



Waitati School

# Mid-Term 3 Principal Newsletter

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## Principal Korero

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Waitati School is in good heart. Learning is flourishing and the school is looking fabulous.

Pete and I are needed by our family in the North Island. I have accepted the Principal position at Kotemaori School, a small isolated rural school on the East Coast of the North Island.

I begin my new job Week 1 term 4.

I have loved my time at Waitati School. What a privilege. I have learnt so much. You have shaped me as a Principal as I have shaped you Waitati School. I am leaving behind close friends.

Whiria te tangata - Weave the people together

Bex Williams will be Acting Principal while the Board work through a full recruitment process for a new Principal. I know you will support her during this time.



# Examples of some cool writing from this term.

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Come in and have a read.

## Gallery





# Math - Across school we have finished learning about fractions and are working on area and perimeter now.

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

All children are learning from the new refreshed Te Mātaiaho curriculum.

Debbie leads our math programme across the school. Debbie has had prior experience with the Te Mātaiaho Math curriculum. The team recently completed the second MOE Professional learning day. Everyone is feeling confident and excited about the new curriculum.

## Gallery





# Swimming Lessons 2025

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Swimming is well underway for the term. Thank you to all the parents/grandparents and support crew that make swimming possible.

Swimming is an important part of our PE programme. Each learner gets a lesson for 30 minutes and a free swim in the big pool. Thanks to the Waitati Staff for making these lessons run like clockwork.

## Gallery





**Congratulations to Bex Williams for officially being acknowledged as the Waitati School Deputy Principal. Thanks for all you do and the leadership you show.**

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

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**BOT statement from Jubilee Hut**

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

*The Board of Trustees has reviewed the Jubilee Hut tramp from earlier in the year.*

*The school has made changes in practice to the Education Outside the Classroom policy, with ongoing staff training. In future we'd choose a much less challenging tramp that is closer to the experience level of kids, and parents. The Board considers the matter closed.*

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# Board Elections - Close on September the 10th. Don't forget to vote.

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

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# Kapuka Class has moved to Mihiwaka classroom.

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

During the annual Ministry of Education property inspection mould was identified in the Kapuka building and is now being tested.

Kapuka class have been extraordinary in the way they showed resilience in their move from one learning space to another. Everyone pitched in and helped with the move. Learning has continued throughout. Thanks to Kapuka parents for your support.

Antoinette has set the space up beautifully.



## Flying Fox Finished

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Flying fox thank you to Alexander McMillan Trust, Grassroots Trust, McEwan Haulage Ltd, Gibsons Earthworks and Tree Care, the PTA and the Pickford family.

Opening Day coming up soon. Final inspection by Otago Engineering this week.

## Gallery





# Cross Country Year 3-8

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Awesome effort by all in the Senior Cross Country at the Waikouaiti Rugby Grounds 2025.

Practice - check. Gear - Check. Nerves - Check. Resilience and courage - check. Well done Waitati School. Congratulations to Olivia and Ardie for placing in the top three for their age group. We got positive comment about our Year 5 girls who supported each other around the course. Thanks to Charlotte for organising the day.

## Gallery





# Rippa Rugby

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Students choose to join in the Rippa Rugby Day at Logan Park.

With over 1000 players it was a busy day. Lots of waiting around but our students participated with loads of energy representing Waitati School brilliantly.

## Gallery





# Hockey 2025

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Thanks Bex and Debbie for supporting our Hockey teams this year. Bex for organising the teams and Debbie for coaching during lunchtimes.

It was inspiring to see the children play their last game. They were determined and showed off the many new skills learnt throughout the season. Both teams won.

Parents - just wow, committed to getting your kids to the game each week. Enduring the many cold afternoons during winter and cheering them on. You must be so proud of their efforts.

## Gallery





# Polyfest (Karahaka) performance next week

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

We have been practicing for our polyfest performance. Thursday 4th September 11am at Edgar Centre.

Students have been working hard at their performance. It is wonderful to see everyone step up and show Rangatiratanga, leadership. We are travelling to the Edgar Centre by bus and one car.

Here is what the children need to wear.

The uniforms

Boys:

Black shorts

waitati t-shirt or no top

Girls:

Black leggings/shorts

Black singlet (generally provided) - bring one if you have one.

Skirt (provided)

Bring clothes for our Dress Rehearsal on Wednesday next week.

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## Video Gallery



# Welcome to school Isla

Tara O'Neill — August 27th, 2025

Isla started school this week in Kapuka.

Isla is the younger sister of Elizabeth and Nora. She has joined friends from playcentre in Kapuka and had a confident start to Waitati School.

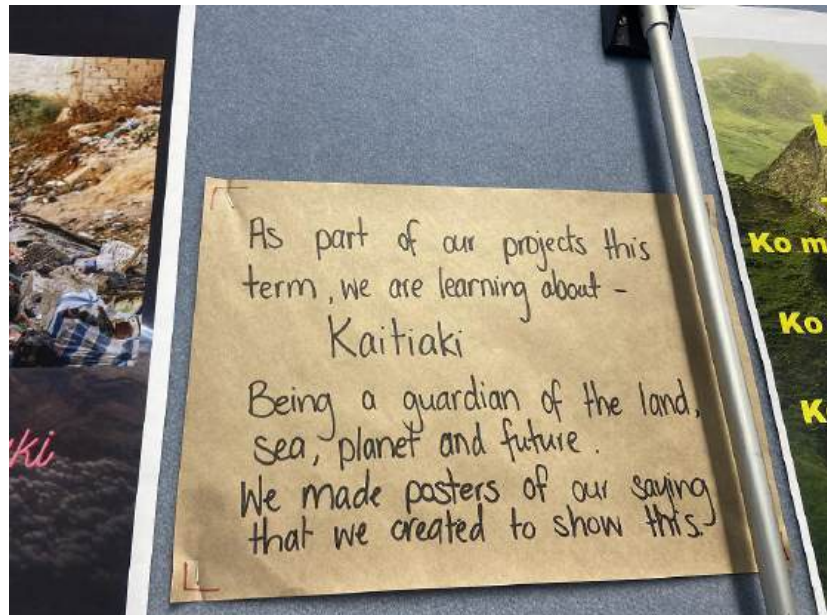


# Netball

It was great to watch Watati students play Netball last Tuesday.

