

As an outside observer, forest days seem to have started as a grass roots innovation that resonated strongly within a community and that policy is following this lead. This brief article can't do justice to these connections, however it does make me wonder about the power of policy, which attempts to force a change, versus the power of an idea whose time has come. While establishing policy is certainly helpful in supporting innovations

maybe forest days show that we shouldn't underestimate grassroots initiatives.

Coming back to my original question about children with pocket knives, I asked Fr Huber if I should give my 4 year old daughter one for the forest day but she suggested that 4 was too young to be using them. But Barbara assures me that many schools and kindergartens specifically teach whittling of sticks - not for marshmallows (unknown in Switzerland) but rather for toasting sausages. The kids at school in Marg's article were at least 6 years old, rather than the five that Marg's colleague mentioned, but those are small details. The amazing thing is how often students visit their local forests and get to know them. Certainly forest days seem to support many ways of connecting with nature. Similar to Marg, I wonder what space is there in EOTC and outdoor education in New Zealand for this kind of experience?

References

Education Department Zurich. (2008). Kindergarten Syllabus. from www.bi.zh.ch/.../Lehrplan.../Lehrplan_KG.pdf

Gugerli-Dolder, B., Hüttenmoser, M., Lindemann-Matthies, P. (Hrsg.)

Was Kinder beweglich macht. Wahrnehmungs- und Bewegungsförderung im Kindergarten. Verlag Pestalozzianum an der Pädagogischen Hochschule Zürich

Metzler, M. W., Lund, J., & Gurvitch, R. (2008). Adoption of Instructional Innovation across Teachers' Career Stages. Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 27(4), 457-465.

Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H., & Fung, I. (2007). Teacher professional learning and development best evidence synthesis iteration. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Bickel, K., (2001). Der Waldkindergarten. Konzept, Pädagogische Anliegen, Begleitumstände, Praxisbeispiel Wyk auf Föhr. NordenMedia: 32.

Miklitz, I., (2001). Der Waldkindergarten. Dimensionen eines pädagogischen Ansatzes. Luchterhand, Neuwied, Kriftel, Berlin.

Mühletaler, B., (2002). Wald als Vorschulzimmer. Bundesamt für Umwelt, Wald und Landschaft BUWAL, Umwelt 4/2002.Schede, H., (2000). Der Waldkindergarten auf einen Blick. Herder, Freiburg, Basel, Wien

Wipfli, D., (1993). Bewegungserfahrungen im Wald. Schweizerische Zentralstelle für Heilpädagogik, Dossier 33.

About the Author:

Chris North is a lecturer in outdoor and envrionmental education at the University of Canterbury College of Education. He areas of research include initial teacher education in outdoor and environmental education, and connections between research and practice. He enjoys getting outdoors with his family and is a founder of Leave No Trace New Zealand.

An extreme fieldtrip?

A 3-stage stream study for 6,7 & 8 year olds

By Mike Taylor & Louise Gusterson

When deciding to use the Kaiwharawhara stream as a location for fifty-four 6 to 8 year olds to explore the big idea *that both nature and people have shaped 'our place'* we chose to walk from the source of the river as far down towards the mouth as was possible. This was no small challenge, as the Kaiwharawhara stream drains one of Wellington's most significant catchments, traverses some steep slopes including the Wellington fault line, flows underground, and is also highly urbanised.

As is often the case, however, where there is a will there is a way. So, catering for the needs of small legs (but large minds) we took a 3 stage approach, which covered 10km in total. Our first stage, starting at the source of the stream just inside the Zealandia predator proof fence by the Brooklyn Wind Turbine was the 'tuning in' stage to our inquiry in the first week of term 2. Our Zealandia guide was fantastic at tailoring a visit to suit our needs. This included ideas about the ecology and habitation of the Kaiwharawhara catchment. The children saw rare native birds that inhabit Zealandia because of the pest eradication and prevention policies there. Furthermore, by exploring the function of the dams in Zealandia, the children were introduced to the idea of how people started to control and influence the Kaiwharawhara.

Our second stage walk began on the northern fringe of Ian Galloway Park, about 2km downstream from Zealandia. None of the children knew that this sport field was once a landfill site! The start of this stage is a decent into a classic 'v' shaped valley which offers great viewing for young learners. Much of the Kaiwharawhara is channelled underground until this point, and so it was with a great deal of "awesome!" that the stream was greeted by the children as it flowed into the open air from its large culvert. The remainder of this stage of the walk is along the relative flat of Otari-Wilton Bush, a large stand of native bush originally conserved from stock grazing by a forward thinking land owner in 1860. The

accessibility of the Kaiwharawhara stream allowed the children to see great examples of how the banks of the river required protection from erosion. This included seeing council workers repairing gabion baskets that had been undermined from the banks by a heavy rain event a few days previous. The picnic troupe area offers a great stopping point for lunch as well as a safe spot for measuring the velocity of the Kaiwharawhara stream – tape measures, stopwatches, ping-pong balls and gum boots were all part of the teacher & parent helper equipment.

The third and final stage was in Trelissick Park, on the lower reaches of the stream. We were able to see the effects of erosion as there had been a recent flood that had eroded the track. Back at school we were able to see a video of the flood and its action on the bank on the Trelissick Park Facebook page. We saw planting that was designed to prevent erosion and more of the gabion baskets we had seen in Otari Wilton's bush. We saw the confluence of the Silverstream and Korimako, but didn't go down to the confluence of the Kaiwharawhara and Korimako because we decided it was too steep a track for the children. Subsequently some parents have taken their children down independently at a weekend (one has even walked through some of the Kaiwharawhara tunnel!).

The Kaiwharawhara stream doesn't just link suburbs, it links communities. We made the most of this by drawing upon a range of people to help the children think about the influence of nature and people on the stream. These included Zealandia educators, volunteers from the Trelissick Park and Bell's Track Groups, a railway structural engineer who talked about building the railway line through tunnels, and a Kaiwharawhara Project spokesperson based at Wellington City Council. With the help of these speakers, as well as the class work that the children engaged in between each stage of the trip, we were able to map out some of the outcomes for our children. These are shown in the table on the next page.

There are many ways in which children can learn during fieldtrips. The approach we took was very much in the vein of the adults as 'tour guides' of children. Kinder (2013) offers a useful overview of the advantages and disadvantages that this (and other) approaches have. In balance, and for the young children in our care, it helped develop a sense of intrigue and answer questions about the many observations they made along each stage of their trip. Experts also help young learners notice subtle evidence that they might otherwise miss. Moreover, a more exploratory, independent approach to fieldwork along the Kaiwharawhara was potentially hazardous, despite the fact that we enlisted several adult helpers to maintain a high adult:student ratio.

Broad Educational Purposes (Kinder, 2013)	**Social-Sciences Best Evidence Synthesis Outcomes** (Aitken & Sinnema, 2008)	**Selected learner outcomes of the 3 stages**
Conceptual	Knowledge	• Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat. • Explain how we know that some living things from the past are now extinct. • Identifying that nature and people changed the surrounding landscape of the Kaiwharawhara stream. • Identifying problems and potential solutions
Skills related	Skills	• Asked questions of experts and each other. • Observed birds, trees, and stream. • Predicted, and measured the speed of the stream. • Took photographs of interesting places. • Compared and contrasted two stages of the walk.
Aesthetic	Affective / Identity	• Used descriptive language to say how we felt about places • Talked about times we had been in these places before, who we were with, and what we did.
Values related	Affective	• Described our favourite and worst parts of the walk • Considered why the Kaiwharawhara project was important to people
Social & Personal Development	Participatory	• Identified safe ways of walking along shared pathways • Took turns in asking questions

On a practical note, the lack of toilets was an issue, and something other primary schools would have to carefully consider in the context of a local stream study multi-staged effort.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive from children and their parents. It was a challenge, but one that was worth the effort. The staged approach meant that children had something particularly special to look towards as they progressed through their classroom learning. Moreover, their walk along almost the entire length of the Kaiwharawhara stream was an introductory insight into the interaction between nature and society.

References

Aitken, G. & Sinnema, C. (2008) *Social Sciences / Tikana-a-iwi Best Evidence Synthesis [BES*]. Wellington: Ministry of Education

Kinder, A. (2013). What is the contribution of fieldwork to school geography? In D. Lambert & M. Jones (Eds) *Debates in geography education*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge

About the authors:

Mike Taylor is a Social Studies/ Geography education lecturer at VUW Faculty of Education, who provided background detail at the planning stage and geographical insights on stage 2 of this fieldtrip.

Louise Gusterson is a Year 3-4 teacher at Crofton Downs Primary School, Wellington, who not only planned this project with her colleague Rachel Shearer, but walked each stage with her dog and husband to determine its feasibility.

Effective Pedagogy
in Outdoor Education

By Jennifer Diggle

This article explores effective pedagogy in Outdoor Education with a specific focus on camps. There is much support for learning beyond the classroom and the outdoors in general (see EOTC guidelines for a more thorough coverage). New Zealand has tremendous scope to facilitate learning in the outdoors (Mike Barber, personal communication, 13 February 2013). Yet, in primary schools outdoor education can have the potential to be confined to one isolated residential experience with little or no connection to prior or future learning (Humberstone & Stan, 2011). Schools are challenged by costs, time, staffing and risk averse perceptions (Linda Chung, personal communication, 21 February 2013). The residential outdoor educational experience provides unique learning experiences in an authentic setting and develops strong connections to our place. I believe residential camps play a strong and necessary part of our children's education, so I set out to find how we can maximise the benefits of learning outside the classroom and how it could be extended beyond the once-a-year experience into an all encompassing educational philosophy. My inquiry process involved observations of education outside the classroom with six different Canterbury schools and four different outdoor education providers. The year level of the children ranged from year 5 to year 10 and included state and independent schools. During my inquiry I interviewed outdoor education professionals including outdoor education centre managers, outdoor instructors and physical education teachers. My learning journey followed Kolb's experiential model of concrete experiences, reflection and applying and adapting prior knowledge. My findings are presented under the existing headings identified by the NZ curriculum on effective pedagogy.

Creating a Supportive Learning Environment

As teachers we recognise the importance of knowing our learners as fundamental to creating a supportive learning environment. However, in outdoor education we often use the knowledge and skills of an external instructor, outdoor centre staff or parent helpers. Outdoor centre staff and external instructors have the expertise necessary to keep our class safe and run an activity outside of our own capabilities but have no prior knowledge of our class and their needs. Therefore we should work to bridge the gap between the classroom and the outdoor education centre in order to create a learning focused environment. This can be done in several ways.

Firstly, camps work best when there is a specific learning focus identified and communicated between the school and the centre. For example many schools view outdoor education as a chance for a personal and social development focus, such as developing relationships, overcoming challenge or perspective. In addition, outdoor education combined with a second curriculum focus, for example science or social studies, can be very successful. Management staff I interviewed at the centres were more than happy to accommodate and plan for these learning objectives. Communication with the outdoor centre enhances their ability to respond to your student learners' unique needs.

Secondly, educate the outdoor centre staff about your school's philosophy, the class's prior learning experiences and learning expectations for the camp and they will be better able to provide you with a program that meets these needs. Involving the student in this process by asking them to identify their own learning needs ensures perceived relevance and gives the children a sense of ownership. It may even be possible for a member of the centre's staff to visit your school pre camp. Outdoor education should be centred on student focused learning as opposed to leader directed. Prior knowledge of the content of an activity can ensure a teacher understands the best way to facilitate learning.

Thirdly, primary schools are likely to rely on the valuable support of parent helpers to make up the necessary ratios to make outdoor education possible. A briefing session or parent handout can provide a valuable insight into outdoor education and experiential learning and help parents understand their role in the learning process. Collaboration with centre staff will enable you to communicate how parents can be facilitators of the learning and prevent the over eager parent directing what was meant to be a student led process.

Enhancing the Relevance of New Learning

We need to justify the content of our educational programs and outdoor education is no exception, especially considering the cost and time out of the normal school program associated with a residential outdoor camp. Therefore, when planning a program we need to consider the relevance to our class's learning. In November of last year I attended a Beach Education day with a group of Year 7/8 students. The children were country kids, at home on the parents' farm and the foothills of the Southern Alps. They live a 40 minute drive from the coast but some spend time recreating at the beach during the summer holidays. The content of the program provided the children with the skills to keep themselves safe in a beach environment and provided an enjoyable and memorable experience of our coastline. The program was highly relevant to this group of learners. Recent articles have expressed the importance of children knowing their front country (for example see Thevenard, 2012), however, new learning also comes from exploring further afield when children are ready. Davis (personal communication, 22 February 2013) maintains "It is a part of our kiwi heritage to recreate and adventure in wild places" and there is a history of outdoor education showing students a different place or learning experience. The Boyle River Outdoor Education Centre, located in the Lewis Pass, hang their hat on personal and social development in a spectacular alpine setting. Learning experiences in such an environment form connections to the land and provide children with motivation to protect the environment for future years.

