



WAITATI SCHOOL PARENT INFORMATION 2026

Welcome to the 2026 School Year!

As we kick off this new school year, I am struck by the incredible passion and enthusiasm filling our kura. Seeing the tamariki arrive with bright smiles and a genuine curiosity for the learning ahead has been the perfect start.

There is nothing quite like the joy of watching friends reunite after a long summer break; it truly fills our hearts to see those connections spark back to life.

Our team is energised and ready for the year ahead. We truly value the "learning triangle" that underpins our success: the vital partnership among tamariki, kaiako, and whānau. This journey is one we take together, and your involvement is a key part of that story.

To keep our connection strong, we will be sharing regular updates via:

- School Newsletters
- The Edge App
- Email communications

We are so excited for everything 2026 has in store, and we look forward to seeing our entire school community shine together.

Bex Williams
Principal
principal@waitati.school.nz

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nau mai, haere mai - welcome to Waitati School. This booklet contains information that will be useful to you with regard to our school and your child's learning. If you have any further questions about any of this information, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Mihiwaka - Yr 0-2

Antoinette O'Flanagan antoinette@waitati.school.nz

Huatea - Yr 3-4

Bea Lee bea@waitati.school.nz
Chris Slabbert chris@waitati.school.nz

Mapounui - Yr 5-8

Debbie Donaghy debbie@waitati.school.nz

Office Manager -

Laura Mulconroy office@waitati.school.nz

Learning Assistant -

Bec Des Fountain becsdesfountain@waitati.school.nz

Sports Co-Ordinator -

Bec Des Fountain becsdesfountain@waitati.school.nz

Principal -

Bex Williams principal@waitati.school.nz

2026 DATES

Term 1 Tuesday 3rd February - Thursday 2nd April
Term 2 Monday 20th April - Friday 3rd July
Term 3 Monday 20th July - 25th September
Term 4 Monday 12th October - Wednesday 16th December

LONG WEEKENDS/PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2026

Waitangi Day	Friday 6th February
Otago Anniversary	Monday 23rd March
Easter Break	Friday 3rd April - Tuesday 7th April (Start of Term Break)
Anzac Day	Saturday 25th April (observed 27th April - Monday Week 2 Term 2)
Teacher Only Day	Friday 29th June
Kings B'day	Monday 1st June
Matariki	Friday 10th July
Teacher Only Day	Monday 31st August
Labour Day	Monday 26th October

SCHOOL VALUES

At Waitati School, our values aren't just posters on the wall; they are the anchor for everything we do. They represent the "life skills" we hope every student carries with them long after they leave our gates.

Because these values are skills for life, they don't stop at the school fence. We believe that when we work together, kaiako and whānau, to model these behaviours, our children see a clear, consistent path for navigating the world.

Leading by Example

As teachers, we strive to "lead from the top" by demonstrating these values in our daily interactions. We invite you to join us in this mission! Children are like sponges; they learn far more from watching how we handle a tough day or treat a neighbour than they do from any lecture.

How to Talk About Our Values at Home

Here are a few ways you can weave the Waitati School Values into your family's daily rhythm:

Spot the Value: When you see your child doing something kind or sticking with a tough task, name it! "I noticed you were showing [Value] when you helped your brother with his shoes."

The Dinner Table Check-in: Instead of asking "How was school?", try asking: "How did you show our school values today?" or "Did you see someone else living our values today?"

Be a Role Model: Talk out loud about your own choices. "I'm feeling a bit frustrated, so I'm going to take a breath and show [Value] while I fix this."

Small Wins Matter: You don't need a big event to teach a value. Loading the dishwasher, sharing a toy, or listening while someone else speaks are all perfect living room lessons.

Our Shared Goal: We want our tamariki to leave Waitati School not just as great students, but as great people. By practising these life skills together at home and at school, we give them the strongest possible foundation.

Turangawaewae (A sense of connectedness)

Manaakitanga (Care and respect for our school whanau and community)

Rangatiratanga (Developing leadership)

Kotahitanga (A sense of unity)

VISION – WHAT DO WE WANT TO SEE?

Mission Statement: What are we trying to achieve?

Light the Mind – Fire the Heart - Engage the Whanau

Our whānau will be engaged participants who enjoy learning and want to come to school.

At Waitati School, our core purpose is to create a true sense of belonging, a safe space where every child is free to be exactly who they are. We nurture individual strengths and passions, ensuring all students feel valued, respected, and heard.

