HIKUAI SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Term 4, Wk 4-5
2026

Term 4 Updates Weeks 4-5

Kia ora koutou,

The last two weeks have been really productive at school as we have completed our end-of-year assessments, reviewed our initial progress findings, and begun writing student reports.

Week 4 also saw a visit from the Education Review Office (ERO) as part of our regular Ministry checks. Their initial findings are very promising across all aspects of the school, including curriculum, leadership, and board governance. We look forward to receiving our draft report in a few weeks, which will be published in the New Year.

Week 5 was a busy week for everyone with plenty of action, including Skate School, Wheels Day, and WHOT Athletics Day. Feedback shows that these events were thoroughly enjoyed by all, and Wheels Day will now become a regular termly event!
A huge thank you to the Whitianga Menzshed for providing two ramps to the school as part of the trust funding that supports Skate School access. A massive thank you as well to Sean and Isaiah for all their efforts this year—we know they have been greatly appreciated by students and staff alike.

This week, we have the Whitebait Connection programme and camp for Te Maunga! With only four weeks to go, we have an action-packed calendar of events ahead.

Please get in touch if you have any questions about anything upcoming. We look forward to spending the rest of the term with you and celebrating all the wonderful progress that has taken place this year.

Ngā mihi nui,
Rachell





River studies with The Waitbait Connection

What's Happening?

Welcome to Kaylia Wilshire

Welcome to Kaylia Wilshire



Earlier this term we announced the appointment of Kaylia Wilshire as our fixed-term, full-time Year 3–4 teacher for the 2027 school year.

Kaylia is currently teaching down in Arrowtown. As a beginner teacher, she brings an abundance of energy, fresh passion, and enthusiasm to our teaching team, alongside her own strong skills in sports and recreation. While the distance between Arrowtown and our school means she won't be able to make an in-person visit this term, she is incredibly excited about relocating and joining our learning community for the new school year. Here are a few words from Kaylia:

Kia ora!

I am so excited to be joining the wonderful Hikuai School community.
My name is Kaylia Wilshire (Miss Wilshire), and my heart has always belonged to the Coromandel since my childhood. I lived in Matarangi and spent many of my primary years at Te Rerenga School. Ever since, my dream was to move back to the beautiful Coromandel Peninsula to work as a teacher in a country school. It looks like this is coming true! I spent most of my upbringing in Auckland, where my parents and three sisters still live. After attending Macleans College, and completing my Bachelor's degree in Sport and Recreation, I worked with Air New Zealand as a Flight Attendant operating International and Regional Flights. My heart was calling for a stable and homely lifestyle so I decided to start my teaching journey. I moved with my partner to Arrowtown this winter where I have been teaching a gorgeous Year 1 class in Arrowtown Primary School. Outside of teaching, my passions lie in the outdoors, especially ocean-based activities such as surfing and sailing. I also have a love for the rural lifestyle having spent my highschool years on a lifestyle block with my own horse.

I am beyond excited to become a part of Hikuai School, and to meet all of you!

What's Happening?

Welcome to Jane McMullen

Staff Spotlight: Welcoming Jane McMullen

We are thrilled to officially introduce Jane McMullen to our teaching team in a 0.4 position for 2027!

Many of you will already know Jane—she has been our CRT teacher releasing Nicola on Wednesdays this year, and she has been relieving across the school since 2023, so she is already very much a part of our school family.

In 2027, Jane will be working alongside Kaylia Wilshire every Tuesday and every second Thursday in Te Awa space. She will also continue releasing Nicola on Wednesdays in Te Wahapū.

We feel incredibly fortunate to have such an experienced teacher joining the team in this capacity. You might also recognise Jane from Kapa Haka, where she plays the guitar for us and brings her wonderful musical talent directly into the classroom.

Looking ahead to next year, Jane, along with Kaylia will be completing professional development using the iDEAL structured literacy platform. All of our classes will continue with Structured Literacy, which has already proven to be of immense benefit to all our learners.

Please join us in giving Jane a warm official welcome to her new role!





More river study fun!

What's Happening?

Learning & Communiuty Connection at Hikuai

Last Friday, 16 Hikuai School students travelled to Whangamatā Area School to compete in the annual W.H.O.T Schools Athletics Championships.

The event brings together some of the best young athletes aged 8–12 from Whangamatā Area School, Hikuai, Ōpoutere and Tairua Schools, competing across a range of track and field events.

Our 16 athletes represented Hikuai School with pride, determination and, most importantly, humility. Whether they were sprinting down the track, jumping into the sandpit or cheering on their teammates, every single student demonstrated the values that make our little school so special. A huge congratulations to Hunter, Zion, Chloe, Baylee, Shanoli, Addi and Jackson, who all secured either first or second place in their respective finals, earning qualification for the Thames Valley Athletics Championships!

To have seven students progress to the next level is an outstanding achievement and something our entire school community can be incredibly proud of.

Finally, a massive thank you to the parents who generously gave their time to help with transport and supervision throughout the day. Opportunities like these simply wouldn't be possible without your support.

Well done, Hikuai! Small school, big heart!







What's Happening?

Learning & Communiuty Connection at Hikuai







Term Four Learning:

TERM 4 AT HIKUAI SCHOOL
KAITIAKITANGA O TE WHENUA
Guardians of the Land

Our Term 4 learning connection is live and kicking with classroom learning and EOTC events linked to the wonderful environment right on our doorstep.

Our big idea is:

"We are kaitiaki of our environment. The choices we make today affect the future of our whenua, wai and communities. Our learners will be exploring what it means to be kaitiaki through a range of hands-on learning experiences, including:

Zero Waste – working alongside TCDC to learn about waste, recycling and how we can reduce what we send to landfill.