Consider extending your view of outdoor education. Opportunities close to home can be taken advantage of to enhance the learning and relevance of all curriculum areas. Miraglia and Smilan (2009) explored an approach that integrated visual art into outdoor education. They found positive correlations between the principles of expeditionary learning and objectives in art education. They noted "art and outdoor education both involve creative problem solving and insightful moments of creativity, success and joy in the process, and going beyond physical, emotional or expected limits." (Miraglia & Smilan, 2009) In this way links can be found to learning areas across the New Zealand Curriculum opening up endless possibilities for outdoor education integration. In this study the location that the children visited was not a far off forest but an area that adjoined the back of an elementary school close to the central business district. As Miraglia and Smilan (2009) state "the simple act of going beyond the classroom intensified the learning experience"

Making Connections to Prior Learning

This links with the first section and in my opinion is more about the relevance of new learning to the student. Because little research has been done in this area, some have identified that it is a dangerous assumption that behavioural changes observed while in an outdoor educational setting will transfer themselves to a classroom environment. That is to say that the new confidence that is exhibited by a usually inward child may be left behind like a stray sock that falls behind the bunk beds. It is important to remember that a lack of research in itself cannot prove or disprove a theory. As teachers, we understand the need for repeated exposure to a concept for it to be embedded.

Linda Chung has created an outdoor education program where camp is not a stand-alone event, but rather each camp builds upon existing knowledge while providing exposure to new opportunities. Perhaps we then need to look for further ways to continue the learning through repeated exposure and reflection back in the classroom. There is a need for further research in this area.

Facilitating Shared Learning

As with any other curriculum area, your class is likely to have a range of competencies that can contribute to outdoor education. For older primary children, an involvement in the planning and preparation of camp can provide a relevant inquiry topic integrating many curriculum areas and installing an attitude of lifelong learning. For example the class could plan the menu for camp discussing nutritional needs, working to a budget and considering special dietary requirements. Homework could be to contribute some home baking to share with their group for morning tea. Humberstone and Stan (2011) highlight the importance of preparing younger children about to experience their first time away from home without their parents. Collaboration with an older class could provide an opportunity to inform and reassure children of what to expect while on camp and develops a collaborative learning community within the school.

Providing Sufficient Opportunities to Learn

In the last issue of *Out and About* we read about the value of a slow journey in creating connections to the environment (Thevenard, 2012). This places priority on the process, not the product, and allows the freedom to take advantage of learning moments encountered along the way. While I was observing at Boyle River, time taken to enjoy a spectacular rainbow spurred a student led discussion on cloud formations. An unplanned swim in Boyle River provided down time for the children to appreciate their surroundings and develop relationships with each other. These experiences enable the children to feel at home in their new surroundings and not just engage as a stranger who is hurried past. The students' observations will inspire questions and encourage a learner led study of their environment. These are all identified as guidelines to place responsive education which focuses on interdependent relationships between a person and place.

Outdoor education can also be viewed as a learning opportunity for the teacher to more deeply understand a child's character and abilities through observation in a different environment from the classroom. Teachers should be involved and celebrate the children's experiences with them so you are better able to transfer the learning back home (personal communication Chung, 2012).

Encouraging Reflective Thought and Action

Reflection is fundamental to experiential learning. Quite often a child will not recognise a eureka moment that you witnessed from the side line (personal communication Barber, 2013). Reflection aids synthesis and provides the foundations for children to apply their learning to new circumstances. Yet, when time is a constraint, reflection activity is often reduced or forfeited altogether. This stresses the need for flexibility. In the outdoors you no longer operate within the boundaries of the school timetable. Enjoy this freedom to work exclusively to your group's needs. Reflection can take many forms and care should be taken to scaffold reflection techniques to meet the group's abilities and comfort levels. A less confident group can begin with less verbal strategies, for example standing on a continuum or giving a five finger rating. Progress onto use of prompts for example sentence starters or props such as feelings cards. Following a scaffolding of reflection techniques will give students the skills and confidence to respond thoughtfully to the big open ended questions. An effective strategy

I witnessed at Boyle River was called Popcorn. Just like corn kernels in a frying pan the children were not expected to all "pop" at the same time. During reflective circle time the children called out "pop" to signal when they were ready to share their thoughts. This eliminated the pressure of waiting for your turn to arrive and increased the quality of reflection as children actively listened to their peers and were allowed the time they needed to formulate their own response.

Conclusion:

So what can we do to make the most of the opportunities that outdoor experiences offer because as Humberstone and Stan (2011) maintain, "the informal and formal learning which takes place is highly dependent upon the ways in which the teacher interacts with the pupils." These authors recommend that teachers seek professional development in aspects of residential and outdoor learning to enhance the learning experiences of children during outdoor education. One way to do this is through the National Certificate in Recreation and Sport, which caters specifically for persons working in education and involved in EOTC. It is a new qualification available through Skills Active Aotearoa and perhaps provides another pathway to great pedagogy in the outdoors.

We are very fortunate here in New Zealand for the opportunities that our landscape, climate and culture offer us as citizens and as learners. To me it makes sense to take advantage of the wonderful spaces outside the confines of the class room in our bid to inspire connected, active and reflective learners. As Linda Chung suggested, "it's all about best teaching practice applied in the outdoors." As educators we are all experienced and knowledgeable in learning theory. Maybe the challenge for ourselves is to apply that theory to a new environment.

References

Allison, P et al (2012) The Curriculum Journal volume 23 pp43 – 58 Potential for Excellence: Interdisciplinary Learning Outdoors as a Moral Enterprise.

Gustafsson, E. Et al (2012) Journal of Advernture Education and Outdoor Learning vol 12 No.1 pp63-79 Effects of an Outdoor Education Intervention on the Mental Health of School Children.

Hodges, K (2008) The Elementary School Journal Vol 108 Issue 3 pp219-227 Models for Curriculum and Pedagogy in Elementary School Physical Education.

Humberstone, B and Stan, I (2009) Australian Journal of Outdoor Education Vol 13 Issue 2 Well being and Outdoor pedagogies in primary schooling: The Nexus of well being and safety.

Humberstone, B and Stan, I (2011) Education 3-13 vol 39 no.5 pp 529 – 540 Outdoor Learning: Primary pupils' experiences and teachers' interaction in outdoor learning.

Miraglia, K and Smilan, C (2009) International Journal of Education through Art volume 5 pp169 – 184 Lessons Learned from the Landscape: an Integrated Approach.

Thevenard, L. (2012). The role of the educator. *Out and About,* (27) Spring 2012 pp.5-8.

Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to Wendy Davis and the Boyle Rover Outdoor Education Centre; Mike Barber and Living Springs; Chris Price and Chris North and the University of Canterbury and Linda Chung for their valuable help with this article.

About the author:

Jennifer Diggle is a beginning teacher at Amuri Area School. This article is the result of an inquiry that was undertaken while studying at the University of Canterbury.

Discovering their place:

EOTC in two South Canterbury Primary Schools

By Hilary Iles

For most primary schools, education outside the classroom is an integral part of their curriculum and hence a regular event. I work with two such Enviroschools who want to create a sense and appreciation of place in their students. One is a small rural school Carew Peel Forest (68 students) and the other is Waimataitai a larger town school (400 students).

Carew Peel Forest (CPF) has a theme for the whole year and in the past, themes have included such things as the sea (with visits to the beach and the port), food (with visits to local growers, a yoghurt maker and a bee keeper), and their local river the Rangitata.

The theme *Our River, Rangitata, Ko Rangitata te awa nei*, from the river to the sea, had two main objectives: first to enable students to value natural habitats and biodiversity, and enjoy it for its own sake, and second to enable them to learn to value healthy, balanced ecosystems and understand their importance in sustaining all life. A number of other outcomes sat beneath these such as learning about the natural processes of a river, observing the river ecosystem

closely to notice smaller details, and understanding people's different viewpoints about the river.

The Rangitata is a major Canterbury river starting in the Southern Alps. One family of the school (whose children have the longest bus trip every day) lives at Mesopotamia nestled at the head of the inland basin between the mountains and the river. So after some initial work at school it was into the school buses and off to Mesopotamia to see where the river starts.

Children were divided into small groups and rotated around different activities. They looked at plants found in the river bed, they searched for creatures living under rocks on the river bank, they sketched the view, they examined life in the river, and they looked at the shape of the rocks and thought about where they had come from and how they had got there. Local people with specialist knowledge and skills helped them with their discoveries and these included people from DOC, Fish and Game, Environment Canterbury and a local artist.

More work back at school followed, before a visit to Clarks Flat (part of Peel forest) and next to a mid-way section of the Rangitata. Small groups rotated around activities in the beautiful lowland kahikatea forest, hunting with pooters for invertebrates in the leaf litter, listening and observing native birds, looking for signs of introduced animal pests and examining the variety of plant pests along the river bank. The river was high and students couldn't get through to the main river channel, so after more work back at school finding out who used the river for what (they used the River Voices resource and talked to locals), they were off for a quick visit to the part of the river closest to school (where Route 72 crosses the Rangitata).

Students had been learning about birds that nest on braided rivers and the threats they face. Consequently, the first activity was to find a stone painted to look like a bird's egg. This was followed by a game teachers had invented where predators (stoats, possums, harrier hawks) hunted nesting birds sitting camouflaged on their nests. They also looked for signs of human threats such as vehicle tracks. A later action from their learning was that the Junior class made signs asking four wheel drivers not to drive in the river bed when birds were nesting. These signs were placed at access points to the river.

Their final visit was to the river mouth. It was an opportunity to see how much the students had learnt and completed the journey. This time students took part in a river mouth scavenger hunt – with pictures of the things students had to spot such as birds, vehicle tracks, plant pests, and animal tracks. Another group recapped erosion processes in the mountains through pouring water on the steep and gently sloping sides of their sand mountains. Students then moved onto describing how rocks have changed on their journey to the sea and then finding out where all the sand has come from. Students mixed sand and water and poured it down a length of guttering into a big container of water – to see sediment settle out. They played a game which showed them the numerous things that effect the survival of whitebait (baby native fish). Students had to pass through a grid drawn on the sand where they were caught by salmon, whitebait fishers and blocked by culverts.

By the end of the year through using the river as a real context and revisiting the concepts in different situations, students had developed a good understanding of biodiversity, interdependence, river processes and how people have different views and values around issues. You can see how the new entrants and year ones could articulate their understanding of biodiversity and interdependence at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjFle6KwiZY

CPF School has also been trying to develop a relationship for students with their local forest and mountain using local pūrākua, school camps and multiple visits. Peel Forest is a wonderful remnant of native trees with magnificent large totara, kahikatea and matai. The school tries to visit at least twice a year so that students can become familiar with the different trees, birds, and plant and animal pests. The school wants Peel Forest to become a place the students know, respect and feel connected to. So students can learn and practice kaitiakitanga and feel their responsibility to look after all the richness of life in the forest, students have helped DOC put up Weta boxes, and shared their knowledge by acting as guides to another visiting school. The year 4-6 camp is held

there every third year and students cycle from school to the forest. Activities include climbing Little Mount Peel, learning about ecological buildings from the Peel Forest Outdoor Education Camp, and listening to the possums at night as they view the stars. Over recent years the school has been facing an increasing number of transient students due to the change in farming practices towards dairying. It recognises the importance of connecting these students (and their families) to their environment and community through their involvement in such programmes.

Waimataitai School in Timaru uses several different local coastal environments to build student knowledge and appreciation of different habitats and their associated plants and animals. Caroline Bay is within walking distance of the school (just under a kilometre) and viewed as an important part of their local school environment. They visit it as frequently as can be fitted into their learning. Usually a whole learning team goes at the same time and splits into smaller groups to rotate around activities. Often they have outside help from DOC, Enviroschools, Environment Canterbury and the South Canterbury museum. The school has also done several community actions down there such as collecting and sorting rubbish and helping Timaru District Council with their sand dune plantings.

