

2026



TAMARIKI POTIKI HANDBOOK





CONTENTS



History of Kura

Page 3 & 4

Take a look at the heart and soul of Apii Te Uki Ou

Meet the Team

Page 5

Meet our wonderful 2026 Kura Team



Learning

Page 6

Learning – Curriculum,

Kura Norms

Page 7 – 9

A brief outlook of expectations in Kura

Rhythm of the Day

Page 10

A 'day in the life' of a Kura child



Transition into big school

Page 11

Important information about the move to big school





HISTORY OF KURA

The heart of Apīi Te Uki Ou

This is where all the fun happens.



Apīi Te Uki Ou would not be the ever-growing school it is if it wasn't for the seedling that is Tamariki Potiki. The start of our journey as a school starts in 1993 when a group of dedicated parents came together and discussed the possibility of creating their own preschool. That seedling was planted in Lauren Parkinson's garage in Betela with ten children and a play-based learning approach which we still use to this day.



The seedling that was Tamariki Potiki needed more space and was developing into something bigger so they moved to the Aotearoa Centre in Tupapa (next to the House of Marsters). They stayed here for a short period of time before moving to the Avatiu mormon church hall (next to the CITC Supermarket). This is a significant part of our primary schools journey because this is where Kathy Nooroa established year one and two alongside Tamariki Potiki. Kathy Nooroa became the first principal of the school at that time and this is where they named the school Te Uki Ou school. She would pack all the school resources into her red sport car every day from Monday to Friday. Each day, she unpack the resources and pack them into her car after school. As to be expected, the school needed more space and were fortunate enough to move to Rangiora, Nikao (Up the hill opposite the Rangiora shop behind the airport), a place that Ellena Tavioni helped the school acquire. The school stayed in Rangiora for 7 years and this is where the original school uniform was created by TAV. The schools journey of moving from village to village finally came to an end when it moved from Rangiora to its permanent location, Ngatangia, the belly of the fish and has been here ever since. In Ngatangia, preschool was developed in the clinic and was renovated in 2022.



As quoted in the 2004 Te Uki Ou School Magazine

'Much sacrifice, by many people, has ensured that the soil was well prepared, the plant carefully looked after every step of the way and as a result the fruit that we are seeing now is excellent!'

We give special mention to Tinomana Ariki – Ruta Hosking who is our school patron and believed in the vision of Tamariki Potiki at the very beginning. We also acknowledge Poila Vaine (Sareni Poila) who is our longest serving staff member of Apīi Te Uki Ou. She started her teaching journey in 1999 and has been a strong pillar of foundation for Apīi Potiki and Te Uki Ou. It is her knowledge of our school that was fundamental in the development of this document and we are grateful to her for her commitment to our school.



You'll notice that all our classrooms are named after local birds and funnily enough all start with K (except for Tavake). We are named after the Kura bird – the Rimatara Lorikeet. The bright green, yellow and red bird is found in Atiu but originated from Rimatara in French Polynesia. The late Ada Te-Au-Purepure Rongomatane Ariki Nicholls bought the Kura bird from Tahiti to Atiu.



HISTORY OF KURA

Location, location, location

School Song

Tūrou, Kia Orana, ōro mai rā
(x2)

I te mataitī ta'i-'iva-'iva-
toru

E moemoeā na te au mētua
'Akamata 'ia mai teia 'Āpi'i
ē (ha-hi-ha-hi a!)

Na te au tamariki Potiki
Topa'iōra tōna 'ingoa
Ko te 'Āpi'i, 'Āpi'i Te Uki Ōu
Mei Bētela

Ki te mārae o 'Aotearoa
(Hi) (Hi)(Hi)(Hey)

'Uru atu ki Avatiu

Ki te pāepāe 'o te Mōmani
(neke)

Neke atu kī Rangi'ura

E 'itu mataitī

Teia nei tei roto mātou i te
kōpū o te ikā

Ngāti Tangi'ia ē

'Ākameitaki iakōe

Ē lehovā

Kua tupu rupērupē

Kua tū rangatirā

To aro'a, mūtūkōrē (x2)



Betela, Arorangi
Lauren Parkinson's Garage



Tupapa
Aotearoa Centre



Avatiu
Mormon Church



This building is where preschool was held
during it's time in Avatiu



Rangiura - The back of the airport
The school stayed here for 7 years



Ngatangia - The belly of the fish

Our school song was composed by Sareni Poila, Tu Edwards, Teia Potoru and the late Keu Titaa. It was developed through the bi-annual cultural festival that is held for all Rarotongan primary schools and one year the theme of the festival was based on the history of schools. The wonderful team of teachers created a song that tells the story of how the school developed into the education provider it currently is and the journey it took to get to Ngatangia.



MEET OUR TEAM



Natasha Maoate-Tafa

ECE Teacher

ntafa@teukiou.com

Aunty Tash is a New Zealand trained Cook Island Teacher. She first started working in Kura in 2019 and returned in 2023. She is a qualified ECE teacher with a Bachelor of Pasifika Teaching (ECE). She believes that early childhood education is a fundamental part of a child's development and it needs to be nurtured with a space that encourages play based learning and empowers children to become competent and confident learners.