SCHOOL HOURS

8.30 am	Doors open to students
9.00 am	Morning bell rings
10.40 – 11.00 am	Morning Tea
12.30 – 1.30	Lunch
3.00 pm	End of school day
3:30 pm	All students off the property

Staff leave school at different times for professional development, sports and appointments. It is not safe to assume that anyone will be here after 3.30 pm or before 8.30 am. Please email your child's/rens teacher to ask if you need to make childcare arrangements outside these times.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for governing the school, a role which it takes professionally. The well-being and education of pupils are their prime concern. Board members are elected parents or community members, and it is important to remember that they must balance their responsibilities as Board members with those as parents. It is helpful to consider the Board as a collaborative entity rather than as individuals.

The Board only exists when it is together at a formal meeting. Therefore, it is not appropriate to bring up matters (you would like the Board to consider) during a 'school gate chat'.

Communication with the Board should be either in writing for tabling at the monthly meeting or in person at the meeting. This helps Board members retain their rights as ordinary parents in day-to-day operations.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBERS

Presiding Member -	Willie Lawson
Parent Representatives -	Julia McEwan, Mani Malloy-Sharplin, Nicola Winter.
Staff Representative -	Antoinette O'Flanagan
Principal -	Bex Williams

ATTENDANCE

At Waitati School, we believe every day counts. We know that regular attendance is one of the most significant factors in a child's social development and academic progress.

In line with the New Zealand Government's new Attendance Management Plan, we are committed to working closely with our families to ensure all students are present and engaged. Consistent attendance helps our tamariki feel connected to their friends and confident in their

learning; conversely, frequent absences or lateness can make it harder for them to keep up and may lead to truancy concerns.

Keeping Our Students Safe

To ensure every child is safe and accounted for, please contact us between 8:30 am and 9:00 am if your child will be absent or arriving late. Please use one of the following to advise that your child will be absent, as this reduces our work.

You can reach us via:

App: Edge
Phone: 03 482 2888
Text: 027 624 1781
Email: office@waitati.school.nz

During School Hours

To maintain a focused learning environment, students are expected to remain on-site throughout the school day. If your child needs to leave early for an appointment (such as a doctor or dentist appointment), please notify the office in advance so we can ensure a smooth transition.

Supporting You Through Extended Absences

If a student is away for more than four consecutive days, we will reach out to check in, see how things are going, and offer any support you might need. Please note that for absences exceeding five school days, a medical certificate is required.

We value our partnership with our whānau and are here to support you in ensuring your child gets the most out of their time at school.

CLOTHING - INCLUDING SPORTS UNIFORM

While we do not require a formal school uniform, we ask that you dress your children for the day's activities. We have found that "activewear"—such as tracksuits, shorts, sweatshirts, and sturdy sneakers - is the most practical choice for a busy day of learning and play.

Because our students love to explore, please ensure a complete spare set of clothes is kept in their bags. Given our local climate and often damp grounds, this helps keep everyone comfortable (and keeps your car clean at the end of the day!).

Official Sports Uniform

When representing Waitati School at events, students are required to wear:

- Plain black shorts or leggings (please ensure they are true black, not navy, and free of branding/logos).
- Waitati School T-shirt.

If you do not have a t-shirt at home, t-shirts are available through the school office and can be charged to your school account. T-shirts are \$33. Please coordinate with the office well in advance of any scheduled events, as we are unable to provide spare shirts on the day of the activity. Later this year, we will be launching a new way to purchase our sports uniforms.

ENTERING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Ensuring a safe environment for our tamariki is our highest priority. To support this, we maintain active safety measures, including security camera monitoring across the school grounds.

To keep our school secure and organised during the start and end of the day, please adhere to the following guidelines:

School Driveway Access

The school driveway is reserved for staff and pre-arranged access only. To keep walking paths clear and safe, we ask that parents and caregivers refrain from driving onto the school grounds between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm.

Pedestrian Access:

When arriving from the car park, please use the designated steps and footpaths rather than walking up the driveway. The driveway is a high-risk entryway; please do not use it to enter the school, whether on foot or by vehicle.

Essential Vehicle Access:

If you have prior permission to use the driveway, please maintain a speed of under 5km/h to protect our pedestrians.

Road Crossing & Patrol

We are very proud of our student Road Patrol team, who are trained by the Police for this in Term 4.

You can support them by:

Leading by Example: Please always use the official road crossing. When parents model this behaviour, it reinforces vital safety habits for our children.

Following Patrol Signals: Please wait for the signals from our trained tamariki and duty staff before crossing.

Wet Weather Pick-up

On rainy days, we want to keep everyone as dry and safe as possible. If it is raining at dismissal time, we ask that parents:

Meet outside classrooms: You are welcome to wait under the eaves directly outside your child's classroom.

