



Elmwood School

Orchards in Schools Autumn 2018

Progress report from Coordinator Mary Tingey

"I like the orchard because its open to nature and nature can come in"

Olivia, Waitakiri School

The following schools currently participate in the programme.

Planted 2015 St Martins, Gilberthorpe, Northcote, Addington, Oaklands.

Planted 2016 Waitakiri, Rawhiti, Wharenui, Cobham Intermediate, Casebrook Intermediate, Kaiapoi Borough.

Planted 2017 Isleworth, Haeta, Wairakei, Elmwood, Fendalton and Chisnallwood Intermediate.

Things to do in your orchard in Winter

- Look for buds. Can you find the buds on the tree stems?
- What patterns do the buds make on the stem?
- Discover the new growth on the tree and measure how much your trees have grown this year.
- When does the last leaf fall?
- Name the trees.
- Look for deciduous and evergreen trees.





Waitakiri School's EnviroFERNs



*Isleworth School
Autumn tree measuring*

Isleworth School. The Isleworth Nature Ninjas showed me their orchard which is a part of their playground.

Emma said, *"We grow the strawberries under the trees because it gives the soil organics. They help the tree get a little more nutrient."*

Haniya said, *"At the end of the year we get the fruits and veggies and we get to take them home. It's like a reward for the Nature Ninjas."*

Ataahua said *"I can see buds growing on the plum tree and it will bloom in Spring."*

The children measured the new growth on their trees. One branch of the plum tree had grown a metre. The pear tree grew 60cm. The apple tree grew 30cm.

Casebrook School. On the day I visited children were hunting for feijoas amongst the marigolds. These healthy well grown trees have gardens underneath them to maintain moisture and soil fertility. Casebrook have planted strawberries, oregano, yarrow, mint, lemon balm, borage, marigolds, nasturtiums and lavender. They have also planted blackberry plants on the fence. On the day I visited children were maintaining the gardens by weeding and hoeing. The children were learning to identify the trees by their leaves.

Wairakei School. The orchard is in its first year. The Wairakei children have been mulching the trees to maintain moisture as well as feeding the growing root system. Wairakei children also have a luxuriant vegetable garden and a support crew of chickens.

Gilberthorpe School. Principal Andrew Wilkinson and teacher Clayton Boyd with help from Mitre 10 erected a wind break fence for the orchard. The difference is huge. No longer do the trees look battered by the Nor Wester as it roars across the plains. Instead behind the protective fence the leaves are green and healthy. Next to the orchard is a beehive which was busy and buzzing the day of my visit. The children moved easily in the orchard as the bees foraged for nectar. The school also has a worm farm in the orchard. Gilberthorpe is planning to plant more flowers under the trees to complement the poppies and phacelia. The trees produced a good crop of pears and apples but unfortunately they were all stolen over the weekend. Teacher Jess Hey and I have considered a way of deflecting further vandalism.



Gilberthorpe School

Waitakiri School The EnviroFERNs meet every Thursday at noon. We discussed the orchard which is bordered by a fence featuring a bright mural.

Meg said, *"The orchard is open so we can walk around and play in it."*

Alyssa said, *"I like the colourful artwork in the orchard."*



Casebrook School Hunting for feijoas

Jake said, **"I like having the chickens, the worm farm and the leaf cutter bees in the orchard."**

During my visit we looked into flowers to see how the bees pollinate them.

Fendalton School. The planting of the orchard inspired Fendalton School to extend the layout of their vegetable garden. The garden and the orchard now flow into a lovely walkway of healthy fruit trees and vegetables which is an open part of the playground. This year the children harvested courgettes, corn, pak choi silverbeet broccoli and cucumbers from under and around the trees.

Jannah said, **"I like to see the flowers."**



Fendalton School

Ella said, **"I like to see the plants."**

Hugo said, **"I like to dig for worms in the garden."**

Riccarton School. The fruit trees are planted as part of the vegetable garden space and chicken run. They cook the fruit and vegetables during their Garden to Table Programme. The children were weeding and harvesting silverbeet on the day of my visit.

Guru said, **"I like learning about different plants. They are all my favourites."**

Jonas says, **"I like to plant plants because it keeps our environment healthy."**

"We planted apples, pears and plums." said Rizza

Elmwood School. Elmwood's orchard is growing on one side of the junior playground. The trees are healthy and growing strongly. The Room 12 children are going to measure the length of the new growth on some of the trees. The children collected leaves and compared the apple leaves with the pear leaves. They noticed that the feijoas don't lose their leaves because they are ever green and the apples pears and plums are deciduous.

Rawhiti School. The orchard is in their garden space all beautifully surrounded by a picket fence decorated by children's paintings. This makes the orchard and garden welcoming and definitely a place for children. All their trees are growing well and are healthy. The garden space under the trees is being formed with pathways and edged garden beds. The children have been growing vegetables in their garden. The preschool is keen to be part of the garden as well.

Chisnallwood Intermediate. The Enviro group is keen to develop the spaces in and around the orchard. They want to develop gardens under the trees which include herbs and flowers. They are also keen to include artworks in their orchard. Beside the orchard are compost heaps and a worm farm. The children thought that the orchard would make a great picnic lunch place.



Riccarton School



Rawhiti School



Cobham Intermediate

Cobham Intermediate. The trees are all growing well. They will be expecting fruit next year. Luke, Hayley, James, Oscar, Ryan and Chris who are in the SPEC garden group have been growing silverbeet, kale, strawberries, marigolds and nasturtiums in the gardens which have been developed beside the orchard. The class is now inspired to extend the gardens to another part of the school beside the worm farm.

Wharenui School. Wharenui School has grown. They need three more classrooms so their orchard has to move. The school and the Canterbury Horticultural Society will be working together to achieve this. Watch out for information on tree moving day in our next news letter.

St Martins School. Garden Coordinator Howard Keene is in the process of increasing the access to the orchard for the children. He wants to make pathways around the trees and plant the understory in wild flowers. One of their peach trees died earlier this year. They have planted a new Apple Adore. The apricot tree was stunning this year with a heavy crop. It did however fruit in the school holidays so Howard froze the apricots for their Garden to Table programme.



St Martins School pears a plenty

For more information or to join the programme contact:
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