Recently there has been great excitement amongst Timaruvians about Little Blue Penguins nesting in the Bay, so this year I have worked with several whole syndicates playing a game about blue penguins to educate about the hazards penguins face nesting at the bay and how they can help. Students examined a stuffed penguin and thought about the threats penguins face as they leave their nests and cross the sand to the sea. Students then practiced how penguins walk. When they have perfected waddling they line up at the end of a grid drawn on the sand (they are now "in the nest") and then have to waddle the gauntlet of socks thrown by "dogs" and shoulder taps by "cats" as they head towards the sea. Once they reach the sea – (the other end of the grid) they are safe and can swim around catching fish but sometimes a leopard seal (one visits Timaru every year) catches one. As night falls the student "penguins" return to the beach – line up at the far end of the grid again and journey back to the nest with some more killed on their return journey. The rest breathe a sigh of relief as they settle down on their nests – only to be eaten by a weasel or stoat small enough to reach them in their hole. Afterwards we talk about what actions they can take to help protect the penguins.

At the same time other groups were learning about the importance of sand dune systems, about introduced pest species and searching the beach for interesting things which they placed within a circle

drawn on the sand. The circle with a ✓ for those things which belong on the beach, one with a ✗ for items which shouldn't be on the beach and one with a ? for unknown objects. Students sit around each circle in turn and discuss the findings.

Also within a short bus journey from school are Washdyke lagoon, where a class project resulted in planting lots of native trees and grasses with DOC, and the Otipua wetlands. These are wetlands recreated in an old quarry site where there have been extensive community native plantings. The school regularly visits this area so children can learn about the importance of wetlands, the ingredients for a healthy habitat and to observe some of the water fowl. Students also look at water invertebrates and their connections to birds, use spotting scopes to view the bird life, play a wetland activity game where students are raindrops and are timed passing through a healthy and an unhealthy simulated wetland and discovered the value of wetlands using analogies such as guessing how much water a sponge will hold before it drips out of the bottom.

These are just some snapshots of things the two schools do to deepen and enrich student learning and make it relevant and purposeful. I hope it might inspire more schools to leave the classroom on a regular basis and use their local environment.

About the author

Hilary Iles is an Enviroschools Canterbury facilitator working with schools in Christchurch and South Canterbury. She can be contacted by email at hilary.iles@enviroschools.org.nz

EOTC on TKI

By Dave Irwin

The newly created EOTC resources on the Ministry of Educations TKI website (a product of the joint EONZ, NZAEE, MSC initiative funded by Sport NZ) were introduced in an earlier edition of Out and About (Issue 26, Autumn 2012), and since many readers of this special edition will be unfamiliar with these, another brief introduction has been included. These resources are fantastic, and if you have not spent some time on the TKI site recently, you should do this. Those who worked on the creation of these resources should be congratulated for there is a wonderful array of resources and links for teachers, parents, principals and boards of trustees, and providers. Although there is not the space here to fully navigate the site, there are several sections that deserve closer inspection.

The *For teachers* section provides a very valuable collection of supportive resources for teachers collected under teaching resources, frequently asked questions, key resources, policy examples, making connections, and professional development. Under *Teaching resources* the user will find a selection of inspiring case studies in *EOTC in action*, teaching and learning theory in *Making EOTC happen*, a collection of practical teaching examples under *Activities, ideas and tools*, and guidance and support for safety strategies under *Learning safety*. The following two examples are taken from *EOTC in action* and *Activities, ideas and tools*.

The first example is a case study of a school that used a visit to the Botanic Gardens to learn about changes in nature through the context of seasons. The learning areas relating to curriculum are integrated, or sit within English and Arts; and the years described in the case study are primary year 2; while the curriculum level is 1-2.

The second example is an activity relating to making music in nature. The description of the activity suggests students will compose and perform a piece of music with material found in nature. The learning areas outlined suggest the activity could be integrated, or sit within Health and PE, Arts, or Technology. The curriculum levels for the activity are 1-8.

There is amazing depth to the site, well demonstrated in the *Research and Resources* section. Here under a range of headings there is a wealth of information about EOTC in this country and from overseas. In this section can be found *Research links*, where users find a wide selection of useful sites. In *Research readings* can be found an excellent collection of contemporary research on a variety of topics including an overview of research relating to EOTC in this country, teaching and learning in the outdoors, Treaty of Waitangi and cultural issues, sustainability and environmental education, place based education, critical research, and risk and safety. In *Articles* can be found a selection of articles (most sourced from the Education Gazette) on a wide selection of topics; *Archive* holds a number of historical documents and *Key Resources* presents the user with a range of documents by a number of agencies whose role it is to support EOTC.

Visit EOTC on TKI at http://eotc.tki.org.nz/eotc-home

EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

BRINGING THE CURRICULUM ALIVE

Case Study: Changes – a visit to the Botanic Gardens

What we focused learning on and why:

Colleen Grey, teacher of a year two class, taught a unit based on the understanding of *change*, through the context of seasons. During the unit they visited the Christchurch Botanic Gardens enabling students to experience the *changes* happening in the season of autumn. For Colleen it was important to engage students in hands-on practical learning experiences in order to develop key understandings with the students.

These included:

- There are seasons of the year.
- The change in the seasons means we change what we do.
- There are specific things we do in the seasons e.g. wear more clothes, eat different food (eating seasonally is sustainable), play different games.
- The seasons affect birds, plants and animals in our school.
- There are things that we do in the garden at different times of the year e.g. planting, harvesting, resting the ground, making compost.

Language and in particular vocabulary development and enrichment was a vital component of students' learning needs. The visit to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens was a key experience in supporting this learning goal.

What we planned (focusing inquiry):

For the visit to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, the key learning outcomes were:

- To engage students with learning in the environment by exploring the changes around us in autumn.
- To provide students with shared experiences that would develop understandings and vocabulary back at school.
- For students to have experiences to connect learning. For example descriptions of changes in leaf colours, learning words to describe sounds like swishing, stomping, crunching and comparisons of bigger than, smaller than.

Prior to visiting the gardens Colleen and the students explored '*what are seasons*?' using pictures, keeping a weather chart, reading and writing about the things we do in different seasons, creating 'seasons' books of the weather, clothes we wear and some of the activities of different animals in different seasons.

Some tangible and physical experiences undertaken at the gardens included:

- Making bark rubbings of different trees and discussing how the different trees feel.
- Carrying out a sound log, listening to different sounds such as the wind moving leaves, rustling branches and bird song.
- Doing a treasure hunt from within a defined space.
- Looking in a defined area for particular shapes in a shape hunt.
- Observing, listening, smelling and touching different things to complete an alphabet hunt.
- Building a leaf mountain.
- Interviewing people in the gardens to explore the idea of why people might value the gardens.

Safety considerations:

Three classes from new entrant to year three participated in the visit to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens with a total of 62 children.

Three teachers, 15 adult activity leaders and one teacher aide were present making the total number of adults 19. One teacher was identified as the teacher in charge. The two other teachers were not activity leaders, their role was to maintain an overview of their students. The teacher aide was assigned to one child. One of the parents that attended had a pre-schooler so was not assigned as an activity leader.

Each of the class teachers had their own class list, their groupings and the medical information as required. This list was also left at school with the secretary.

Each teacher had a cellphone.

Identified hazards were:

- Encounters with the public and people unknown to the students.
- Workers in the gardens and their equipment.
- The empty paddling pool.
- Encounters with wildlife such as paradise ducks.
- The river.

For each of these hazards class teachers had identified a behaviour expectation with their students. This information was re-iterated on arrival at the gardens.

Check the requirements of your own school policies when planning such learning experiences. *See the EOTC Guidelines, 2009 for further information.*

To take or not to take?

During the planning of the visit, teachers discussed whether students should take items from the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. A call was made to the Information Centre as requested on the Christchurch City Council website to communicate the school's intentions for the visit. At that time the teacher asked whether taking 'dead or fallen items' back to school was possible. In the area identified for the visit, autumn leaves and other materials were being removed from the grass areas by the gardeners, so it was decided that a small number of fallen items (i.e. dead) per group could be taken back to school to further learning intentions.

What we did (teaching inquiry):

At the start of the unit Colleen supported students to understand what the seasons were and the differences between them. The class created a weather chart and wrote explanations of the different seasons. Once students had explored some of the changes that they make as a result of the seasons they were ready to examine other changes around them.

The day before the visit the learning intentions and experiences were discussed with the students. Expectations for learning safely were developed with the students and in accordance with school policy. The teachers organised the children into suitable groups and sent information/guide sheets for the activities to the activity leaders (parent help) the day before the visit.

At the gardens the boundaries and keeping safe guidelines were re-iterated with all the students before splitting into groups of no more than four. With their activity leaders the students carried out activities described above and had a great time collecting 'treasures'. After lunch a collective 'leaf mountain' was built before feeding the ducks and returning back to school.

What happened (learning inquiry):

The next day Colleen used the gathered 'treasure' to further develop learning outcomes through mathematics. The experience focused on shape and measurement and expanded the students' vocabulary including factual words and ideas. For example deciduous and evergreen trees, as well as more expressive language related to texture, shape and feelings.

The lesson included:

- Setting clear learning intentions for mathematics in shape and measurement.
- Discussing and deciding on the criteria with the students.
- Students working in groups to sort their leaves according to the intentions and criteria.
- Reviewing the learning intention with all the students and each group sharing their ideas. Through this process Colleen was able to introduce the concepts of evergreen and deciduous trees and plant life cycles as it arose naturally as part of the discussion.

A number of other literacy outcomes were developed from the visit to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, such as recounts and poems.

Student reflect Student reflections:
"We had to draw pictures of leaves me and mum got a leaf and put it under the paper and we see the picture. M's was in her friends group I was in D's mums group listen really carefully what noises we heard we closed our eyes, we found heaps of acorns."

"We had to look for different leaves we had to follow the leader we to find the bark it was very fun."

"We drew a pattern, at the botanic gardens we found some pointy leaves and some pine needles and some chestnuts."

"Learn about evergreen trees no leaves fall down in winter, spring summer, autumn."

Learning outcomes:

For these children, the Christchurch Botanic Gardens visit enabled learning of the key understandings that Colleen had planned for students. Learning experiences in the classroom after the visit were about making connections with the children's experiences at the gardens to identified learning needs.

The mathematics lesson was not in the initial unit plan, but was a great response to the students' delight in the 'treasure' that they had gathered. The children were observed 'playing' with the different items, identifying which things they had found and their favourite items – spiky chestnut shells, colourful leaves and feathers all scoring highly. Ongoing learning for some of the students in EOTC from this event may have been to let students re-create the gardens visit in the school grounds.

Further information, links and resources:

EOTC Guidelines, 2009: http://eotc.tki.org.nz/EOTC-home/EOTC-Guidelines

Acknowledgement: *This story was made possible through the Enviroschools programme and was part of a research project into Literacy in Enviroschools. Thanks to the Enviroschools Foundation for their support. For more information visit: http://www.enviroschools.org.nz/about-enviroschools/national-projects/research*

Activity: Music makers

Learning intention: Compose and perform a piece of music with materials found in nature.

Description:

Music is a series of different sounds and many instruments have their origins in natural materials.

- Get the group to identify some natural materials they might find in the area they could use to make various sounds.
- Ask students to identify guidelines for selecting their material, e.g. no living material, cause minimal disturbance to the environment.
- In groups of four to six collect a range of materials that each group could use to make a musical instrument, or a musical instrument for each person in the group.
- Give the groups a few minutes to practice making a range of noises with their instruments. Compare the sounds produced by different people using similar instruments. See if different instruments can produce similar sounds.
- Give each group a card with a scenario on it, for example;
    - It is a calm day in the mountains. Gradually a fierce storm moves in.
    - Imagine a mountain stream as it gathers momentum into a swift river, flows over a powerful waterfall, into a deep slow moving river on the plains and eventually into the sea.
    - The dawn chorus
    - The sounds of the playground at lunch time.
- Give the groups about 10 minutes to work on their composition then students perform their work for each other.
- The group discusses what the composition evoked for them and what it might represent.

Safety considerations:

- Set boundaries of area from which material can be collected for instruments.

Equipment:

- Enough scenario cards for each group to have one.
- A recorder to record students' compositions.

Location:

- An outside area where students can find a range of materials with which to create sounds.
- The composition tasks can be done inside if it is wet.

Time: 45 -60 minutes (depending on the size of the group)

Student processing/reflection:

- Discuss why each group chose their particular instruments.
- Discuss how sound can be used to tell a story or evoke emotion.
- Discuss the process used by each group to develop their composition.
- Ask each group to identify strategies they used to play their composition together.

Possible adaptations:

- Each group could develop a dance to go with their composition.
- Groups could recreate the sounds they hear in their everyday lives.
- Students could write a short poem based on each composition.
- Students could create a composition to tell the story of their week at school / camp etc.
- The different sounds produced by the instruments could be used as a study of sound waves.