Kathy Lagoudis

ECE Head Teacher

klagoudis@teukiou.com

Aunty Kathy has spent time living in both Australia and New Zealand. She has a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and after graduating in 2019 she has worked in a mixture of primary school and early childhood education. Aunty Kathy has been teaching at Apii Te Uki Ou since June 2024 starting in the primary school and moving to ECE in 2026, she is loving life in the Cook Islands.



Sareni Pekepo-Poila

Te Reo and Culture Teacher

spoila@teukiou.com

Poila Vaine is Apii Te Uki Ou's longest serving staff member who started her Apii Potiki journey back in 1995 in Rangiuira. She worked alongside Tu Edwards and Keu Titaa who she calls her mentor. In 2019 she transitioned from Kura head teacher and is now our lead teacher and advisor in Te Reo and culture throughout the whole school. We are very fortunate to have Poila Vaine back in Apii Potiki this year to help instill our language and culture through her experience in early childhood education.



Mary Rodgers-Bagnall

Art Teacher

mrogers@teukiou.com

Aunty Mary/Mrs Rodgers is a New Zealand trained Cook Island teacher. She first started working at Apii Te Uki Ou in 2022 and is now working as our wonderful release teacher in each classroom. She believes that Kura is the perfect place for students to practice their social skills and school values. Lots of hands on learning happens in Kura, and children are developing their fine motor skills and hand eye coordination.



Gardenia Rouru



LEARNING



Play-Based Learning with Intentional Curriculum Connections.

At Kura, we believe that learning happens naturally through play, and we integrate educational experiences to support children's growth in a fun, engaging way. Our approach aligns with the Cook Island's Ministry of Education Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum, ensuring that play is not just an enjoyable experience, but also a foundation for learning that prepares children for a smooth transition to school.

Curriculum Connection

Our teaching practices are thoughtfully aligned with the ECE curriculum, embedding key learning outcomes into everyday activities. By focusing on intentional learning within play, we guide children toward developing important skills such as literacy, numeracy, and social development in a way that feels natural and enjoyable.

The Four and a Half Club

Children in our program are introduced to the Four and a Half Club, a special learning initiative designed to build essential school readiness skills. This includes a focus on early numeracy (counting, patterns, and basic math concepts) and pre-literacy skills (recognizing letters, sounds, and early reading techniques). This targeted preparation helps children gain confidence and familiarity with concepts they'll encounter when they begin school.

Learning Beyond Play

While play is at the heart of our curriculum, we integrate learning opportunities throughout the day, including structured mat time activities such as Te Reo Māori, storytelling, and early numeracy activities. These moments intentionally weave literacy, numeracy, and social development into the play-based experiences, helping children make connections and gain valuable life skills.

Through our integrated approach, we ensure that children not only learn key concepts but also develop the self-regulation, problem-solving, and social skills essential for success in school and beyond.

At Kura, every moment is an opportunity for learning, and we're committed to nurturing your child's curiosity, confidence, and creativity while supporting their path toward school readiness.





KURA NORMS



Sign In and Out Sheet

We have a sign in and out sheet located at the entrance of our preschool on the Kura carpark side. Please ensure you have signed your child in the morning and out in the afternoon. This will help us in emergency situations and ensure all our children are accounted for.

Learning Journals

We use portfolios to track your child's learning in Kura. This is a great place to keep samples of your child's artwork and write learning stories describing the learning that is taking place. These portfolios are available for your viewing at any time and we encourage parents to review their learning journals. At the end of the year you will be free to take them home.



Change of Clothes

Our tropical climate can dictate how we feel in Kura and with our beach like outdoor environment we know our children love to explore. We kindly ask that you provide them with changes of clothes so we can help them get changed and a plastic bag to put their wet/dirty clothes into. This encourages self-help skills and if they need help it is a great way for them to learn about communication skills with our team and their peers.



Toileting

Please ensure that your child is fully toilet trained before attending preschool. If they have toileting accidents, we ask that you provide them with two changes of clothes, wipes and a bag to put their clothes into afterwards.





KURA NORMS



Behavior Management

In Kura we encourage positive guidance and learning opportunities for all children. We understand at times our children may not be able to communicate their feelings and this can result in physical actions towards their peers. If we have concerns and observe these behaviors we will let you know at the end of the day during pick up time to ensure smooth communication between our team and families.

If we observe more serious behaviors, such as biting or physical altercations we will call you during the day and your child would need to be picked up. If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to talk to our team. We are more than happy to help with positive conversations to help guide our children through emotional times during their day and for smooth communication with parents.



Healthy Eating

We encourage healthy eating to ensure the food our children eat is nutritious and will full them for a full day of exploration. Therefore, we kindly ask that you provide a healthy lunch. No junk food please - especially chips, lollies, fizzy drinks and chocolate milk. We are a **WATER** only school and encourage reusable drink bottles. We are a **NUDE FOOD** school that promotes less rubbish in our lunchboxes. Any packages that come in your child's lunchbox will be sent home with them on the day.



