

Sunnybrae Normal School - Silver Award Statement - October 2011

Sunnybrae Normal School is a **Silver Enviro School** because we are a **connected community of positively engaged learners** who show the core values of **RICE (Respect, independence, Cooperation, Excellence)** in the environmental practices of our school.

There are obvious signs of all the **Guiding Principles** throughout our school grounds and embedded in our learning.

Respect for Diversity of People and Cultures - What we do at school that shows we have all kinds of people and cultures:

- ✓ Books in the library in different languages.
- ✓ Fantastic programme for new speakers of English.
- ✓ Multicultural week is full of activities from around the world where difference is celebrated.
- ✓ We learn and greet each other every day in languages from around the world.
- ✓ We learn about other cultures as part of our classroom studies.
- ✓ We have two Kapa Haka groups.
- ✓ Our musical groups learn and sing songs from around the world.

Sustainable Communities - These people are involved in creating our sustainable community.

- ✓ EIF – these kind people have given us funding which has helped us to create our weather house, butterfly garden and sprinkler system.
- ✓ Travelwise has helped us to change our attitude about finding better ways to travel to school.
- ✓ Our Property Officer, Mr Barnes, is a Superhero of Sunnybrae Normal School and a master builder.
- ✓ Parent Teacher Association; Board of Trustees; Parents; Teachers - for all their help.
- ✓ McCain; Tui Plant Products; Fresh'n'Fruity - for the gift of plants and tools.
- ✓ Stu Duval – great stories about the environment
- ✓ Enviroschools – for their inspiration and guidance.

Empowered Students - In what ways do you get to have a say or help to make decisions?

- ✓ We can become a member of the Enviro Group, the Garden Group, G.A.T.E or the School Council.
- ✓ We can tell our teacher our ideas for improving the school or what we want to learn.
- ✓ We can share things from home e.g. Someone brought in a kauri tree seedling to plant.
- ✓ Our mums and dads can come along to school and talk to students about some of the interesting things that they do.
- ✓ We can go on our class or the Enviro blog and leave a comment.
- ✓ We presented at Enviro Cluster Day. We even got to teach the other schools a special song.

Learning for Sustainability - These are the sustainable practices we have put in place.

- ✓ Built new structures for our growing interest in the environment. E.g. Weather house, butterfly garden.
- ✓ We recycle paper, plastic, cans and glass in special bins.
- ✓ All our food scraps go into a bin for the worms or the compost bin; we sell our worm tea.
- ✓ We re-use paper – classrooms and the photocopy room have GOOS (good on one side) boxes
- ✓ The Garden Group shows us how to grow vegetables and other plants for eating.
- ✓ The Garden Group helps to look after the bush area by getting rid of the weeds.
- ✓ We try to get to school in an environmentally friendly way – a lot of us use the walking school bus. Some of us use scooters or our bikes. Some of us drive part of the way and walk the rest.
- ✓ We take lunch boxes outside when we eat so our non-food rubbish goes home.
- ✓ We learn about the environment in our classrooms as part of our theme studies.

Māori Perspectives – How is Māori knowledge valued and applied in everyday school life?

- ✓ We can join the Kapa Haka Cultural Group and perform at school and out in the community e.g. The Onepoto Cultural Festival or the Northbridge Retirement Village.
- ✓ Māori experts come in and help out at the school e.g. with Kapa Haka groups.
- ✓ Every year we are taught about the importance of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- ✓ We have special books in the library that tell us about Māori myths and legends. Some of the books are in Māori.
- ✓ Our school assemblies are opened with a Māori language karanga and the boys perform a haka.
- ✓ In our theme studies students learn about and play traditional Māori games.
- ✓ We plant trees that are native to New Zealand around our school.
- ✓ We celebrate Māori culture in our artwork. We learn about Māori myths and legends in language and reading times. We learn the Māori language in our classrooms.
- ✓ We have Māori consultation meetings with parents of Māori students.

Students have identified these as our **next steps** in our Enviroschools journey. Some of these we will start on next year. Others we will need to think about some more and discuss with next year's Envirogroup group and decide how it is best to implement them.

The butterfly garden is now complete. The next step here is to populate the area with swan plants and butterflies. As a result of notices in the School newsletters there have already been donations of both swan plants and flowering plants for the garden. We aim to get a roster set up so Middle and Senior syndicate students can have access to the butterfly garden.

Repaint the drains. Re educate the students, many of whom were quite small when the drains were initially painted about the purpose. Repaint adventure playgrounds in parts where the elements have made the paintwork a little shabby.

Māori lessons – keep up with these. As a bicultural country students at Sunnybrae enjoy learning about the cultural heritage of Aotearoa. At our school we celebrate our multicultural makeup by having a festival every second year. Envirogroup students would like to decorate areas of the school e.g. Multicultural hall – decorate hall – mufti day to support festivals. Each class has a country to support, much as we have for the RWC.

Middles – playground. At present there is limited wet weather play area. Perhaps their shade/rain protection could be offered as part of this development.

Colour in bush area is a recurring theme. Students want more coloured plants here. We could perhaps explore native plants that have colour that could be planted e.g. more ti tree. Also signs to encourage students to stay on the pathways. Keep up with weeding programmes. Volunteers could undertake a bush clean up once a month. More pathway stones. Flowers more colourful.

Gifted and Talented Students group will be presenting their plan for an improved play/sitting area (presently a 'dead' area) and we will look at implementing this in 2012 with the Board's approval.

We will continue to be an environmentally rich school, providing our students with an education that educates, supports and encourages them to look after each other and their environment. Environmental studies are playing an increasingly important role in our theme studies and students throughout the school are displaying an increasing awareness of what it takes to be a responsible citizen of the 21st century.