

# **Bali Tour, July 2014**

by Kristen Widdop

In July this year, as part of my professional development, I went on an educational tour in Bali, focusing on sustainability and English programs within their schools. We first visited The Green School in Ubud, voted the most sustainable school in the world. It is an amazing community focused school, built entirely from bamboo and other natural and recycled materials. Their sustainable projects include organic farming, a bird breeding program for the endangered Bali Starling, and solar energy. While there I also attended a graduation ceremony for the 'Educare Program' currently running in rural primary schools in Bali. Educare aims to provide a type of education not available in traditional Bali schools. A program based on creativity, its objective is to teach children English through story, drama and music. During my visit I also learnt about a wonderful environmental program currently running within Indonesian and Australian Schools. 'Bottle for Botol' is a simple water bottle exchange program, which generates partnerships between Australian and Indonesian schools to combat single-use plastics consumption. The Balinese children then receive environmental education and are able to communicate frequently through 'skype dates' with their partnered schools in Australia. The results of this program are already having a positive impact on the environment within Bali and other Indonesian communities. All in all it was a very worthwhile and inspiring trip. Key learnings was the vital importance of nurturing creativity in children. It also taught me the powerful impact that young people can have in generating change for a positive sustainable future.

Further information on these programs can be found on:

<http://www.greenschool.org/>

<http://karunabali.com/index.php?section=46>

<http://www.bottleforbotol.org/>