Acknowledgements:
Reference: Adapted from:
McConnell, B. & Law, B. (1994). Education outside the classroom: Language. Christchurch College of Education
Hillary Commission. (1995). Kiwi Outdoors.

Staffing and Supervision

By Catherine Kappelle

Effective leadership and supervision structures in EOTC are more than just ratios. Supervision is often referred to in terms of the ratio between experienced or skilled supervisors compared to the number of novices involved in an EOTC activity. Careful consideration of a number of factors, along with reference to accepted best practice for a particular activity should frame any ratio that is established.

Gemma Periam, in an article written for Out and About called *Let's no longer talk 'ratios'* (Out and About, Issue 17 Summer 2006/07) advocates use of leadership and supervision structures to frame EOTC activities instead of 'ratios': "*I usually arrive at the 'ratios' conversation sooner rather than later. I also soon get frustrated at people's traditional understanding of 'ratios' getting in the way of them grasping an understanding of the currently accepted meaning of ratios.*" Periam makes the point that, too easily, the ratio is reduced to an oversimplification of all the considerations when coming to an agreed balance of competency of experienced to inexperienced. The article goes on to provide two examples, reprinted on the following pages, of possible supervision structures for a Year 5/6 social studies camp and a day tramp for Year 10. Each scenario provides a rationalisation for the supervision structure that was the result of collaborative planning. In framing the leadership and supervision structure that lead to a ratio in each scenario a series of questions were answered. These included:

- What skills do the leaders/ supervisors have specific to the activity?
- What is the nature of the site you are using? Is it land based or water based?
- What is the season? What is the weather forecast? What contingencies are required if the weather changes unexpectedly?
- What skills do the students have specific to the activity? Are there students with special needs requiring extra supervision?

Chapter 4 of the Ministry of Education (2009) *EOTC Guidelines, Bringing the Curriculum Alive*, focuses specifically on staffing and supervision and provides further considerations for effective supervision on p 42. The chapter expands on what are referred to as the cornerstones of learning safely, namely that of competent staff, roles and responsibilities that are clearly defined, and adequate ratios and effective supervision.

This chapter on staffing and supervision is also comprehensively examined as part of an easily accessible set of 8 self-paced EOTC learning modules called SPLMS. The modules unpack the EOTC Guidelines and develop understanding of key messages found in the document. These are available on line through the Ministry of Education Training Services website. Access requires a short process of registration, after which participants can work through material at a time and pace to suit their own situation. Full registration information is available in an article called New Qualifications and Online Professional Learning. Alternatively, follow the link provided on the EONZ homepage at www.eonz.org.nz, or through the EOTC kete on TKI. The modules also feature in the Education Gazette of May 6, 2013.

Let's no longer talk 'ratios' can be found online at www.eonz.org.nz or by completing a simple Google search using the name of the article.

References:

Periam, G. (2006/07) Let's no longer talk 'ratios', Out and About, 17, 45-48

Ministry of Education (2009) EOTC Guidelines, Bringing the Curriculum Alive

Example 1. Year 5/6 Social Studies Camp – Rotorua

A group of 64 students, 9 parents and 4 teachers went on a camp for four days. So is that 13:64 (or 1:5) or 4:73 or what? Activities included visits to Rotorua Museum, Whakarewarewa, Buried Village (including walk to the waterfall) and the local city thermal park. Accommodation was at a holiday park in a large hostel type facility.

The following diagram represents the supervision structure that was put in place as a result of teachers' collaborative planning to maximize learning and safety across the range of activities undertaken.

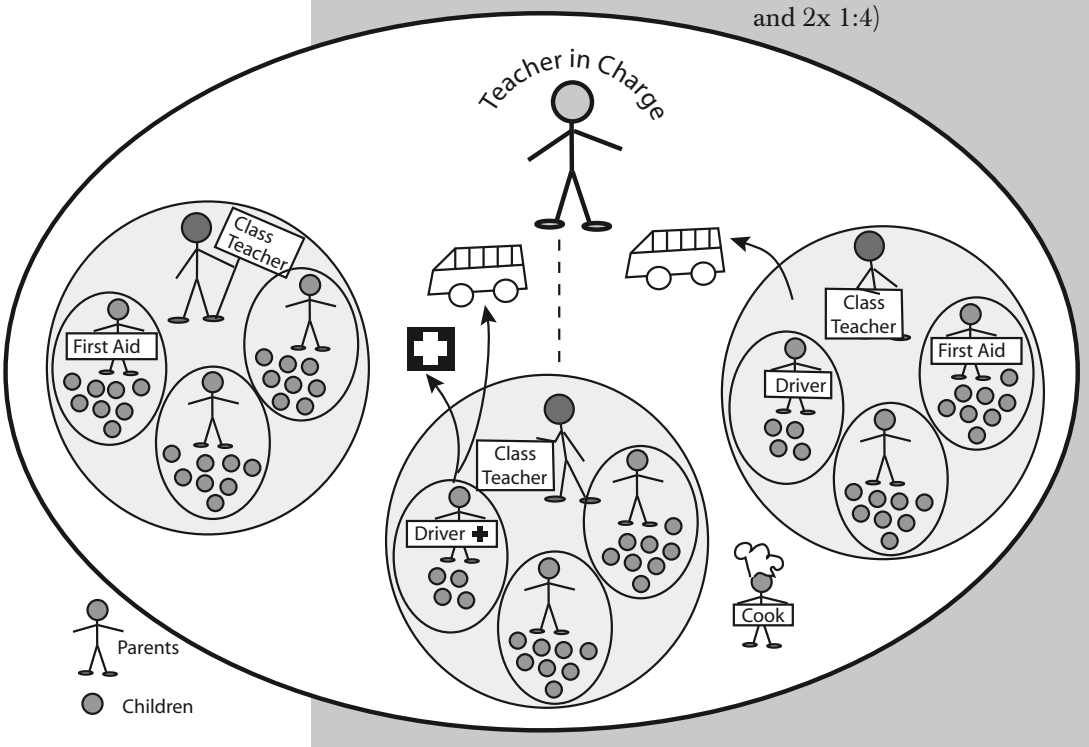
Teacher-in-charge had responsibility for overall supervision of the programme and had no students to directly supervise. It was their role to respond to any problem or crisis and ensure it was managed successfully. (1:77)

Cook. A parent with considerable experience cooking in commercial kitchens for large groups. No students under their direct supervision.

First Aid Officer. A parent who was bus driver and a trained current volunteer ambulance officer was the designated first aid person. He had a group of four students only. The class teacher would take this group when he had to deal with any first aid situation. Other teachers and parents had a range of first aid knowledge and experience, two with current certificates. (1:77 or is it 3:77)

Three teachers. Each was responsible for a class of students. If a parent required assistance or to be released the teacher would step in for that parent's group. When the two parent bus drivers were driving the teacher would supervise their group. If a problem or crisis occurred the teacher for that group would respond initially and communicate to teacher-in-charge if the problem could not be managed at that level. (1:24 and 2x 1:20)

Eight parents. Six parents were allocated eight students each to directly supervise and be responsible for during the four days. Two parents who were also bus drivers had four students allocated. Groups of students were formed and matched with parents who had the skills to supervise them. For example two ex-teacher parents were given groups with more troublesome students. (1:8 and 2x 1:4)



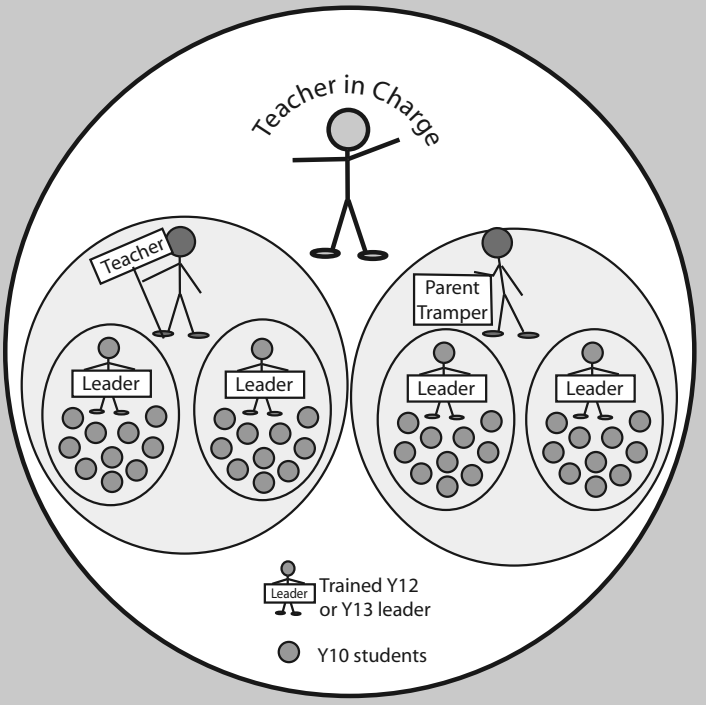
Y5 and Y6 Social Studies Camp – Rotorua

Example Two. Year 10 day tramp – Hunua

Each tramping group was made up of 40 Year 10 students, 4 Year 13 leaders, teacher in charge, a teacher and a parent. The tramp is about 5 hours and on a high use, well formed and clearly marked track. The track is very steep in places and has two easier contingency routes.

Four groups of 11: 10 Year 10 students assigned to one Year 13 leader. A parent tramper or teacher with 2 groups of 11. See diagram. So two larger groups of 23 tramping 5-10 minutes apart. Teacher – in-charge within whistling distance of both groups. Both groups stopping and touching base with each other at junctions and pre-determined rest spots. The group of 40 was split into these smaller sub-groups to be a more manageable size to walk along a tramping track.

It wouldn't be best practice to have each of these groups walking totally independently. Ideally we would want supervision levels to be sufficient so that we could, but reality in schools means we make the best of what we can get. The bottom line has to be do we have enough competent leadership to handle a crisis in this given situation?



Y5 and Y6 Social Studies Camp – Rotorua

Teacher in charge. Moved between the groups particularly when groups stopped at junctions. No assigned students. Knows the area particularly well and has considerable tramping experience, risk and crisis management skills (Bush 1 equivalence). (1:46)

Teacher Two and Parent. Teacher had some tramping experience and site specific knowledge having tramped the track previously. Parent with considerable tramping experience and leadership experience working with young people in youth groups. (1:11)

Year 13 students. Trained in leadership, established rapport with students in previous two or three days leading in other outdoor activities. Received site-specific training earlier in the year. At least one of the two had workplace first aid. (1:10)

Overall the 'ratio' according to definitions above was 7:40.

Structured Learning and Safety
Come Together at CastleRock Adventure

By Deborah Hinde

Working closely with schools CastleRock Adventure is able to design outdoor adventure education programmes to meet requirements whether environmental or curriculum focused team building, leadership or specific skills development for a particular activity. The added advantage of having on site core activities of rock climbing, abseiling, bouldering, flying fox, orienteering, archery, camping and mountain biking make it a simple choice of venue for schools to base themselves.

Students can also experience wilderness and environmental activities with bivvy building, camp cooking and basic survival skills as part of a new initiative that is receiving a very positive response. The region is rich in opportunity to extend students learning with Lake Arapuni for kayaking, the Waikato River Trails for walking and mountain biking and Maungatautari for tramping and nature study. Schools return to CastleRock time and again because of the location, the programmes on offer and the knowledge that their student's safety comes first.

At the outset understanding client's requirements are established by asking two key questions: Why are you coming? and, What are you wanting to achieve? Once the reasons for running a programme and desired outcomes are determined, clients are provided with a detailed plan that gives value for money and ensures all objectives are met. During or on completion of a programme feedback is encouraged to make sure all objectives, expectations and goals have been achieved.

CastleRock has been operating as an outdoor education provider for over ten years. The landowner developed the business as a place for schools, corporate groups and family and community groups to visit, stay and take part in the activities available on-site. Trevor Johnson's vision at the time was to provide an opportunity for young people to extend themselves through exposure to outdoor adventure activities, particularly rock climbing.

Safety for both client and staff has always been of paramount importance with annual independent safety audits for the abseil site, rock route anchors and the flying fox. Instructors were required to be experienced and hold a recognized industry qualification as well as undergo on-site training once a year.

Since opening, operational changes have streamlined CastleRock Adventure.

