



Kia ora e te whānau,

## School Contact Details

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### Te Awa (Rm4)

Kia ora I'm Whaea Sarah and I'm super excited to be teaching in Te Awa for Term 1! I've taught at Allandale Primary School and Whakatane Intermediate and love being part of young people's learning journey. Before becoming a teacher, I worked in wildlife conservation and love bringing my passion for the environment into the classroom. I love reading, playing sport, being with my family and friends and travelling. Most days you'll see me wearing bright clothes and funky earrings!



### Upcoming Dates:

9<sup>th</sup> Feb - Tech Class Yr 7 & 8

11<sup>th</sup> Feb - Swimming lessons begin  
(Rm 1, 2 & 5)

16<sup>th</sup> Feb - Gritty Kiwi (Rm 3)

18<sup>th</sup> Feb - Country Swimming Sports

25<sup>th</sup> Feb - Surf Club Day Room 4

26<sup>th</sup> Feb - Surf Club Day Room 3

What an amazing start to the year it has been at Waiotaha Valley School! It has been fantastic to see our tamariki back on site, reconnecting with friends, settling into routines, and approaching the year ahead with enthusiasm and positivity.

A very special welcome to our brand new students and families who have joined our school community this term. We are delighted to have you with us and look forward to building strong, supportive relationships as part of our Waiotaha Valley School whānau.

I would also like to welcome Whaea Sarah (Room 4) and Whaea Trusca (Rooms 1 & 2) to our team of kaiako. We are very excited to have you both working with our tamariki at Waiotaha Valley school and we know you will love being in our beautiful kura.

Over the summer holidays, a significant amount of repairs and maintenance has taken place across the school. While we had hoped everything would be completed before the start of term, a few delays and supply issues mean some work may take a couple more days to finish. Thank you for your patience and understanding. You may have noticed that we have also started concreting around the tennis court, an exciting step in preparation for a multipurpose turf that is scheduled to be installed in late April. This will be a fantastic asset for our students and wider community, supporting sport, physical activity, and learning.

Looking ahead, 2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year for our kura. We are proud to be involved in the Delamere Cup Kapa Haka Festival, which will be a real highlight and a wonderful opportunity for our ākonga to celebrate culture, performance, and identity. We are also hopeful to send a team to the AIMS Games in Tauranga, giving our students the chance to challenge themselves, represent our school, and create lifelong memories.

This year, we are placing a strong whole-school focus on our values and manners. By reinforcing these consistently, we aim to support our students to grow into respectful, confident, and well-rounded young people – both in the classroom and beyond.

We are currently finalising a few dates for school camps and meet the teacher opportunities and we will get these out to you ASAP.

Thank you for the continued support you give our school. We're looking forward to a positive, successful year ahead, working together for the benefit of our tamariki.

Ngā mihi nui,  
Tai Miskell

## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AROUND WAIOTAHE THIS WEEK

### Attendance

At Waiotaha Valley School, we know that **regular school attendance plays a vital role in your child's learning, wellbeing, and sense of belonging**. Attached with this newsletter is an attendance information pack with fridge magnets and marker. This is a Opotiki Khahui Ako initiative and all schools in our area will receive these awesome packs.

When students attend school regularly, they:

- Make consistent progress in their learning
- Build strong relationships with their classmates and teachers
- Develop routines, confidence, and a sense of belonging
- Feel more connected and settled in their learning environment

When students miss too much school, even with good reasons, they can:

- Miss key learning and instructions
- Feel unsure about what is happening in class
- Find it harder to reconnect socially with peers
- Become overwhelmed trying to catch up

It is also important to acknowledge that **we all get sick at times**, and there are occasions when absence is unavoidable. We understand and support families when this happens. However, frequent absences can add up quickly, and it can be challenging for kaiako to fully catch students up on learning that has been missed.

As a school, our shared goal is for students to **miss fewer than 5 days per term** where possible. This level of attendance gives learners the best chance to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

We value the partnership we have with our whānau and appreciate your ongoing support in prioritising attendance. If you are experiencing challenges that make regular attendance difficult, please don't hesitate to reach out – we are here to help.

Together, we can ensure our tamariki are present, connected, and thriving at school.