Zara and Elizabeth play in a combined team with Karatane, and Nora and Skylah play in a team combined with Waikouaiti. All girls showed tenacity in teams. They had good knowledge of how the game ran and could place themselves strategically in the play. Great job.

## Gallery



## Deep Learning Project 2025

You will remember our Deep Learning Project from 2024? We learnt about Turakiri, Identity and produced a book where each child had one page to write about a family story. It made great reading and the children were so proud of their work.

This year, we are learning about **Citizenship through science.**

Pūtaiao - Science, the root or base to the natural world.

Our main goal is "to show care and respect for myself and my environment".

School values focus;

- Manaakitanga, Care and respect,

- Kotahitanga, Open to learning and Turangawaewae, Environmentally wise.
- Citizenship goal - to show genuine interest in human and environmental sustainability.

### Te Ao Māori goals

- I am developing a relationships with the natural world.
- I am aware that Māori have a special relationship with the natural world.
- I am aware of the terms Kaitiaki (guardian) and Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and have some idea of their meaning.

### New Zealand Curriculum

*The Nature of Science strand is the overarching, unifying strand. Through it, students learn what science is and how scientists work. They develop the skills, attitudes, and values to build a foundation for understanding the world. They come to appreciate that while scientific knowledge is durable, it is also constantly re-evaluated in the light of new evidence. They learn how scientists carry out investigations, and they come to see science as a socially valuable knowledge system. They learn how science ideas are communicated and to make links between scientific knowledge and everyday decisions and actions. These outcomes are pursued through the following major contexts in which scientific knowledge has developed and continues to develop.*

*Contexts - The living world, planet earth and beyond, the physical world and the material world.*

Year 3-8 are working on science projects individually and/or in pairs and Kapuka are working on a class science project.

Examples of Science projects - "What's a Tui's favourite food?" "How many birds come into the classrooms at school during a week?" "Do people playing in the swamp effect the stream quality?" "Which natural scents (peppermint oil, cinnamon, cloves) are most effective at deterring mice from entering spaces?" "How much lunchbox plastic gets left at school each day?"

Kapuaka - "How many insects are found in different locations around Waitati School and what does this tell us about our environment?"

This week Tara taught Pūtaiau Science. Sheena, Ray's mum came to talk about Harakeke and went to investigate the health of the plant. They found some insect holes in the leaves. What might this mean? Other groups went to different locations and used a Quadrat to count the number of insects and plants. Then they compared each location. Why do you think some locations had more insects and plants than others? They found some insect holes in the leaves. What might this mean? Other groups went to different locations and used a Quadrat to count the number of insects and plants. Then they compared each location. Why do you think some locations had more insects and plants than others?

These will be shared with you on Thursday 18th September at our end of term 3 Learning Celebration from 3pm - 6pm.

## Gallery





## Mihi Whakatau Term 3 2025

Tara O'Neill — July 15th, 2025

We welcomed the Prasad whānau at our Mihi Whakatau.

Welcome to Oliva, Year 5 and Amber, Year 3 to Waitati School. Michael Dad, brought the family to the Flying Fox Fair in Term 1 and really liked what the school offered. The family have moved to a home in Waitati Road.

Please join me in welcoming them.

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## Student led learning survey

Tara O'Neill — May 15th, 2025

Our Year 7 and 8 students carried out a survey with a random selection of 13, year 3-6 students, analyzed the data and shared their recommendations with the teachers.

The year 7-8 students carried out a survey and asked whom to ask. Younger students feel comfortable being asked by a peer leader in the school. The students, with the help of the Principal, analysed the data and suggested next steps for teachers.

Here is the analysis from our Year 7-8 students.

### What assumption can you make about the data ?

- Most children between Years 3 and 8 feel safe at Waitati School.
- The majority of kids feel safe with the teachers around.
- Most know what to do if they don't feel safe.
- Most have friends, 92%
- 100% believe the relationship ladder (behaviour management) is fair.
- Having friends and teachers helps them feel safe at Waitati School

### Here are the recommendations they made to the teachers

- You could be more involved in the morning tea and lunchtime. Most stuff goes on at lunchtime?
- You could have two duty teachers at lunchtime.
- One duty teacher could go from court to the swamp, and the other from the playground to the garden and stuff.
- You could explain to people who don't know what to do if they don't feel safe, what to do.

The teachers are now rearranging duty time so that this can happen. Two teachers will be on duty each lunchtime. One will run a game and the other will roam.

We also have the following happening during lunchtimes:

Monday - Robyn opens the music studio

Tuesday - Jamie opens the music studio, and Nathan is in the swamp

Thursday - Stephen opens the ceramics.

Each of these fantastic adults is volunteering their time.

Thanks to Jai, Puawai, Seth and Robbie for being Peer Leaders and joining with Tara to help us learn more about how students at Waitati School feel about safety.

Update - the extra options for lunchtimes is going really well.

## Gallery

