

# NEWSLETTER

FEB 2026

MATARAU SCHOOL

# WELCOME BACK



## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome everyone, and a particular welcome to our new staff, students, and whānau. We are delighted to have you as part of our Matarau community and look forward to building strong relationships across the year.

This morning we were privileged to hold a beautiful mihi whakatau, welcoming new members into our kura. Thank you to the whānau who attended and supported this special occasion. Your presence helped make it a meaningful and memorable way to begin the year together.

We are very excited about what 2026 will bring and are committed to providing a safe, engaging, and innovative learning environment for all our learners. We appreciate your support as we work together to help every child thrive.

## HATS | PŌTAE

Our Board has recently reviewed our sun hat policy and has decided to maintain our existing approach to ensure consistency and student safety.

The approved sun hats for students are the blue bucket hats. These hats are UPF 50+ rated and meet all required sun safety standards. They are available for purchase from the school office for \$10, and students are welcome to personalise them.

Hats will be stored in classrooms during the day. Students are required to wear their hats during break times in Terms 1 and 4, and at other times when directed.

We are aiming for consistency across the school, as we have noticed that some students are wearing hats that do not meet safety requirements. This approach reflects standard practice in many schools. Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our students safe in the sun.

## BOTTOM GATE PICK-UP AREA

A reminder regarding health and safety at the end of the school day. Students are expected to wait behind the school fence while awaiting collection. Recently, some students have been observed climbing on school signage and playing on the grass island, which presents safety concerns.

As part of the process introduced last year, any students not collected by 3.15 pm will be asked to wait in the school library. Parents and caregivers will then need to collect them from the top car park.

We appreciate your understanding and support, as the health and safety of our students remains our number one priority.

Ngā mihi  
Tom Clarkson  
Principal | Tumuaki

## IMPORTANT DATES

### 2 MARCH

Y7&8 Immunisations

### 3 MARCH

Zone Swimming Y5-8  
Maungatapere

### 4 MARCH

Y7&8 Doubles Tennis  
Thomas Neale

### 11 MARCH

WPSSA Swimming Y5-8  
Whangarei Intermediate

### 16 MARCH

Y7&8 Surfing Trip

### 20 MARCH

Y7 & 8 Lawn Bowls

### 23 & 24 MARCH

Parent Conferences

### 26 MARCH

Y4-8 School Swimming  
Sports

### 27 MARCH

Y1-3 School Swimming  
Sports

# NAU MAI HAERE MAI



It was a beautiful morning this week as we gathered for our mihi whakatau, officially welcoming our new tamariki, whānau, and kaiako into our school community. There is always a special energy when new faces join us, and we are so excited for the fresh perspectives and passion our new teachers bring to our kura.

We place immense value on the hononga (connection) between home and school. We know that our children thrive best when there is a strong partnership between their kaiako and their families.

Please remember that our doors are always open. Whether you are a new family settling in or a long-standing member of our community, you are welcome here anytime. We look forward to working alongside you all to make this a fantastic year of learning and growth.

Welcome to the team and the whānau!



**RESPECT - MANAAKITANGA**

**COMMUNITY - WHANAUNGATANGA**

**RESILIENCE - MANAWAROA**

**EXCELLENCE- HIRANGA**

# Introducing Our New Staff Members

## STAFF



**KATH CORBY - DP**

Most recently a New Entrant teacher at Hurupaki School, Kath brings many years of experience as Deputy Principal at Whangārei Primary School, along with experience working with the MOE.



**SAM MARKS - RM 9**

A highly experienced teacher, most recently at Morningside School, Sam brings a strong passion for Kapa Haka and looks forward to being actively involved in this area of our kura.



**MARILYN DUNN - RM 9**

A highly experienced principal, Marilyn most recently spent 17 years at Ruakākā School. She has also taught at Kamo Intermediate and served as Relieving Principal at Maungakaramea.



**HŌRIHI MĀNIHERA**

We are excited to welcome Hōrihi Mānihera, a talented musician and member of the band IllumiNgāti. Hōrihi teaches Te Reo and Kapa Haka across a variety of schools. We are excited by the impact he has already had in his first session!



# ATTENDANCE AND FULL SCHOOL DAYS

Regular attendance is essential for learning, wellbeing, and a strong sense of belonging at school. Every day matters, and even short periods of missed learning can have a significant impact over time.

We have noticed that a number of families have been picking up students early each day, while our school day officially ends at 3.00 pm. While we understand that occasional appointments or unavoidable circumstances arise, students are expected to remain at school for the full day.

Thank you for supporting your child's learning by ensuring they are at school on time and for the entire day. Consistent attendance helps all students make the most of their learning opportunities and strengthens our kura community.

**ATTENDANCE  
MATTERS.  
ALL DAY, EVERY DAY**

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

By now, you should have all received a letter introducing your child's teacher. I strongly encourage you to take the time to pop in and meet your child's teacher after school. The best days for this are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

We also have Parent-Teacher Interviews scheduled for Monday 23rd March and Tuesday 24th March (Week 8). Bookings will be made through the HERO App, and further details will be shared closer to the date.