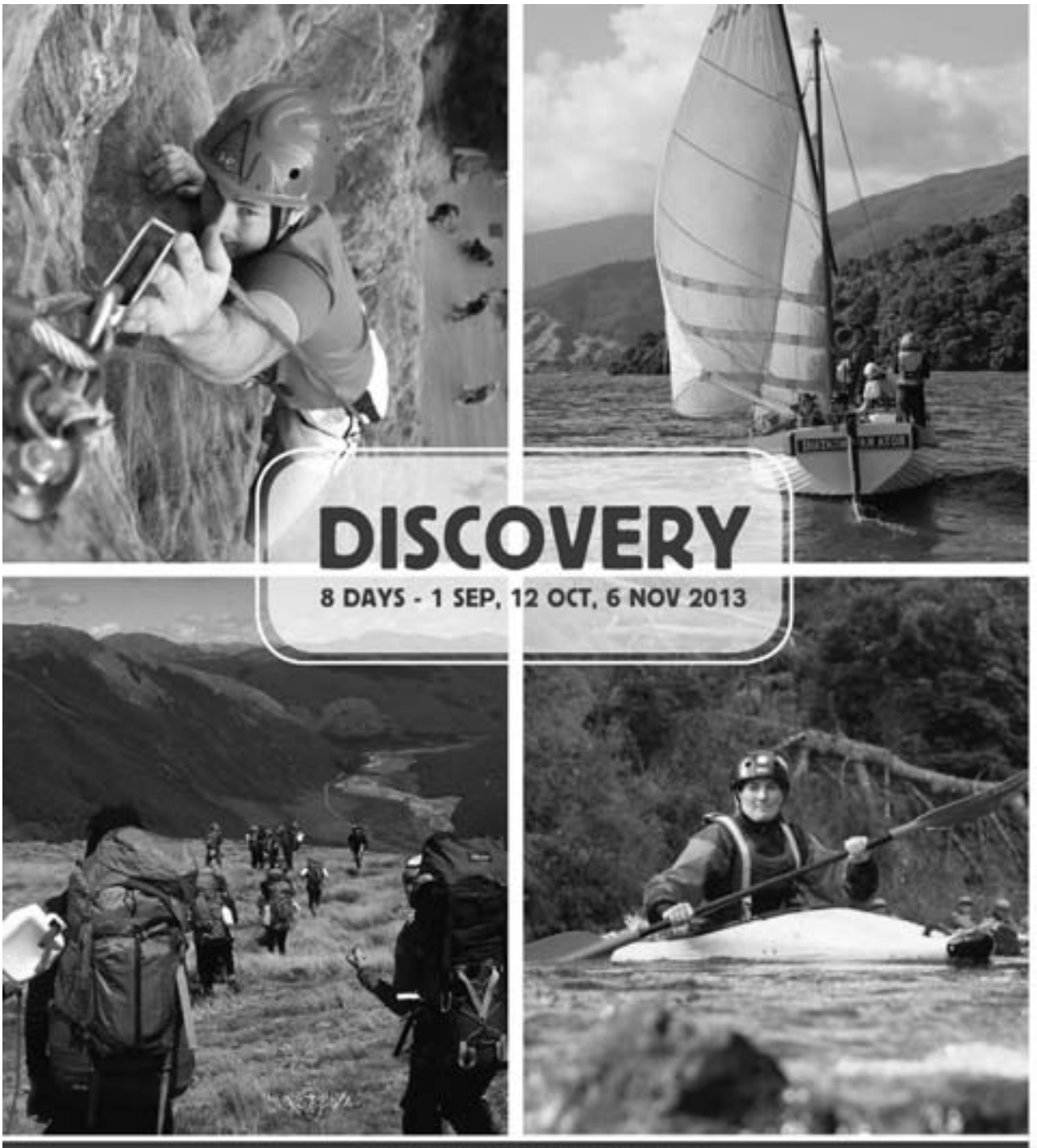
In 2010 CastleRock Adventure closed the crag used by freedom climbers and instructed groups for a period of six months. Lawyers were consulted to determine the best way to manage all safety aspects of the crag and business in light of the Adventure Activities Regulations being introduced in 2011. The outcome of this was the installation of a third anchor on climbs used by instruction and guided groups on the Lower Tier; new signage; Terms and Conditions forms for access and a new Sign-In procedure.

The second more important change was the partnership developed between CastleRock Adventure and Outdoor Recreation Management (ORM). These two private organizations with different assets and skill sets work together to provide safe and meaningful EOTC experiences for schools, corporate and community groups.

Working closely with CastleRock Adventure, ORM develops and implements adventure activities for single or multi-day programmes that work within the curriculum bringing structured learning and safety together.

CastleRock Adventure is located at:
1250 Owairaka Valley Road,
Wharepapa South.
RD 7 Te Awamutu

And can be contacted at:
Reception 0800 225 462
Email: info@castlerockadventure.co.nz
Web: www.castlerockadventure.co.nz



DISCOVER YOUR FULL POTENTIAL
THROUGH CHALLENGE & ADVENTURE IN THE OUTDOORS

COURSE: In the beautiful Marlborough Sounds you will try tramping, sailing, high ropes course and more!

PARTICPANTS: 14 participants 27 - 45 and 40 + years. Two instructors will be with each group.

COURSE FEE: $2,320. Don't let funding be a barrier, go to www.outwardbound.co.nz/funding-your-course.

Outward Bound

For more information please go to www.outwardbound.co.nz/discovery, call 0800 OUTWARD or email info@outwardbound.co.nz.

New Qualifications and Online Professional Learning

By Fiona McDonald

Self-paced learning modules (SPLMS), a new qualification and specialist support for schools are three new initiatives available for educators this year.

Professional Learning Development (PLD) for Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) is now available as a series of on-line self paced learning modules, or SPLMS, as they are known. The modules can be completed at the time and pace that suits each individual, at no cost and are readily accessible through the Ministry of Education Training Services Learning Management System (LMS) website.

What do the online self-paced learning modules involve?

The modules, created by Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ) in partnership with the Ministry of Education were developed to support the understanding and implementation of the 2009 foundation document EOTC Guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive.

Participants are led through the EOTC Guidelines, providing examples and opportunities for self-review and planning. They are suitable for all teachers and leaders of EOTC, sport and EOTC coordinators, school leaders, providers, and Board of Trustee members. Parents who regularly assist with school EOTC experiences may also find the modules useful.

Accessing the Modules

There are two ways to do this:

1. If you already have a Training Services LMS username and password go to the website www.trainingservices.org.nz and enter your details. Select 'Browse Training' on the left hand side bar, then find EOTC where the modules are listed under 'Self Paced Learning Modules'.

2. If you don't have a username and password for the Training Services LMS email training.services@minedu.govt.nz your details (name, position, school, email) and the Training Services team will set you up. Alternatively, contact the Training Services team on 04 463 0928.

For any assistance with accessing the Training Services LMS or these modules please contact training.services@minedu.govt.nz or 04 463 0929.

Facilitator Support

Schools who register with the modules will have the ability to access on-line facilitator support. The support could include but is not necessarily limited to:

- Answering questions arising from the SPLM or from EOTC in general
- Sharing ideas and/or resources
- Answering questions arising from the assessments in the EOTC qualification
- Developing and/or facilitating small cluster groups
- Making comment about the school's EOTC material, for example, safety management systems, EOTC overview or EOTC Policy and procedures.

See the Closing module or email fmcdonald@clear.net.nz for further information or to register for facilitator support.

Qualification Support

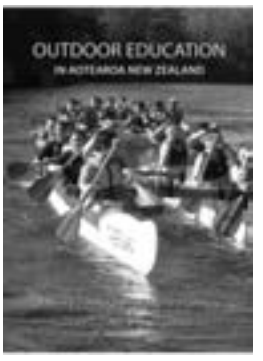
There is a subsidy available to a limited number of SPLM participants to complete the National Certificate in Recreation and Sport (Education Outside the Classroom). This qualification is based around the EOTC Guidelines and focuses on:

- Understanding the principles and values of EOTC
- Managing hazards and risks
- Planning, delivering and evaluating safe and rewarding EOTC activities and events
- Teamwork and listening skills
- Dealing with different types of behaviour.

The total cost of the assessment of this qualification is $400 + GST per participant, the subsidy will provide $260 +GST towards the assessment costs. For more information about the National Certificate in Recreation and Sport (Education Outside the Classroom) or to enrol to complete the qualification, email tess@skillsactive.org.nz

Outdoor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand: A New Vision for the Twenty First Century

Edited by: *Dave Irwin, Jo Straker and Allen Hill*



Outdoor education in a variety of guises has a rich history in Aotearoa New Zealand, dating back more than 100 years. Outdoor learning experiences have a strong and often much-loved place in our collective education memories. However, the world in which we currently live is vastly different from the one which shaped those memories. What does that mean for education, and more specifically, what does that mean for outdoor learning experiences? This book attends to these questions from a forward looking position by providing a practical, insightful, and innovative reappraisal of outdoor education theory and practice. Embracing a critical socio-ecological perspective, the contributors celebrate aspects of creative practice and chart a direction for outdoor education which aspires to educate for a sustainable and more equitable future.

This is essential reading for outdoor educators, teachers, guides, and students who want to expand the possibilities and practices of education, especially education which builds a deeper understanding of our relationship to the world we depend on.

ORDER FORM Please fill out and return with your payment to: **$NZ35.50** (incl GST and postage)
Education Outdoors New Zealand, 354 Tram Road, R D 2 Kaiapoi 7692 Reduced p&p on ordered multiple copies.
Or, office@eonz.org.nz
Payment by cheque: Make cheques out to Education Outdoors New Zealand Inc
Payment by Direct Credit: Kiwibank: 38-9014-0056233-00 (In Particulars please write OE in NZ)

Name and postal address: _____

_____

Website helps children see the outdoors from Both Sides of the Fence

By James Heffield

Hundreds of Kiwi children are learning the value of the outdoors and how to access it responsibly on a new curriculum aligned website run by the New Zealand Walking Access Commission.

Named Both Sides of the Fence, (www.bothsidesofthefence.org.nz), the site is a free, enquiry-based digital resource for primary and intermediate school students aged 8-13 years, and their teachers. It uses engaging animated video scenarios featuring characters such as Kush the dog and Barry the farmer to teach students about the realities of rural life and responsible access behaviour.

New Zealand Walking Access Commission Chief Executive Mark Neeson said the website was a valuable tool for groups and individuals in the outdoor community, particularly educators and those teaching children.

"The website's enquiry-based approach helps students come to their own conclusions by considering different viewpoints around outdoor access," Mr Neeson said. "This differs from resources that tell students how to behave in the outdoors without a background story or context."

Both Sides of the Fence has been visited 3,000 times since its launch in October and November last year. Resources for students include a 'Web Book', a series of animated 'Explore' access-related scenarios, and an 'In my Region' image gallery where students can upload photos of outdoor areas of interest to them.

The 'Explore' scenarios look at topics including unformed legal roads, dogs in a rural setting, biosecurity risks, fires, and the cultural implications of access across Māori land.

"Both Sides of the Fence encourages people to follow the Kiwi way," Mr Neeson said. "It helps students understand why they should behave in the ways suggested by the Commission's *New Zealand Outdoor Access Code* and why different groups have differing values around access."

The New Zealand Outdoor Access Code was developed by the Commission to set out the rights and responsibilities of recreational users and landholders. The Code spells out the need for people to behave properly and take responsibility for their actions in the outdoors. It also asks landholders to continue the New Zealand tradition of giving access to people wanting to cross their land, so long as those people are respectful.

Both Sides of the Fence was developed by education resource provider Learning Media (the producers of the School Journal) and digital experts CWA New Media. It is a valuable resource for anybody involved in education

outside the classroom (EOTC) and aligns with Social Sciences and English learning areas of the school curriculum. Lesson plans are available on the site for teachers and educators looking for ideas about how to make the most of the resources on the site.

The scenarios

Unleashed

Kush the dog is restricted from accessing a track down to a beach he often enjoys with his owner. Students find out why he has been stopped and are encouraged to think about possible solutions.

Fruitful discussions

A locked gate and 'No Access' sign stops Alice from walking across an orchard to the cliffs. She has enjoyed the walk for years but can't go there anymore. Students discover why and are encouraged to think of alternative solutions.

Public land

Kate finds out about unformed legal roads and the rights of access they offer.

Treading softly

Andy learns about some of the important cultural protocols when seeking access across Māori land.

