



Te Aro School

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Te Aro School Newsletter – 16 February 2026

News from the Principal's Desk

Tena tatou katoa e te whanau. Talofa. Kia orana, Bula, Dobar dahn, Nabad, Hola, Ciao, Ni hao, Namaste, As-Salaam-Alaikum, Bonjour, Konnichiwa, Buon giorno, Cześć, Mingalarpar, Selamat datang, Walang anuman, Buon giorno, Guten Tag, Cześć, Salamu Aleykum, Hallo, Merhaba, Akkam, Selamat datang, Walang anuman, Mabuhay, Xin chào

Hari tau hou
Xin nian kuai le
Happy New Year

It has been wonderful to welcome everyone back to school. The teaching team and I are looking forward to catching up with you tomorrow night at our Meet and Greet evening here at school.

I enjoyed a very quiet summer break here in Wellington. I read a little, walked Molly lots although I have to say she is slowing down and wanting to take shorter walks. I made haloumi cheese with my eldest daughter Jessie, and I took time to do some work in my office where I got a lot done with few distractions.

My thanks to Graham, Sonia, Ruby, William, Rhea and our cleaners Satwinder & Dilpreet for working so hard to get the school grounds and buildings ready for the start of the school year.

Thanks too to the teaching team who worked hard during January to set up their classrooms ready for your children arriving back on Wednesday 4 February.

Nau mai haere mai. A warm welcome.

A very warm welcome to Hannah and Moana who have joined our staff team. Hannah is our new Deputy Principal. She will lead our Years 1 - 3 teaching team. Moana is joining the junior whanau. In the Government's changes to the New Zealand curriculum Years 1 - 3 are known as Phase 1 students.



A very warm welcome to our new students and their families who have joined the Te Aro School whanau over the first two weeks of school. Serah has welcomed to her class of Year 1 students Elsie, Hazel, Ivy, Ruhi, Zoe, Cece, Arfa, and Atreus. Moana has welcomed Tadhg to her class. Ishaan and Aziel have joined Rūma Ngaio with Hannah. Lila has joined Rūma Nikau with Mathew. Joy, Iris, Selah, Jericho and Xiyou have joined Rūma Manuka with Tessa and Afsana. In Rūma Pohutukawa, Meena and Ray have welcomed Kat, Juno, Athena, Abel, Jiaxue and Ronnie.

We have also welcomed Marcus and Phoenix. Both Marcus and Phoenix are all set to complete extended teaching experiences at our school this year as they train to become teachers. Marcus is going to work closely with Tessa and Afsana. Tessa will be his mentor teacher. Phoenix is joining Mathew in Rūma Nikau. We wish them all the best as they undertake the practical side of their teacher education programme here in our school.



Last Tuesday we welcomed Daijia, our new Mandarin language assistant. Daijia will this year be working with us on a Tuesday and Friday each week. Daijia comes from Putian near Xiamen. I am certain that her enthusiasm for her new work is going to mean she makes a wonderful contribution to our school community. Daijia is being mentored by Kristin.

Mathew is leading our Years 4 - 6 teaching team. In the Government's changes to the New Zealand curriculum Years 4 - 6 are known as Phase 2 students. Our Years 7 - 8 students are known as Phase 3 students.

During this coming term Ray, Mathew, Hannah and I will be working with Mark Sweeney an educational consultant as we reshape our leadership team. We had our first session with Mark last Thursday.

The teaching team this year is:

Rūma Tawa	Serah Mehrtens	Year 1
Rūma Ngaio	Hannah Newell	Year 3 & 4
Rūma Tarata	Kristin Holmes	Year 2 & 3
Rūma Kauri	Moana Jones	Year 2
Rūma Nikau	Mathew Quivooy	Year 4
Rūma Manuka	Afsana Adams	Years 4 - 6
	Tessa Devereux	Years 4 - 6
Rūma Pohutukawa	Meena Vallabh	Years 7 & 8
	Ray Teahen	Years 7 & 8

Cathie, our ESOL teacher, works Monday – Thursday each week.

Katie, our learning support teacher, works Monday - Wednesday each week.

Anna and Julia will be our release teachers this year. They will work across the school releasing teachers on a regular basis.

Mathew will be the lead/contact teacher for the Year 4 students.