Meeting with your child's teacher is a great way to build a partnership that supports your child's learning and wellbeing.

## CELL PHONES AND PERSONAL DEVICES



As per existing requirements for New Zealand schools, students are not permitted to use cell phones during the school day.

If students bring a cell phone to school, it must be handed in to the school office at the start of the day. Phones will be securely stored and returned to students at the end of the school day. This applies to all cell phones and smart devices that can send or receive messages or access the internet.

Students do not require cell phones during the school day. This expectation supports learning, wellbeing, and positive social interactions. If there is a need for urgent contact during the day, whānau are asked to contact the school office, as usual.

We appreciate your support in reinforcing this expectation with your children and helping us maintain a focused and safe learning environment.

# HERO

We are delighted to launch our new communication and reporting system, Hero. An online sharing platform with a complementary parent app. This will be our one-stop shop for communication and will replace eTAP and Seesaw. It is vital that we have your most up-to-date email address so that you can access the app. If you require support in setting up the Hero App, please visit the office area between 8.30am -9am and 2.45-3pm. One of our staff will be available to support you with this, or contact Kath Corby (DP) [kcorby@matarau.school.nz](mailto:kcorby@matarau.school.nz) or Katie Donaldson (AP) [kdonaldson@matarau.school.nz](mailto:kdonaldson@matarau.school.nz)



Hero allows schools to customise an online environment that enables teachers, students, and parents to view and share content anytime, anywhere on any device. The software is secure, easy to use and brings together all school-related information in one place.

With Hero, you can:

- Read and comment on posts relating to your child's learning
- View information on your child's progress and goals,
- Read and comment on school notices sent to the class or groups your child is part of
- Respond to school notices such as surveys and trip permission requests
- View school term dates
- View a school calendar of events
- Notify the school if your child is absent or late
- Book your school interviews
- Navigate to other school-related web pages
- Customise your account by adding a profile image

Learning posts combined with curriculum information and goal-setting will form an online report designed to build year-on-year, so that over time, you will have access to written posts, images, videos, work samples, and helpful resources all in one place.



## READY, SET, SIGN IN!

Stay in the loop by following these steps



If you encounter problems logging in, please check with your school to make sure they have the correct details for you.



# SCHOOL VALUES

Over the past year, our school community has worked through a deliberate and inclusive process to identify a set of values that truly reflect who we are and what we stand for. This process included staff, students, whānau and the Board, with opportunities to share whakaaro, challenge assumptions, and reflect on what matters most for our learners now and into the future.

Through consultation, discussion, and refinement, we reached a shared understanding of the values that will guide our decisions, relationships, and learning. We are excited to announce that our new school values are:

## **Respect – Manaakitanga**

*We show manaakitanga when we care for others, listen respectfully, include everyone, and look after our environment. This is seen in the way students speak kindly to one another, welcome visitors, and take responsibility for our shared spaces.*

## **Excellence – Hiranga**

*Hiranga means striving to do our best. We demonstrate this by setting high expectations, taking pride in our learning, and persisting with challenges. Students show excellence when they aim high, seek feedback, and celebrate progress as well as success.*

## **Resilience – Manawaroa**

*Manawaroa is about the strength of heart and perseverance. We live this value when we keep going through difficulties, learn from mistakes, and support one another during challenges. This is evident when students try again, manage setbacks, and grow in confidence over time.*

## **Community – Whanaungatanga**

*Whanaungatanga reflects the importance of relationships and belonging. We see this in action when we work together, support one another, and build strong partnerships with whānau and the wider community. It is lived through collaboration, tuakana–teina relationships, and shared successes.*

## TUMUAKI AWARD HONOUREES



Tate Slatter,  
Mrs. Easterbrook,  
Heath Hankins,  
Connor Whiter,  
Kiedis Brown,  
Zara Ringrose,  
Ayvah-May Summers,  
Riley Popata,  
Aaron Ley,  
Zoe Sandilands,  
Lyla Kristensson,  
Nina Croucher,  
Helena Neave

Congratulations to the students who received the Tumuaki Award this week. It has been inspiring to see our school values in action so early in the term. A consistent message of respect, high standards, and a positive attitude shone through in every recipient, setting a fantastic tone for the year ahead.

# HOMework

To help track their progress, students will be provided with reading logs to record their daily reading; we aim to have these fully up and running by Week 8. Additionally, all students in Years 4–8 have access to Math-Whizz. To get the most out of the program, we recommend completing three Blue Gems and three Red Gems each week.

We strongly encourage you to visit the Parent Portal website: <https://www.education.govt.nz/parents-and-caregivers/schools-year-0-13/parent-portal>

Understand your child's learning  
**Parent Portal**



This site offers a range of resources and activities tailored to different year levels. It is updated regularly, and we will also share some of these links each week so you can explore them with your child. Engaging with these resources at home can help support learning and make homework a more interactive and enjoyable experience.