Sparking debate

Sam and his dad are asked by a farmer to put out a fire at their camp. Students find out why and are encouraged to think of possible solutions that would be agreeable to both the farmer, and the campers

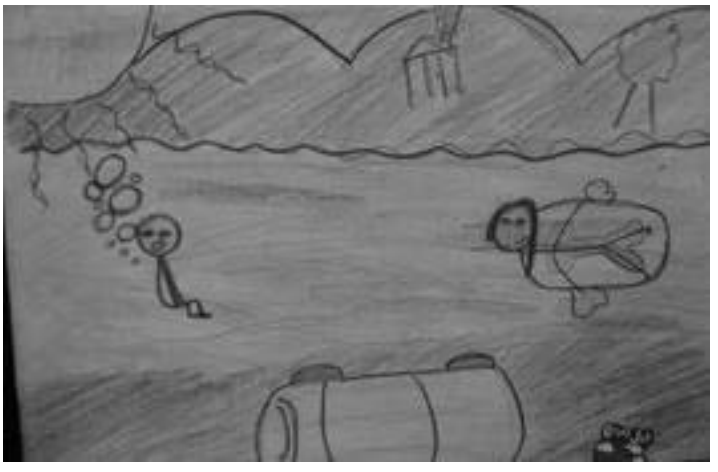
The following artworks are examples of student work in a recent *Top Outdoor Spot* competition that attracted entries from around the country. Teachers and students are encouraged to keep filling the 'In My Region' web gallery with photos and descriptions of the favourite outdoor spots in their schools' regions.

Across Te Mata Peak

Connor, 9
Havelock North

Te Mata Peak can be seen all around Havelock North and when you are on top of it you can see all around Hawkes Bay including out to sea. My school is even called Te Mata School. It is a very special place and has its own Maori Legend called The Legend of Te Mata o Rongokako, The Sleeping Giant. It is my favourite place because when I see Te Mata Peak, I know I am near my home and family.

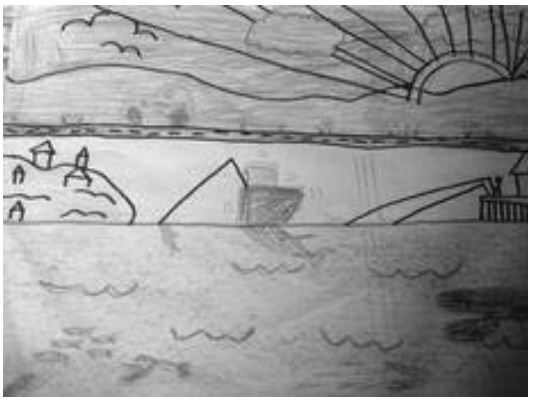
The Humps, Bay Of Plenty



Travene, 11
Opotiki

The twinkling, luminous sun burns the rocks at the river. The river sparkles blue shimmers in the sunlight. SPLISH! , SPLOSH! , SPLASH! Goes the water when I do a bomb in the river. As I splash into the river the ripples form little ringlets around me. The metal jumping platform springs me into the air and I splash down into the water at The Humps.

Wellington Harbour



Vincent, 8
Petone

In Wellington Harbour creatures of wonder
and beauty lurk beneath the surface.
The wind sweeps rocky shells off the deck of
Petone Wharf.
It blows through the sails of the yachts that sail
on the frizzling water.
In the evening the water glitters as the hills
sing.

The Mount

Tai, 7
Wellington

My place is Mount Ruapehu. Its snow is as soft as your blanket. It is as big as the moon. It is as steep as the sky.

Omaio Beach

Destiny, 12
Opotiki

As I'm walking along the beach at Omaio I look up at the sky and see seagulls flying like aeroplanes gliding from side to side. The tree is a staunch soldier keeping guard for shade. Dark, black, bold branches sway calmly side to side. As I am walking past Omaio Beach, the beach is a rippling cheetah. As I walk past, the branches are reaching out to the sky. By Destiny

Cape Palliser

Julia, 12
Havelock North

Imagine jagged rocks like the teeth of a wild animal,
Imagine storm ravaged landscapes that never seem
to end,
Imagine jets of water shooting out like a cannon,
That's Cape Palliser.

Cannibal Bay

Emma, 13
Dunedin

Can you imagine a beautiful beach with amazing green hills and scenery, clear blue water, heaps of fishing spots and only a few minutes to the nearest paua catching spots. This is my idea of heaven on earth and I am lucky because it's real. This is my favourite place in my region, Cannibal Bay in the Catlins.

Waiotahi Beach

Danni , 11
Opotiki

Waiotahi has lots of beautiful objects scattered across the beach
Crash! Crash! The sound of waves.
The sand is sparkly like glitter.
Crash! Crash! The sound of waves.
Beautiful big blue ocean below the blue sky.
Crash! Crash! The sound of waves.
Waiotahi is a special place to me because I always go there with my family.

The organising committee for the next NZAEE conference invites EONZ members to participate in the conference

Christchurch, 15-17th January, 2014.

For a number of years now EONZ and NZAEE have collaborated on a number of education projects designed to enhance our understanding of sustainability. This conference offers many opportunities to not only explore sustainability from a variety of viewpoints but also to experience a city and its communities recovering from disaster.

Diary the dates now and favourite our URL **www.nzaeeconference.co.nz**

shake up! 2014
Ka huri te ao, Ka huri te whakaaro
NZAEE Biennial Conference
Christchurch, January 15-17th

Dear Shazza and Brucie

The two questions below and the response that follows first appeared in the Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ) publication New Zealand Physical Educator – Te Ao Kori Aotearoa Volume 45/3 October 2012. The response was compiled by Libby Paterson, Subject Advisor for PENZ and a national facilitator in the recently concluded EOTC Guidelines PLD workshop series. Libby chose to answer the questions together as they had similar connections.

The Questions:

Dear Shazza and Brucie
We have an EOTC week for all year 1-8 students towards the end of the term 4. I am in-charge of putting a low cost programme together, but our students expect to do outdoor pursuit activities like rock climbing, kayaking and tubing to name but a few. I'm not sure that our staff have the expertise to take these activities and water scares the life out of me.

Water Worries

Dear Shazza and Brucie
Our Year 9/10 have an Outdoor Education week after their exams prior to school finishing. All the staff offer activities and the students choose. They include mountain biking, tramping, surfing, fishing. All involve 3 nights away –we prepare on Monday, depart Tuesday-Thursday returning on Friday, all hopefully in one piece!

Could we do better?

The Answers:

Dear Water Worries and Could we do better.
How timely – many of our schools, at both primary and secondary levels, look to do similar type activities at this time of the year.

Lots of our schools have recently attended the Professional Learning (PL) opportunity which is based on the resource *EOTC Guidelines Bringing the Curriculum Alive* (MOE 2009), which comes with a DVD of appendices, (in all schools) but also found on the web at http://eotc.tki.org.nz/EOTC. The overarching messages from the PL were:

1. EOTC is all curriculum-based activities outside the classroom, including sport

2. *EOTC Guidelines* supports the National curriculums: *The New Zealand Curriculum (2007)* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (2008)*

3. Each activity requires planning

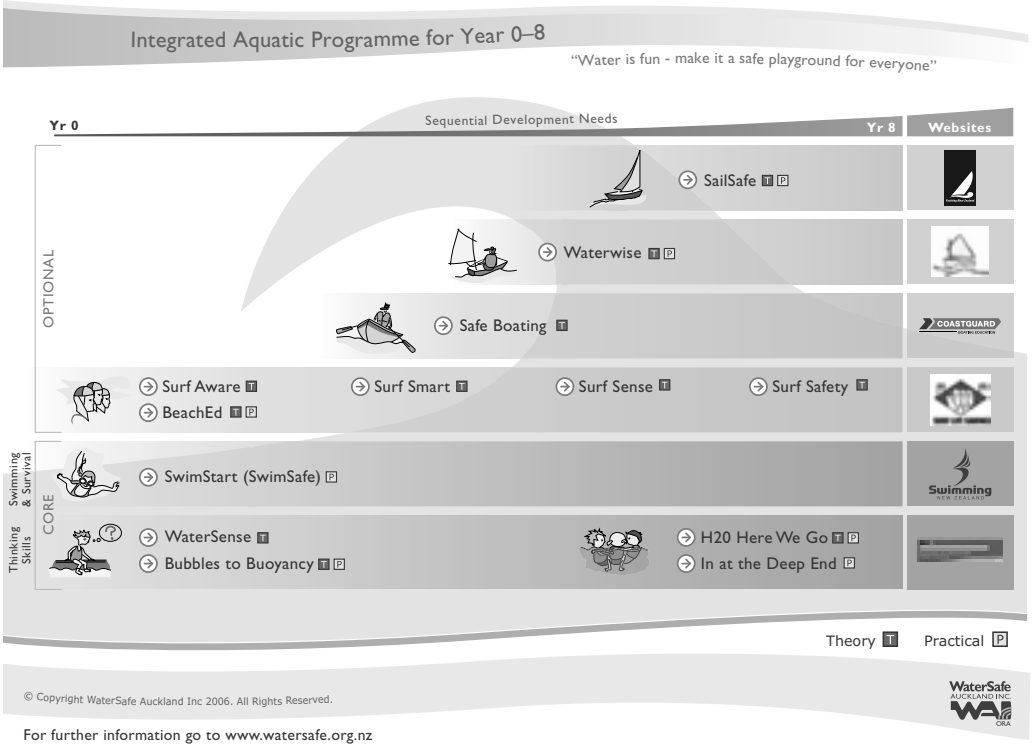
4. Education for sustainability is fundamental to EOTC

For EONZ, NZAEE, MSC funded by SPARC (March 2011)

So this is a good starting point for the answering of some key questions prior to embarking on these activities.

As far as planning goes, within the NZC Health and Physical Education Learning Area we have a key area of learning – Outdoor Education. (Re-visit Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum, page 46-47, The Pink Book).

So what is the purpose of your activities? Are they building on prior knowledge? And how are these activities meeting the needs of your students? Is there clear



evidence of a range of structured, sequenced and developmentally appropriate learning across your programmes?

When do you do these activities? Why? Is this the best time?

Are the learning opportunities based on teaching and learning or logistics? Transport, travel, and food are all very important but which comes first? Learning or logistics?

Are your student playgrounds in the upcoming summer holidays the rivers, the beach, boats, skate parks, mountains, and the bush? Can your programme give them greater confidence to explore, play, make better decisions and be safer out in their playgrounds?

How do we decide on what is the most appropriate learning environment? Start with your school environment and the local community. They can revisit these places regularly as they are accessible, often lower risk and reduce transport costs. Students can enjoy a more Place Based programme where they live and play e.g. local walkways and natural bush areas, where they can create rock towers, sand sculptures, bush art, orienteering, unsighted travels, and treasure hunts.

If we choose an aquatic environment do we have a learning programme prior to the experience that builds the knowledge and skills necessary to participate? Do you know each student's swimming ability and have they developed water safety skills? Do students know how to fit a life jacket properly? Safety Action plans should be developed together through explicit teaching that develops and encourages discussions and critical thinking about the different scenarios they could experience.

Enough questions! Help me get down to the nitty gritty.

What resources are available to me?

Start with your learners. What are their needs, prior experiences and their playgrounds, then jump on the web and also source some key resources that will be in your school.

For both secondary and primary levels:

- *EOTC Guidelines - Bringing the Curriculum Alive (MOE, 2009).* This is a working document and hard copies will be in your school. It is downloadable at http://eotc.tki.org.nz/EOTC-home/EOTC-Guidelines

- http://www.eonz.org.nz/ Here you will find the PL resources that have been offered to schools plus the opportunity to participate in self-paced on-line learning modules.

- On the following TKI website, under the teaching resources, you will find some fantastic resources set out in four sections. http://eotc.tki.org.nz/EOTC-home/For-teachers/Teaching-resources/

  * EOTC in Action: Explore case studies and see how EOTC experiences have been incorporated into a range of learning programmes.
  * Making EOTC happen: Use the Teaching as Inquiry process to plan learning programmes that include learning inside and outside the classroom.
  * Activities, Ideas, Tools: An opportunity to investigate some new teaching and learning tools.
  * Learning Safely: What you need to know and do so your students learn safely outside the classroom.

For the primary level:

- *Curriculum in Action: Adventure Experiences in the School Grounds. Outdoor Education: Yrs 4-6*

- *Curriculum in Action: In the Outdoors: Yrs 7-8*
  Hard copy of this distinctive red-covered series will be found in all schools. Online material can be found at http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Curriculum-in-action

- Watersafe Auckland highlights an integrated approach to aquatic education – visit their website http://www.watersafe.org.nz/aquaticprogramme

For the secondary level:

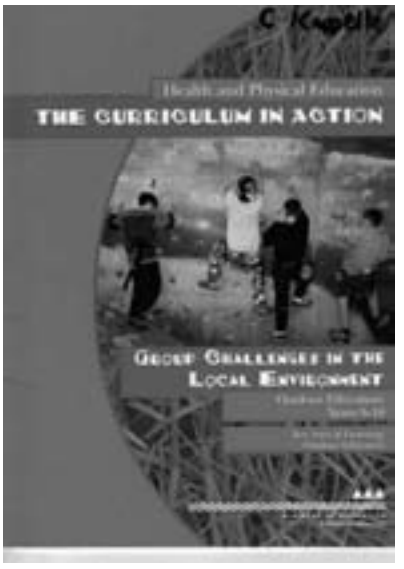
- *Curriculum in Action: Group Challenges in the Local Environment: Outdoor Education: Yrs 9-10*

- *Outdoor Activity Guideline for Leaders* (SPARC 2007). - this resource was issued to all secondary schools but can be downloaded from the Sport New Zealand website. http://www.sportnz.org.nz/Documents/Young%20People/Outdoor_Activities_Guidelines_for_Leaders_-_Complete.pdf

  The resource outlines current accepted practice for running some 42 outdoor activities.