Communication

If you have any concerns about your child please don't hesitate to email Aunty Kathy and she will endeavor to contact you back within 24 hours of contact. Our preschool phone number is **23510**.

If your child is absent from school please advise us via the school app, email or phone call. If you email the office please CC our team into the email or vice versa to ensure our team and the office are aware.

If you are travelling overseas please let our principal know by email principal@teukiou.com



Kura Facebook Page

Kura - Apii Te Uki Ou Preschool 2026 - We have a private facebook group where we post daily photos and updates so please find us and add us.



KURA NORMS



Birthday Celebrations

Birthday celebrations in preschool happen every month and we understand that families would like to celebrate with their child in Kura. You are more than welcome to come in and celebrate with us. Please talk to one of our team so that we can arrange times/days to make this happen.

Graduation Ceremonies

The big 5!



Before your child turns five or on their fifth birthday we have a graduation ceremony where we put a cap and gown on them to acknowledge their achievement of completing preschool and their transition into big school. They receive a certificate of completion and a small gift bag with goodies to start in their new class. The child's graduation is an open invitation to their family to come in and celebrate their achievements before they move into their new class. We welcome one and all.

Art with Aunty Mary

We are very grateful to have Aunty Mary join us twice a week for art. She provides amazing learning opportunities for the children to learn art skills through fun activities. Mary's kind and patient nature puts all the children at ease when trying new art techniques. While she does teach them specific skills, they are allowed to explore the materials and express themselves as they choose.





RHYTHM OF THE DAY

In preschool we have created a routine which is similar to big school but also caters to the needs of our children.

Preschool Opens - Preschool will open from 7:50am everyday.

Morning mat time- Our morning mat time is taught by either Aunty Sareni or Aunty Nia - our Maori and Culture teachers. This mat time is a chance for the children to learn Te Reo Kuki Airani and to practice Cook Island songs and dances. We use this time to teach our children the daily pure that we practice in school - pure kai, pure oki ki te kainga and pure popongi.

Morning Tea/ Lunch Time - Before eating times we say our pure kai and wash our hands. All children bring their lunchboxes and drink bottles to the eating area and share space with their peers. When they have finished we encourage them to put their belongings back into their bags or onto the shelf for later. After lunch we encourage our children to put their belongings into their bags and check that they have their shoes/clothes before going to play so it is ready for home time. When our children are eating they are encouraged to sit to ensure they focus on eating their food and giving them time to rest before using their big energy in our learning environment. We have filtered water taps that are located outside on the carpark side under the verandah.

Afternoon Mat Time - Mat time is a valuable part of our daily routine where we come together as a class and learn. Our children use this time to practice songs that they've learnt, listen to stories, learn about shapes, numbers and the alphabet. Mat time is a great time for our children to understand and how important it is to practice it in preschool before moving into primary. The Kura teachers alternate who teaches this mat time.

Lunch time breaks - From 12pm to 12:30pm our Kura team will have their lunch breaks. This means that teachers from the primary school will cover us and be present with our children. If you need to pass on a message to our Kura team during lunch time or want to do a pick up during lunch time, please let our teachers on duty in Kura know.

Tidy Up Time - A big part of our program is tidy up time and this encourages working as a team and self help skills. We ring the pate and everybody is asked to help tidy up our learning environment before lunch or before everyone goes home.

Daily Routine

7:50am

Preschool Open

9:30am - 10am

Mat Time

Maori/Culture time

10am - 10.30

Morning Tea Time

10:30am - 11:45am

Free Play Time

11:45am - 12.00pm

Tidy Up Time

12pm - 12.15pm

Mat Time

12:30pm

Lunch Time

1pm - 1.30

Free Play Time

1:30pm - 1.45pm

Tidy Up Time

2pm

Home Time



TRANSITION

Transition to School

You will receive an email about your child's transition into primary school prior to their start in Kuriri/Karavia. This will include two documents: Turning 5 and How can I help my child get ready for school.

When your child is 4-4 1/2 years old they will know:

- How to count from 1 - 10 in Maori and English
- Basic colours in Maori and English
- Basic shapes in Maori and English
- How to write/recognize their name
- How to hold a pencil correctly

When your child transitions to primary school you will be informed through email about transition sessions. The transition email will contain information about what is needed before they start school, transition visit times to help them settle in and an opportunity for you to meet their teachers/principal. This year we will be working closely together with Kuriri, Kakerori and Karavia to ensure a smooth transition period for your child. If you have any questions please ask.

This year we have trialled opening Karavia (Year 0) earlier than previous years. We will assess how this has worked before deciding how transitions will look next year.

What will they need moving into Year 0 and 1:

Uniforms are required when they start at big school. They can be purchased from Tuki's in town. PE uniforms are to be ordered through the school so please contact our office to order

School Phone: 23509

Email: office@teukiou.com

Stationary List - This will be emailed to you from the office.