# SPORTS NEWS

## EXCITING LUNCHTIME BASKETBALL TRAININGS KICK OFF FOR FUTURE NBA STARS!



This week, our Year 5/6 and 7/8 basketball teams commenced their lunchtime training sessions with Mr P. We are thrilled to have such a remarkable group of young athletes at our school! These students are eager to return to the court and pursue their dreams of reaching the NBA.

- We will share weekly scores to keep you updated on their progress.
- Parents, please check your child's team on the Hero App for the weekly draw.
- Games starting next week, Wednesday for Year 5/6 and Friday for Year 7/8

A huge thank you to all the parents who have stepped up to coach and manage our school teams; without your support, these teams would not be possible!

## KING OF THE TABLE



Ricky Kumar is a prominent Northland table tennis coach and a key figure in developing young Kiwi talent. We are very lucky to host him each week as he helps develop our students' skills over lunchtimes.



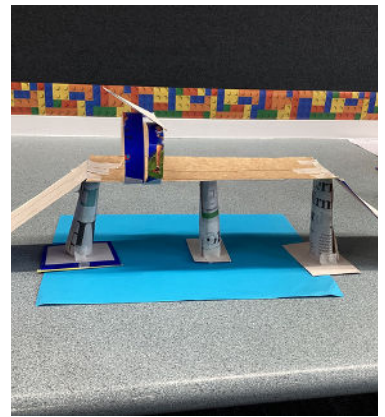
Netball 2026 Netball notices were distributed on Wednesday, February 4th, to students interested in playing this season. If your child missed out on a notice but would like to play, please contact Stacey at [shamilton@matarau.school.nz](mailto:shamilton@matarau.school.nz) to request one.

## NORTHLAND RUGBY STAR COMES TO SUPPORT OUR TAMARIKI

On Tuesday, our Year 4s to 8s were fortunate to have former Northland first five, Dan Hawkins, come and show us some new rugby skills. They had a blast. What a fantastic opportunity for our tamariki! We can't wait for him to return in Week 6.



# THIS WEEK IN STEAM



Our Middle School Students were challenged to design and construct a bridge using only limited materials, including masking tape and newspaper, capable of spanning a gap and supporting a total load of 1 kilogram (1 kg).



## Lunchonline is now ezlunch!

Lunchonline has been acquired by ezlunch, meaning all our school lunch orders will now be handled through the ezlunch (Kindo) platform. What does this mean for you? While the delivery day stays the same, the way you order has evolved. Here is everything you need to know:

You can now place your orders at [ezlunch.co.nz](http://ezlunch.co.nz) or via the Kindo app. If you already use Kindo, you're all set! Just log in and add your child's lunch order to your cart. Any existing credit you had on Lunchonline should be transferable.

**Cut-off Time: Remember to get those orders in by 9:00 AM on Thursday morning.**

# PARENT SUPPORT GROUP AGM

Wednesday 18.02.26 6.30pm

Location: Staffroom

Our Parent Support Group is all about supporting our school and tamariki in heaps of ways—from fun fundraisers and cool events to volunteering, helping with activities, and building our awesome school community 😊

Fancy lending a hand? No matter how much time or energy you have (even just a little bit!), we'd be stoked if you joined us. Every bit helps make a real difference for our kids! Who's keen?

[UNCLASSIFIED]

## DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD?

Term 1 2026

Te Manawa Tahī is a learning support hub where you can talk to educational professionals about your child's learning needs. This is a free service.

If you have a concern about your child's language development, learning progress, social and emotional well-being or behaviour, Te Manawa Tahī have specialists available so you can discuss your concerns directly with them.

All hubs are open from 9:00am until 12:00pm unless otherwise stated.

**Te Manawa Tahī COMMUNITY TIMETABLE:  
Whangārei, Bream Bay & Kaipara**

| Date                      | Hub Locations                                       | Term 1 2026, Weeks 1 to 5 |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Thur 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan | Clark Road Chapel, 4-6 Clark Road, Kamo             |                           |
| Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb   | Bream Bay Community Trust, 9 Takutai Place, Ruakākā |                           |
| Thur 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Ministry of Education, 24 Kaka St, Morningside      |                           |
| Thur 12 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Onerahi Community House, 130 Onerahi Road, Onerahi  |                           |
| Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Early Years Hub, 28 Hokianga Road, Dargaville       |                           |
| Thur 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb | Clark Road Chapel, 4-6 Clark Road, Kamo             |                           |
| Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb  | Ministry of Education, 24 Kaka St, Morningside      |                           |

Drop into a hub or to see a Speech Language Therapist make an appointment by phoning 0800 524 842 or emailing [TT.Support@education.govt.nz](mailto:TT.Support@education.govt.nz).

**Te Mahau**  
[UNCLASSIFIED]

ANGORA KI NGĀ TAMARIKI



Eat Yummy apples and get a share of \$200,000 free sports gear. Collect the 'Yummy Stickers' and 'cut-out labels' from Yummy 1.5kg apple bags.

Yummy apples are available at New World, Pak'n Save and participating Four Square stores.

The more stickers you collect, the more sports gear we get for our school!

Send all stickers and cut-outs to room 5 (Mrs Easterbrook).