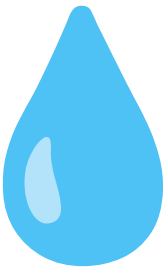
Water – discovering where our water comes from, how it is treated, and why protecting our wai is so important.

Earth Science – investigating our whenua, the natural processes that shape it, and how our environment connects us to the past, present and future.





We would love our community to be part of this learning journey! Do you have a skill, knowledge, experience, passion or connection that could contribute to our learning?



We still have learning and events coming up in the next few weeks We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to be involved in our Term 4 learning programme, please get in touch with Rachell and come along with us as we explore what it means to be kaitiaki of our whenua, wai and community.



Tū Ake, Tū Kaha – standing strong together as kaitiaki.

TERM EVENTS CALENDAR

Please let us know if we have missed anything!

Calendar of Events 2026

sports, school community events and public holidays etc...

November 2026

16th-17th	Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust's Whitebait Connection programme- details T.B.A
18th	Ruben the Safety Bear visits Te Wahapū
18-20th	Te Maunga Camp- Tui Ridge, Rotorua
23rd	Book Fair In the Library- Details TBA / BOT meeting 6:00pm
24th	Water Treatment Plant Trip- Te Wahapū and Te Maunga
25th	Thames Valley Athletics for qualifying pupils.
27th	Junior HOT Sports - details TBC

December 2026

7th-8th	Te Awa & Te Wahapū Overnight Camp and whole School Mt Pauanui climb
8th	BOT meeting 6:00
10th	Picnic Prize Giving 6:00
11th	The last day of School. School finishes at 12:00 midday. The bus and van will run at this time. See you all back on Tuesday 2nd February.

COMMUNITY

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Pauanui Pre-School is a community based, not for profit early childhood centre that offers a high quality, dynamic programme in a homelike environment for children aged 0 to 6 years.

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COMMUNITY





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JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

THAMES SCHOOL OF MINES & MINERALOGICAL MUSEUM

Our mission is to make learning an adventure. Our activities combine science with relatable, hands-on activities. We can't wait to see you!
The Education Room, 101 Cochrane Street, Thames. Kate Coatsworth, Education Co-ordinator. Phone 0274 170 425, kcoatsworth@heritage.org.nz
There is no need to book but we do appreciate an RSVP via our Facebook page/events. Fb Thames School of Mines. Visit heritage.org.nz

Historic School and Mineral Museum guided tour $10, Children no charge. Tours: 10:30am, 1pm and 2:30pm.
Self guided Mineral Museum Tour $5. We are open 10-4pm. Wednesday - Saturday.

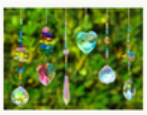
PERSONALISE AND ADOPT A PET ROCK: WEDNESDAY 13TH JAN 2027, 10-2PM KOHA ENTRY

Tiptoe into the Education room as our pet rocks are fast asleep. They're all waiting for their forever homes, but they're missing a few important things, hairdos, outfits and plenty of personality! Choose your favourite rock and bring it to life with facial features, hair, accessories and a character all of its own. Give your new pet a name, receive your very own adoption certificate, decorate and take your new rocky friend home!




SUN CATCHER CREATIONS: 14TH JANUARY 2027, 10-2PM ENTRY FEE $10

Catch a little magic and sparkle… Create your very own hanging sun catcher using beautiful crystals, gems and colourful beads. Kids can let their creativity shine as they design a sun catcher that is completely their own. This hands-on activity is a lovely way to develop fine-motor skills, hand-eye coordination, concentration and creative confidence, while having plenty of fun along the way. Design, create and decorate your masterpiece, then hang it at home and watch it twinkle and shimmer in the sunlight!

SCIENCE SPARKLE AND SCULPTING: WEDNESDAY 20TH, THURSDAY 21ST JAN 2027,10-2PM ENTRY FEE $5

Get ready for two days of sparkling science and creative fun! Discover the magic of crystal growing as you create your very own sparkly crystals in a jar using pipe cleaners and borax. Then let your imagination run wild as you sculpt and decorate a unique Polymer clay keyring to take home. Both activities will be happening throughout both days, so you can experiment, create and get crafty at your own pace! A magical mix of science, sparkle and creativity!




JEWELLERY CREATION:WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY 2027, 10-2PM. TARGET AGE GROUP: HIGH SCHOOL YEARS 9-13, ENTRY FEE $5 AND THE COST OF WHATEVER JEWELLERY KIT YOU CHOOSE ON THE DAY!

Make your own earrings or beaded keyring using semi precious gemstones. Our instructors Suze and Kate will show you what tools, findings and beads you'll need to make your own earrings or keyring, and take you step by step through the process. All materials are provided, and you'll be able to take your finished earrings or keyring home the same day.




COMMUNITY



We're giving away $600 worth of Word Whizz Literacy Hubs to help your child strengthen their reading and spelling skills from home. Head to the Word Whizz Facebook page to find out how to enter and be in to win one of three prizes: https://www.facebook.com/wordwhizzonline/





BABY SITTING SERVICE

Hi, my name is Niki, and I teacher aide at Hikuai School if you are needing baby sitting services.

Please contact : Niki Pollard - 021 450 407

DENIM - ARE YOU HAVING A CLEAN OUT?

I'm working on a denim upcycling project and looking for any old, non-stretch denim you're planning to throw out. Coloured denim, rips, stains, or worn-out knees are totally fine—I'll gladly take them off your hands so they don't end up in the landfill. Please contact : Michelle (wk) 07 864 7818 or 027 264 0077