Tessa will be the lead/contact teacher for our Year 5 students.

Afsana will be the lead/contact teacher for the Year 6 students.

Meena will be the lead/contact teacher for the Year 7s.

Ray will be the lead/contact teacher for the Year 8s.

Hemi Price will continue to be our kapa haka tutor on Thursday afternoons.

Starting the new school year

We have had a busy start to the school year.

Our Year 5 - 8 students have started weekly swimming lessons on a Friday at the Aquatic Centre in Kilbirnie. These weekly lessons are an important part of our physical education and health programmes. They foster a culture of water safety, so we can together reduce New Zealand's drowning numbers and promote lifelong enjoyment of water-based activities. At the pool our Year 5 - 8 students learn the fundamentals of being safe around the water. They learn the skills of floating on their back, on their front, getting into a huddle position if they are with a group, making sure they are wearing a life jacket on a boat and knowing how to use one in the water, and learning how to scull and tread water. We know that being in the water for some of our students is a VERY new experience but we urge you to send your child to school this term on a Friday so they learn these very important safety skills. If you have any questions about the weekly swimming lessons or your child is anxious about attending these lessons please talk with your child's teacher or come and talk with me.

Over the past two weeks ...

- The staff team attended two teacher-only days before our students returned on Wednesday 4 February. On Monday of that week we worked with Kathryn Berkett, a neuroscience educator, who holds a Masters in Educational Psychology. She works with educational institutions, the police and in judicial settings to help people understand the neuroscience of childhood stress, trauma and anxiety. She works with organisations and with parents on how regulated adult nervous systems can change a child's behaviour and how we can make a positive difference in the lives of the tamariki we work with because of our interactions, because of our relationships, and because we care.
- Our second teacher only day on Tuesday 3 February was facilitated by two educational psychologists who work within our local RTLB team (Resource Teachers of learning and behaviour). Nic and Karen's work with us was focussed on inclusive classrooms; maximising working memory for effective learning; and establishing predictable routines in the classroom.
- Our kapa haka group supported the teacher education department at Victoria University to welcome all their education students last Tuesday. Our group gave a rousing performance at the mihi whakatau for these students.



- Afsana and Tessa's students were very excited to harvest the first honey from our hives last Thursday. Preparation began for this very sticky work on Tuesday when Claire, our beekeeper, brought up the full frames from the hives and stored them in the senior block's kitchen. We had to keep this room tightly sealed so the bees weren't able to locate the honey. Many thanks to Bridget, Odessa, Natan, Kjirsti and Taufan who worked alongside Claire, Sue and the students to extract the honey and then fill the jars with this season's honey.



- Pru and Jess held the first Friends of Te Aro meeting in the staffroom last Thursday after school. My thanks to all the parents who joined them and shared great ideas about how we might fundraise for the school this year.

Summer Reading

Thank you to all the students and whanau who have returned their summer reading books. Cathie has been delighted to receive so many of the summer reading books so quickly this year. She has been able to get the books back into circulation. If your child still has books at home can you please help them to return their books over the next week. They can drop their books off in the container in the foyer by the office.

I am looking forward to the year ahead. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or queries that you have about the school or feedback which you would like to share with me.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou,

Sue

Important Dates

February

Tues 17 Feb –

Meet and Greet evening, 5pm

Wed 25 Feb –

Te Hokioi & Kekenō walk

Board of Trustees Meeting

March

Tues 3 March –

Tuatara - hikoi locally

Te Hokioi – EOTC trip – Adrenaline Forest

Tues 17 March –

Tuatara - hikoi locally *Postponement Day*

Wed 18 March –

Kekenō 'Explore' VR workshop in school PM

Thurs 26 March –

Tuatara EOTC – Te Matapihi o te Ao

Term Dates 2026

Term 1 2026

Wednesday 4 February – Thursday 2 April

Waitangi Day – Friday 6 February

Good Friday – Friday 3 April

Term 2 2026

Monday 20 April – Friday 3 July

Teacher Only Day – Friday 24 April

Anzac Day – Observed Monday 27 April

King's Birthday – Monday 1 June

Term 3 2026

Monday 20 July – Friday 25 September

Term 4 2026

Monday 12 October – Wed 16 December

(school finishes at 1pm)

Labour Day – Monday 26 October