  The guidelines aim to assist outdoor leaders, whether volunteer or employed instructors, teachers, youth group leaders or guides, to provide quality outdoor experiences for participants.

- Water Safety New Zealand has a River Safe toolbox and DVD – check out their website http://www.watersafety.org.nz/education/recreation-advice/rivers/be-river-safe-dvd-and-toolbox/



Within *EOTC Guidelines, Bringing the Curriculum Alive* you will find a Management Guide for EOTC Activity Types (page 26 & 27) and also a comprehensive guide to Staffing and Supervision (Chapter 4) which will assist you in examining the expertise your staff need for various activities. The *Outdoor Activity Guidelines for Leaders* is also very useful. Primary schools will have an earlier version on DVD in their schools and it is available on the Sport New Zealand website.

Build staff expertise "water worries" to the advantage of your students. You are well underway "could we do better".

Draw on the resources available as you set about that planning with your students that allows them to become familiar and connected with their local environment from which they derive enjoyment through being appropriately challenged.

WaterSafe AUCKLAND INC. WAI ORA

WAI Teach Water Safety?

Water is a dominant feature of the New Zealand landscape, and many New Zealanders spend much of their recreational time in, on or by water (Ministry of Education, 1990). New Zealand has more than 15,134 kilometres of coastline, large tracts of inland water and fast-flowing rivers. Our abundant access to aquatic environments allows many of our students to experience a wide range of EOTC activities in, on and around water. These experiences provide a rich context to explicitly teach water safety skills and knowledge. Through authentic experiences students can develop safer behaviours in, on and around water.

As teachers, how can we justify spending quality teaching and learning time on water safety? The New Zealand Curriculum (2007), states "it is expected that all students will have had opportunities to learn basic aquatic skills by the end of year 6" (p.22). The Ministry of Education advocates that water confidence, water safety skills, water sports, swimming techniques and developing decision making in and around the aquatic environment, are all part of aquatics education. The understanding of the intent of "basic aquatic skills" allows us to justify the teaching of water safety and EOTC as the context.

The International Open Water Drowning Prevention Guidelines (2010) and The Water Safety Code (2010) provide some key water safety messages that can be applied to all water environments, activities and target groups which include children and youth. Four simple rules are; be prepared, watch out for yourself and others, be aware of the dangers, and know your limits. For a more detailed explanation of the messages visit the websites referenced below.

To embed water safety into teaching and learning experiences for any year level the learning needs of your students needs to be identified. Below is a snap shot of how a primary school used the teacher inquiry and knowledge-building cycle (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, 2007) to deliver an authentic cross-curricular approach, linking EOTC and the development of water safety skills, attitudes and knowledge for their senior students.

References

Adventure Smart (2010) *The Water Safety Code.* Retrieved from http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz/water-adventures/

Ministry of Education (1990) *Bubbles to Buoyancy: Aquatic Education Years 1 – 3*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2007) *The New Zealand Curriculum for English – medium teaching and learning in years 1 - 13* . Wellington: Learning Media.

Seattle Children's (2010) *International Open Water Drowning Prevention Guidelines.* Retrieved from http://www.seattlechildrens.org/classes-community/community-programs/drowning-prevention/open-water-guidelines/

Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar H. & Fung, I. (2007) *Teacher Professional Learning and Development: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration. Wellington,* New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Teacher as inquiry

Survey of students to see what they do, where they go and with whom, in relation to water activities. Results indicated the beach, boating with family with little knowledge of boat/beach safety and use of life jackets.

Understanding of beach safety, currents, and rips. What to take when planning a boat trip. How to fit life jackets correctly. How to teach water safety skills in a pool environment. Review of what do we do already to promote student learning around water safety? What could we do to enhance student learning?

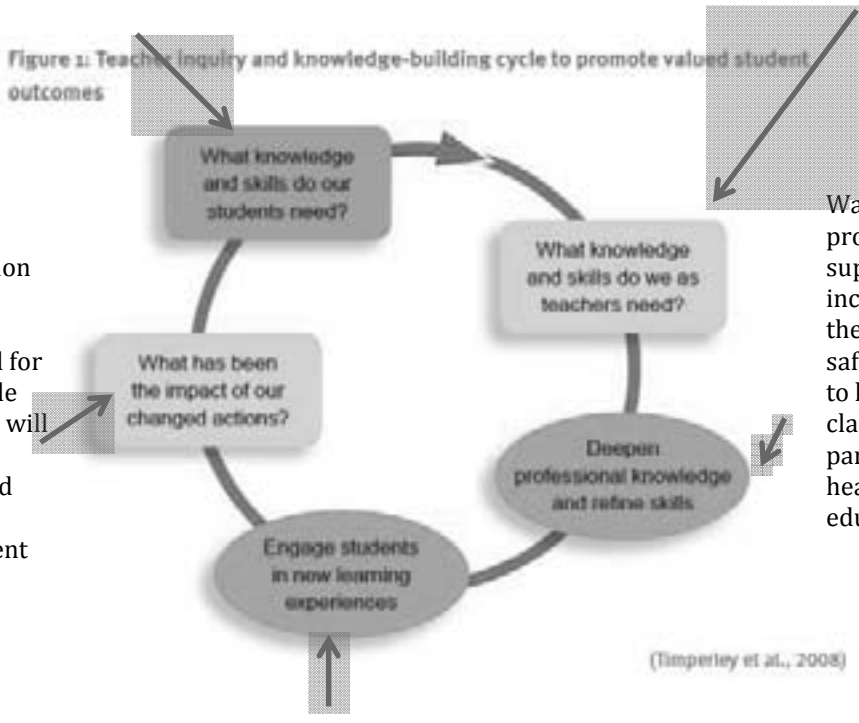


Figure 1: Teacher inquiry and knowledge-building cycle to promote valued student outcomes

Students demonstrated a greater understanding of common hazards in relation to beach and boat safety. They influenced parent behaviour about the need for and use of lifejackets while on a boat. EOTC activities will be linked across the curriculum and embedded into planning as this approach enhanced student learning.

WaterSafe Auckland provided professional support. This is included modelling of the teaching of water safety skills, resources to link water safety to classroom learning as part of literacy, science health and physical education.

Water safety became the theme for making and creating meaning prior, during and after the EOTC learning. Hazard signs at beaches were used to make meaning of the use of symbols and for students to develop their own safety leaflets. Sinking and floating was used to investigate what helps us float in the water – the personal skills we need and equipment that can help. Students participated in water safety learning activities at a local pool prior to going on a school camp. Parents were invited to view static images and listen to oral presentations by students around what they had learnt.

For more information around water safety and ideas for teaching and learning visit http://www.watersafe.org.nz/page.asp?page=502

Activities to foster awareness of the environment

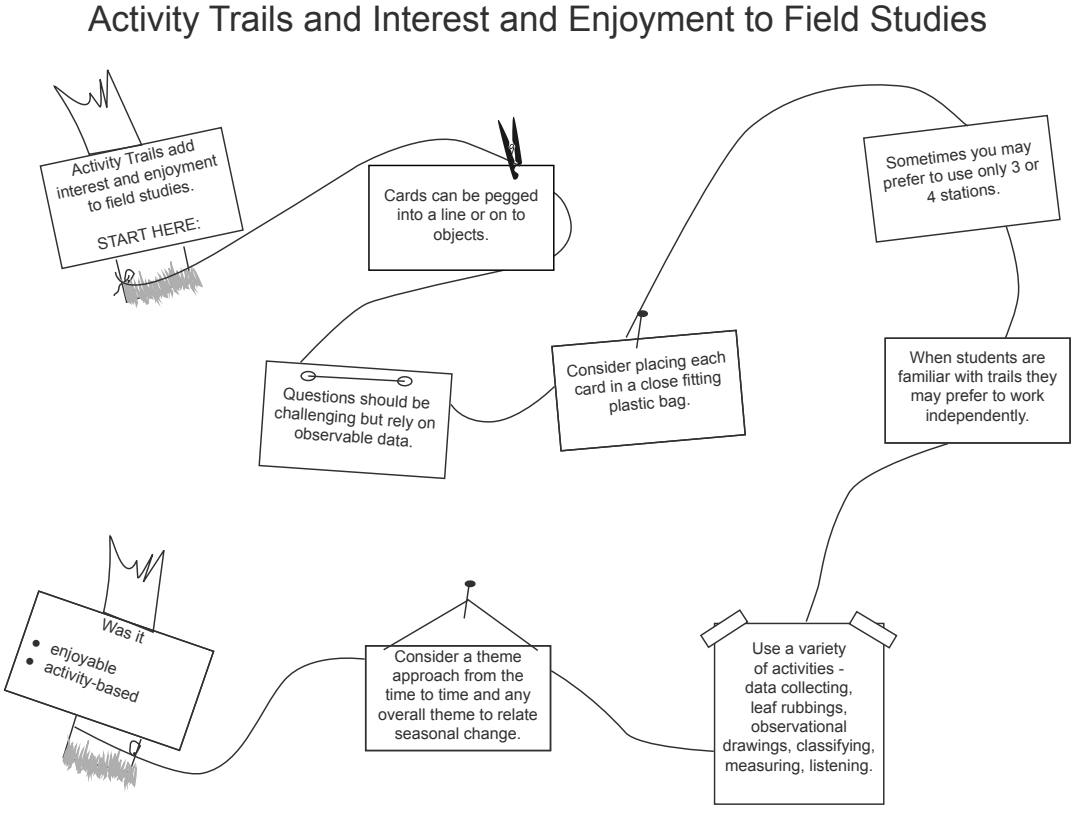
by Liz Thevenard

The following activities suggest ways students can engage with the environment and become much more aware of their surroundings. Using our senses of observation, listening and touching expands the learning experience and provides opportunities to explore and builds an excitement of discovery. It is an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate what is at our backdoor or just outside the classroom. These activities encourage teamwork can be adapted to meet different learning needs and can be used to enhance a variety of curriculum areas e.g.: language, science, health, art or maths.

Question Trail

– This activity help to focus on the little things around us

1. Either use a map of the school or a numbered stakes or cones.
2. Select locations of interest and mark these on the map or on the stake/cone.
3. These points provide stops along a question trail
4. Each question should invite some type of activity or question that will result in new learning at that location.
5. Begin with the teacher selecting and arranging the questions
6. Extend the location and have the students in small groups create the questions.
7. Groups can work independently on each question and share them back in the classroom.
8. Questions could include: Can you find any animals living on this plant. How many colours can you find on is plant trunk. How would you describe this …. to an unsighted person.



Find a 'Treasure' or 'Taonga' – Listen ... Look...Touch - This activity is useful for creative writing and poetry

1. Select your own special plant ('special treasure or tonga' is the individuals choice.)
2. Give this 'Special Treasure' a name e.g. Fern – Shelter from the storm, Kowhai – Tuis Heaven
3. Ask questions for example: Where did it come from and how did it get here?
4. Find a buddy and share the 'treasure' and answers to the questions.
5. Together create a story about its journey to this spot.
6. Both look closely at the treasure, then close your eyes and feel it.
7. Write down all the words you can think of that describes your treasure
8. Develop a 4 lined poem using as many of the words as you can.
9. Decorate your poem with sketches or rubbings. A digital photo of the object could be used to enhance the presentation
10. Share your work with the class

Big Fernie – A very useful observational activity

1. Find a plant that has interesting shapes and textures
2. Look closely at your plant
3. Write down as many words as you can that describes the plant or tree
4. Use heading such as: What does it feel like? What does it look like? What does it remind you of?
5. Use these words to write a story or develop a poem.

Back to Back – An excellent verbal language activity

1. In pairs sit back to back
2. One person has a pencil and paper
3. The other selects a natural object
4. Sitting back to back the person then describes the object using a descriptive dialog
5. Be careful not to tell the other person what it is
6. The person drawing can ask clarification questions eg does the line begin from the top of the page.
7. Share the picture and swap over.
8. Share some of the pictures once everyone has finished
9. This activity improves with practice.

