



We are fortunate to have such an amazing outdoors on our doorstep here, and although we had a great time in Wellington last year, our latest experience right on our doorstep, at Mt Hutt Retreat was equally as rewarding for our Year 6/7/8 class. The activities undertaken were by no means extravagant and they are certainly easy available to do outside of a school camp scenario. It is still the easily accessible things that pupils enjoy



doing. Some of these activities will have been done with families and some things won't have been done at all by some pupils, but in the company of your peers and friends it adds another dimension and a shared experience.

This week our Year 4/5 class get to go on an experience of their own. They will spend a night on a high country station before embarking on a journey along the Stour River. An 18 km bike ride that will be an adventure for some, and an endurance event for others! Having completed this ride with my family a couple of weeks ago, it is three hours (at a gentle pace!) of reasonably pleasant riding through recently acquired DOC land at Barossa and the Hakatere Basin. We are fortunate to have a school family allowing us to make use of their shearer's quarters for the overnighter, and we would be silly not to make use of this facility and use our local environment.

Next week our Year 3 class will be heading up the Ashburton Gorge towards Lake Heron with George from DOC to look at the environment and see if there is any way they can help make an area predator free so that Takahe can be introduced. A long shot we think, but the enthusiasm gained from a LEARNZ virtual field trip to the Murchison Mountains, some inspired study about Takahe and the Burwood Breeding Project, as well as some tracking of predators around the school grounds (who knew what creatures were around during the night) and the Year 3's are ready to change the world to save the Takahe. Local expert Warren Jowett will be in to provide further inspiration for this keen group.

Speaking of local experts, the Year 1/2 class were transfixed by the skills of local engineer and parent Hamish Bruce. Their work around recycling has led them to making wind vanes out of recycled bike wheels and his skills were invaluable in making it a reality for the class. Such a wealth of skills and knowledge right on our doorstep and we are very fortunate and grateful for the time they give us at school.

It is local knowledge, local experts and the local environment that we are using more and more for our rich learning experiences, as the district we live in has so much to offer. I hope that you get the opportunity to 'head for the hills' at some stage over the summer and experience what the area has to offer.