Use the Bus Shelters: Alternatively, you may wait in either of the two school bus shelters until your child is released.

Community Conduct and Walking Home

We are aware that many children walk to and from the library and home. Please follow the link and read [Road Safety for Families](#).

If your child walks home independently (e.g., to the library), please remind them that they are ambassadors for our school. We expect our students to uphold our school values until they reach home. This includes staying on the footpaths, being respectful to neighbours, and taking care of our local environment.

Our community is very supportive and often shares feedback with us. Let's work together to

ensure that feedback is always something to be proud of.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

At Waitati School, we believe that a safe, happy learning environment is a fundamental right for every child. Our approach to social and emotional growth is grounded in Restorative Practices and Justice, moving away from traditional punishment and toward building, maintaining, and repairing relationships.

Our Philosophy: PB4L & Learner Agency

We are proud to align our school culture with the PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) School-Wide approach. This framework allows us to create a consistent, positive environment where ākonga are empowered to develop learner agency.

Rather than using authoritarian or coercive methods, which we believe offer little long-term value in teaching self-regulation, we focus on:

Active Choice: Supporting ākonga to take an active role in their decisions and social interactions.

Relationship Repair: Teaching students how to make things right when conflicts arise.

Causal Support: When a student is dysregulated, our role as adults is to "dig deep" to understand the underlying factors and provide the support they need to regain their balance.

Partnering with Whānau

Social learning is a journey, and as the adults in our ākonga's lives, we are here to guide them as they navigate the complexities of human interaction. We see this as a true partnership between school and home, and we value your support in fostering these essential life skills.

Learn More

For a deeper look at our systems and how we support our learners, please visit the 'Waitati Learning' section of our website, under the heading 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' (PB4L).

BREAK TIMES

10:40 am - Morning Tea

Children sit on the concrete area outside the classrooms for 5-10 minutes to refuel. Please pack a healthy, wrapper-free lunchbox to ensure they can continue to play and learn. After this, they can either continue eating or go play in the playground.

12:30 - 1:30 - Lunch

Eating:

Children will sit on the concrete area outside their classroom for 10-15 minutes at the start of lunchtime with their lunchboxes. When the handbell rings, the duty teacher will verify that they have finished their lunch before allowing them to go.

You can send a 'heat-up' to school with children. Please ensure it is wrapped and named in baking paper or tin foil, then placed in the oven to heat.

- No rubbish to go in the bins - rubbish/packaging is to go home in lunch boxes.
- No lollies/chocolate/flavoured milk etc - it will be coming home again.

We are a peanut-free school. Please refrain from sending anything with peanuts or walnuts in lunchboxes/baking

BLUESKIN CAFE LUNCHES

The Blueskin Nurseries' Cafe offers a lunch delivery to school on Thursdays. Please contact the cafe or school office for a menu. All orders must be placed and paid for at the cafe by midday on Tuesdays.

ASSEMBLY

This year, we are running two assemblies per term. These will be led by a class and will celebrate the learning and leadership that have occurred throughout the term.

These assemblies will be in Week 4 & 9 and will be advertised in the weekly newsletter.

TIMETABLE ADDITIONS

Yr 7 & 8 Tech	Wednesday afternoons - 12:15 (each lunch) bus arrives 12:30, return 2:50.
Swimming	Term 3, Friday Afternoons 12-3 pm at Moana Pool

HOMEWORK

Children are expected to read for 20 minutes each night. This will help build fluency, provide practice, and reinforce the lessons they learned during the day. If you would like additional homework for your child, you can arrange it with the classroom teacher.

SICK BAY AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

Every effort is made to ensure that students who may become ill at school or suffer an accidental injury receive appropriate care. Parents are always advised as soon as is practicable, so that sick students may be taken home. In an emergency, when parents cannot be contacted, students may be taken to a doctor or the hospital.

Many illnesses require exclusion from school for specified periods. Please support us by keeping your children at home, as infections are spreading rapidly in schools.

Some such conditions include Chickenpox, Conjunctivitis, Impetigo, Influenza, Measles, Mumps, COVID-19, etc. Information about these can be found [here](#).

Please note that children suffering from vomiting or diarrhoea should not return to school until they have been clear for 48 hrs after their last bout.

Medication

Children should not have medication in class, except for asthma inhalers. Any medication brought to school should be sent to the office, administered by a staff member, and recorded in the office.

Panadol will be given to children only with written permission or, if verbal permission is sought by telephone.

