



Viewlands Elementary School sits at the edge of the Broadview neighborhood at an entry into Carkeek Park. The school, neighborhood and park are part of the Piper's Creek watershed with a salmon bearing stream that flows into the Puget Sound.





The arrival experience is designed to welcome students and provide a first connection to the Piper's Creek watershed. Students are guided to the front door by a permeable paver promenade of abstracted Orcas and schools of fish.





In a small courtyard adjacent to the bicycle parking enclosure, a small bioretention cell provides a learning opportunity as students arrive at school. Native species, educational signage and swooped downspouts highlight the connections between stormwater and natural





Three terraces connect the outdoors with the indoors through programmatic connections from arrival to play and outdoor learning. The building's volumes step with the terraces, minimizing the impact of the taller volumes to neighbors and trail users.





On the middle terrace, a traffic garden is designed to teach students bicycle and pedestrian safety as part of their curriculum. Painted graphics include a ferry, Piper's Creek, and rainbow crosswalks, sending inclusive messages of welcoming and place.





Playful striping weaves through the schoolyard with depictions of Orcas, schools of salmon and water waves. These painted graphics allow kids to create their own fun games connected to the Piper's Creek watershed.





With a grade change of 40 feet within the school property, focused attention was given to creating accessible routes seamlessly integrated with play, gathering and outdoor learning. Sinuous, natural forms respond to the landforms of the Piper's Creek watershed.





The improved Viewlands Trail connects to the schoolyard at three locations, supporting field trips into Carkeek Park and to the Puget Sound. Improvements increased accessibility, added trailhead amenities and removed invasive species while carefully preserving mature tree canopy.





A bioretention cell in the classroom courtyard is part of the daily passage of students. Six bioretention cells in total are integrated throughout the school site, cleansing stormwater and slowing its release into the Piper's Creek watershed.





A small synthetic turf field provides a resilient surface for games, sport and gathering. This all-weather surface was chosen instead of natural grass to support use throughout Seattle's wet season and to reduce water use for irrigation.





A hillside play slope provides a fun and adventurous connection between the middle and lower play terraces. Kids can choose different ways to ascend and descend; building skills over time.





The design team developed custom details to celebrate the flow of stormwater from roof to bioretention cell. The boulders sit above natural stone steps, dissipating and displaying water flows from the covered walkway.





The outdoor classroom, located on the south side of the classroom wing, provides environmental learning opportunities and is the launch spot for field trips to Carkeek Park via a school gate and pathway that connects to the public trail system.





Thirty basalt seats accommodate a standard classroom size. Spacing between the seat varies accommodating wheelchairs and offering a playful diversity of choices.





Trees removed for school construction were salvaged and re-purposed as snags. These habitat features located in the outdoor classroom provide a perch for birds and another learning opportunity for students.





Educational signs throughout the schoolyard teach students and community members about native plants and their traditional uses by the Coast Salish tribes. English, Latin, and Lushootseed names for these species introduce students to common, scientific and native languages.