Discovery – Great for Maths and Languages development

1. Discover objects related to texture which could be described as: soft, rough, slimy, coarse, knobbed, furry, hairy, waxy, hard, rough etc.
2. Discover objects related to shape which could be described as: round, triangular, pointed, curved, small, large, etc.
3. Discover objects relating to density such as: spongy, solid, thick, compact, porous, lumpy, etc.
4. Discover objects relating to temperature such as: hot, cold, moist, dry, wet, damp, cool etc.
5. Discover objects relating to size such as: narrow, large, small, bulky, miniature, tall, etc.

Word Sketching – A wonderful way to gather words for language tasks

1. Use a can or a circle and divide the circle into quarters
2. Hold it up to the scene you want to record
3. Write down all the words that describes what you see on the corresponding location on a piece of paper

Environmental Treasure Hunt

Something **smooth**		Something **multi-coloured**	Something with a **scaly surface**	Something **fragile**
Something **old**	Something **symmetrical**	Something **chewed**		Something which reminds you of **yourself**
Something **oval**	Something you find **beautiful**		Something which **tickles** your skin	Something **shiny**

4. Then draw what you see
5. The words and drawing can be used in all sorts of different ways

String Hike – This is a great activity to extend students imagination

1. Each group will need a length of string 3 – 5 metres and some cones or pegs to mark the journey
2. Design a trail along the length of the string with cones or pegs to mark significant sights
3. Imagine yourself as a tiny person shrunk to the size of an ant.
4. Your task is to travel along the string as tiny person or ant it is a great distance
5. Describe your journey as if you were an ant or tiny person and pay particular attention to each small peg or cone.

Treasure Hunts – Have fun exploring. Find something and draw or describe it:

1. Something with multi colours
2. Where something small lives
3. Something with a pattern
4. Something you find that is beautiful
5. Something you haven't seen before
6. Something tiny
7. Something delicate
8. Extend these ideas to suit the topic of study
9. Share your findings with a buddy or in small groups

What can you see – An excellent observational activity

Each person or pair are given a classification list to seek out and record

Ideas for classification:

distant, near
colourful, drab
delicate, sturdy
light, dark
natural artificial
huge, tiny
plain, patterned

Discuss findings

Are there different ways to classify objects?
What did you notice that surprised you?
Record findings on a chart

Poetree – A useful language activity to stimulate descriptive words

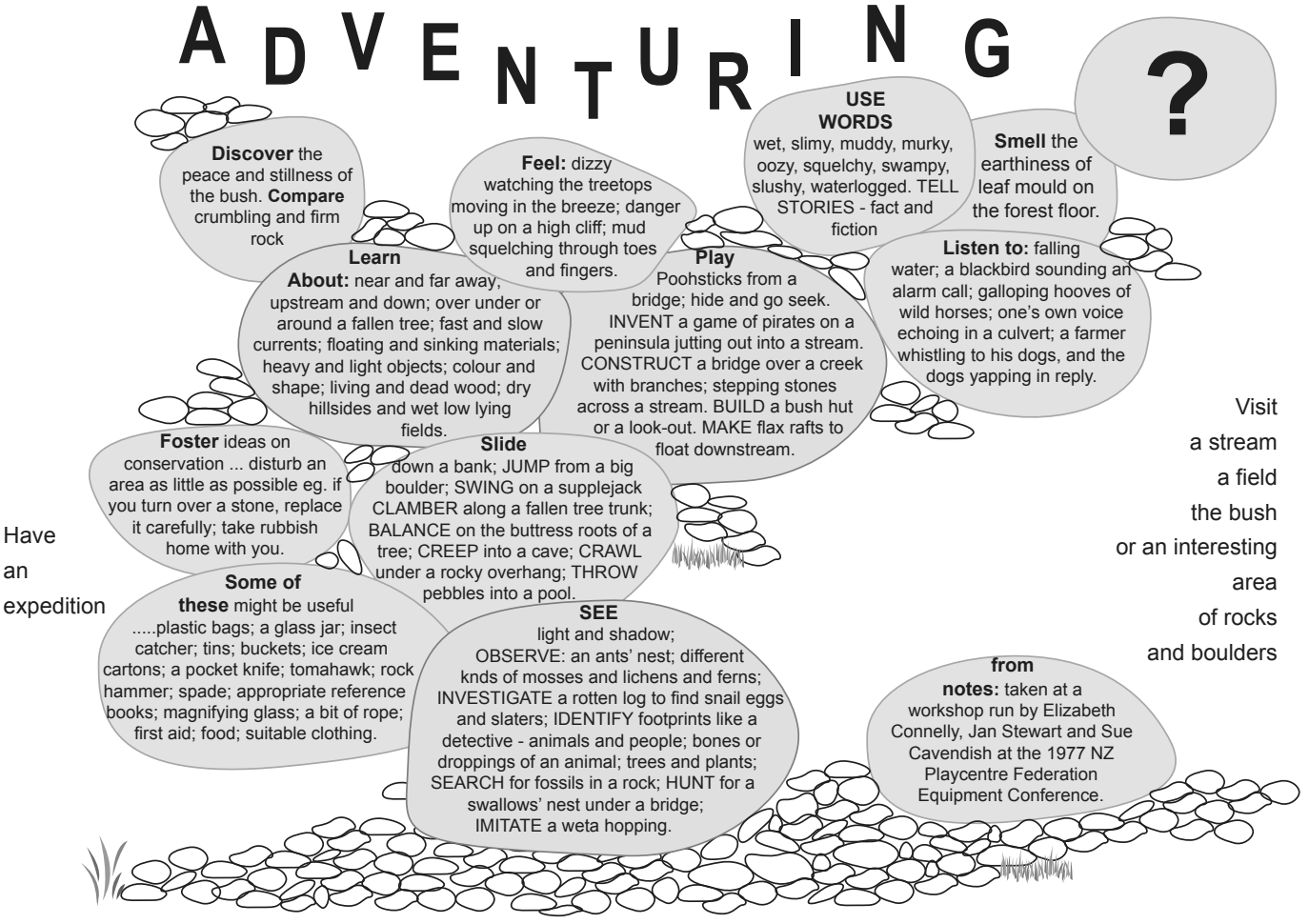
1. Find a large tree or bush and spread the class around the tree at different spots
2. Squeeze out every word possible that accurately describes the tree or bush
3. Write down as many describing words as you can as a class or pairs
4. Use these words in a story or poem
5. Share them with the class.
6. Try using different objects you find in the environment

Telling Stories – Useful for oral language skill development

1. Find a shady spot and sit together and create a story
2. Many years ago, when the school was built …...
3. Take turns to contribute in pairs or as a class

Adjective Bingo – Enhances observational skills and oral language

1. On your Bingo Card with 12 to 15 squares write your chosen adjectives
2. Go outside and find an object that highlights the adjective
3. Draw the object in the Bingo Square that matches the description eg soft. round, pointy
4. Discuss the different objects that matched the descriptions.



Maths in the Environment

Included are some suggestions for using the outdoor environment to develop or reinforce mathematical concepts. The outdoors offers huge potential for measurement and estimation.

Measurement

Length

Activities that develop basic concepts
Short, Shorter, Shortest,
Long, Longer, Longest
Tall, Taller, Tallest

Short – Long

1. Find 3 sticks shorter than a ruler
2. How long are they? Estimate and then measure.
3. Which one is longer? Which one is longest?
4. Find a stick that is longer than a metre
5. How long is it? Estimate and then measure.
6. Take a small step
7. How far is it? Estimate and measure.
8. In pairs take a long step and mark each one
9. How far is each one? Estimate and measure.
10. Which step is the longest and which one is the shortest?

Measuring the circumference of trees

1. Measure five tree trunks
2. Measure at the same height each time – chest height is a useful measure
3. Show the results in a graph or chart.

Estimating the heights of trees

Ruler Method

1. Stand far enough away from a tree so you can hold a ruler so the top and bottom of the tree line up with the top and bottom of the ruler
2. Tip the ruler over and have a buddy stand on the mark that marks the top of the ruler
3. Now estimate the height of the tree and then measure the distance by measuring tape or paces

Upside Down Method

1. Estimate the height of the tree
2. Turn your back to the tree and bend over looking through your legs
3. Walk away until you can see the top of the tree
4. This will take you away from the tree as far as the trees height.
5. Measure the distance and compare it with your estimation

THE EONZ POSITION STATEMENT ON EOTC

1. Purpose (What we do)

EONZ maintains that the primary purpose of EOTC is to engage with the New Zealand curriculum outside the classroom in order to enrich the learning of students in early childhood centres, and primary and secondary schools.

EONZ embraces all the principles of Te Whāriki He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna O Aotearoa / Early Childhood Curriculum (1996); Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (2008); and The New Zealand Curriculum (2007); including a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and cultural diversity, inclusive communities, coherence in learning across the curriculum, and future focussed issues such as sustainability, citizenship, enterprise and globalisation.

EONZ supports the values outlined in the above documents including excellence, innovation, diversity, equity, community, cultural and ecological sustainability, integrity, and respect.

2. Why we do it (benefits for individuals, communities, environments)

EONZ is cognisant of research (for example see TKI website http://eotc.tki.org.nz/eotc-home) that supports well-structured EOTC experiences. Studies have shown that educationally sound EOTC experiences can enrich student learning across the curriculum. The establishment of positive relationships with teachers and peers in places of significance can foster a sense of belonging to communities and environments that is essential to on-going learning.

3. How we do it (Pedagogy/practice/partnerships)

EOTC programme design should be informed by sound pedagogical principles as highlighted in the New Zealand Curriculum. EONZ maintains that EOTC should at all times occur within the framework of the EOTC Guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive (2009).

EONZ actively supports partnerships with and between teachers, schools and the community. EONZ seeks to work collaboratively with other sector organisations with the goal to improve EOTC in Aotearoa New Zealand.

4. Where we do it (Place)

EONZ supports place based and responsive approaches to EOTC that seek to: strengthen the understanding that students have of their local communities and environments (as well as those further afield), and engender a sense of obligation to care for those communities and environments. To achieve these goals, EONZ encourages action oriented experiential education that explores individual and collective relationships to places to foster vibrant communities and healthy environments.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership is current for ONE year and runs from 1 January to 31 December

For further information contact the EONZ Executive Officer:

Phone: 03 327 9551

Email: eonz.eo@clear.net.nz

If you wish to become a member please complete the form below and return with payment to:

Catherine Kappelle
Executive Officer
Education Outdoors New Zealand Inc.
354 Tram Road
R D 2 Kaiapoi 7692

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ _____

_____ Fax: _____

_____ email: _____

_____

Contact Person (in Organisation): _____

enrolled at: (for students only)

_____ _____

Membership category (please circle one):

Organisation	**$110.00**	(all organisations, and Schools with rolls above 300)
Small Organisation	**$75.00**	(Schools with rolls of less than 300)
Individual	**$50.00**	(Not carried by school/ organisation)
Student	**$30.00**	

Payment enclosed

Direct credit: 38 9014 0056233 00
Please include name of school or person

Date: _____ REGION: _____

REMEMBER! Membership of EONZ gives you:

Training Courses and Workshops ◆ Newsletters/ Magazines ◆ Resources ◆ Advocacy ◆ Networking ◆ Regional focus ◆ and more...

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY

Chairperson:
■ **Liz Thevenard,** *Ph: 04 905 7473*
email: jbtruman@paradise.net.nz

EONZ Executive Officer:
■ **Catherine Kappelle**
Education Outdoors New Zealand Inc.
354 Tram Road
R D 2 Kaiapoi 7692
Ph: 03 327 9551
email: eonz.eo@clear.net.nz

Members:
Brenton Harrison –
Ph: 021 426 448,
Email: office@eonzauckland.org.nz

Mike Boyes – *University of Otago.*
Ph: 03 479 8991,
Email: mike.boyes@otago.ac.nz

Kath Wilkie – *Wairarapa College, Ph: 06 370 0400, Email: k.wilkie@waicol.co.nz*

Libby Paterson – *(Primary EOTC representative),*
Email: libbypat@xtra.co.nz

Fiona McDonald –
Cell: 021 106 8632,
Email: fmcdonald@clear.net.nz

Out and About Editor:
■ **Dave Irwin**
Sustainability and Outdoor Education Programmes, Department of Humanities, CPIT, PO Box 540, Christchurch, 8140
Cell: 021 215 4090
Ph: 03 940 8256
Email: David.Irwin@cpit.ac.nz

EONZ Resources
Refer to EONZ Executive Officer – see above

www.eonz.org.nz