BANNED ITEMS

- No chewing gum
- No cellphones in class (see below)
- No fizzy
- No lollies/chocolate
- No valuables
- No makeup
- No aerosol cans

MOBILE PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

Mobile phones and electronic devices should not be brought to school. If children have them, they should not remove them from their school bags during school hours.

Please do not allow children to hand in their phones at the beginning of the day; we do not have the facility to store phones during the day.

The school accepts no responsibility for cell phones or electronic equipment that are lost, stolen, or damaged at school.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

- Written Reports - These go out twice a year, at the end of term 2 and at the end of term 4
- Newsletter – These go out weekly.
- Goal Setting – occurs in Terms 1 & 3. These are ten-minute conversations with the classroom teacher. The children lead these conversations and set goals for the terms ahead.

EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Tamariki will have the opportunity to participate in school trips and camps. These are a regular feature of our programme and are timetabled according to the various subject needs.

Parents are advised in advance of the details and cost of these trips. Parents are also invited to provide help with these programmes.

A 'blanket permission' clause has been added to the enrolment form, which allows us to take children on 'routine school trips'.

We will always notify you of outings and will seek specific permission for an overnight or unusually risky trip.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

As part of our emergency management plan, every child at Waitati School must have a parent-supplied emergency food kit kept at the school.

We ask that the boxes be taken home and refreshed annually in Term 2. Please refresh your child's box and return it to school in the first week of Term 2. It is helpful if the items you provide have at least 1 year remaining before expiration.

If you have not supplied a box before, then here are some tips:

- The food needs to be packed into a 2-litre square ice cream container to ensure easy storage. (We have spare containers in the office if you need them.)
- The container must be labelled with your child's name to avoid any problems with food allergies and intolerances.

FUNDRAISING

We currently have a highly dedicated group of parents in our PTA who organise fundraising events and other activities that bring parents, staff, and students together. The PTA is deserving of your support. Please feel free to attend their meetings and get involved.

MIHI WHAKATUA

At our Kura, we believe every child's journey begins with a sense of belonging. We hold a Mihi Whakatau to deeply honour each student and their family as they join our community, acknowledging the unique spirit and importance they bring to our school. This tradition is a cornerstone of our identity, reflecting our commitment to coming together as one vibrant whānau.

Before your journey with us begins, your child's teacher will personally reach out to guide you through this process and answer any questions you may have.

MUSIC LESSONS

We offer a range of music lessons from local music teachers. We offer drums, piano, guitar and ukulele. If you would like to participate in one of these, please contact the office for more information.

Music Teachers:

- Jamie Prout - Drumming
- Brenda Sterling - Piano

If you would like to sign up, please contact Laura in the office for more information.

SNOW DAYS/LATE STARTS

Please listen to The Hits on 89.4 and check the following Facebook pages for information on this.

- <https://www.facebook.com/waitatischool/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/thehitsbreakfastdunedin>

We are a part of the OPPA, which means that we adhere to all advice from Mosgiel to Port Chalmers and Waikouaiti. We will also send an Edge app notification.

SPORTS

There is a wide variety of sports available for students to participate in. For more information, please contact our Sports Co-ordinator, Becs Des Fountain.

TERM 1/4

- Futsal

TERM 2/3

- Hockey
- Netball

Student participation is the heartbeat of our sports programme, and we are committed to helping every child develop a positive, active lifestyle. While we facilitate various teams throughout the year, their success depends on the incredible support of our parent volunteers. If you are interested in helping out, we would love to hear from you.

To help us manage our programmes effectively, please note that sports subscriptions must be paid for before the season starts.

SUN PROTECTION

During Terms 1 and 4, all children are to wear a wide-brimmed sun hat of their choice. Please ensure they have one from home in their bag or at school. Please ensure it includes their name. If they do not have a hat, they will be asked to sit and play in the shade. Ensure that you apply sunscreen in the mornings before school. There are opportunities to reapply at school, whether from classroom sunscreen or from the duty teacher.

TE REO MĀORI & KAPA HAKA

Waitati is committed to developing Te Reo. We believe that understanding Te Reo and tikanga is best demonstrated through real-world practice. We have a school kapa haka group that is optional for tamariki to join. We have developed protocols for informal welcomes (Mihi Whakatau) and formal welcomes (Powhiri), and these will become second nature for children at our school over time. Regular tamariki Whānau hui are held. We hold Kapa Haka every week and invite you to come along and support the learners if you have experience in this.

WEBSITE & CONTACTING US

Please visit waitati.blog, our school website. It includes updated information on learning taking place in school. It also features our school newsletter and a calendar of upcoming events.

Thank you for choosing Waitati School - we look forward to sharing your child's learning journey with you.