

# Mātaiao Evaluation April 2024

## What is Mātaiao?

Underpinned by Atua Matua, Mātaiao is an initiative supporting kura and kaiako to implement a Te Ao Māori approach through whakapapa and mātauranga Māori to connect taura to te taiao.

Funded by Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa, Mātaiao is a culturally distinctive approach within the Government's Healthy Active Learning initiative which supports Māori medium education settings.

## Mātaiao evaluation

Te Paetawhiti Ltd and Associates have led the kaupapa Māori centred evaluation of Mātaiao, focused on understanding:

- What is important when implementing Mātaiao.
- What difference Mātaiao has made for taura, kaiako and kura.

**Mā te rongō, ka mōhio, mā te mōhio, ka mārama, mā te mārama, ka mātau, mā te mātau, ka ora.**

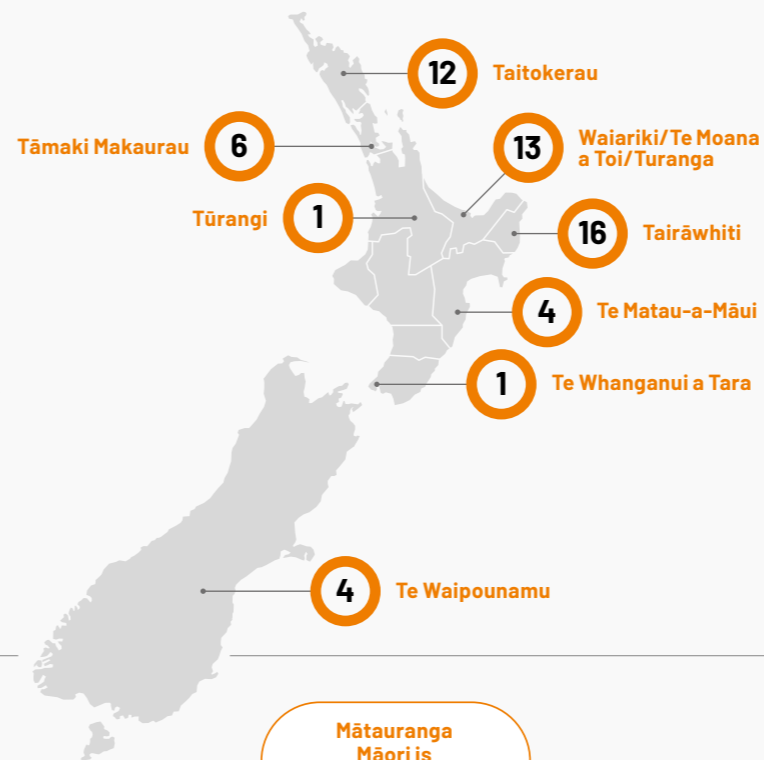
**From listening comes knowledge, from knowledge comes understanding, from understanding comes wisdom, from wisdom comes well-being.**

## Te haerenga (The journey)

- Mātaiao emerged from Tapuwaekura, and Tapuwaekura emerged from the Atua Matua Framework.
- Since 2020, Mātaiao has supported and benefited 57 kura nationally.

**"He tiroiro ki ngā tohu o te taiao, ōna atua, ōna mātauranga, ka whakaarahia hei akoranga mā te tangata."**

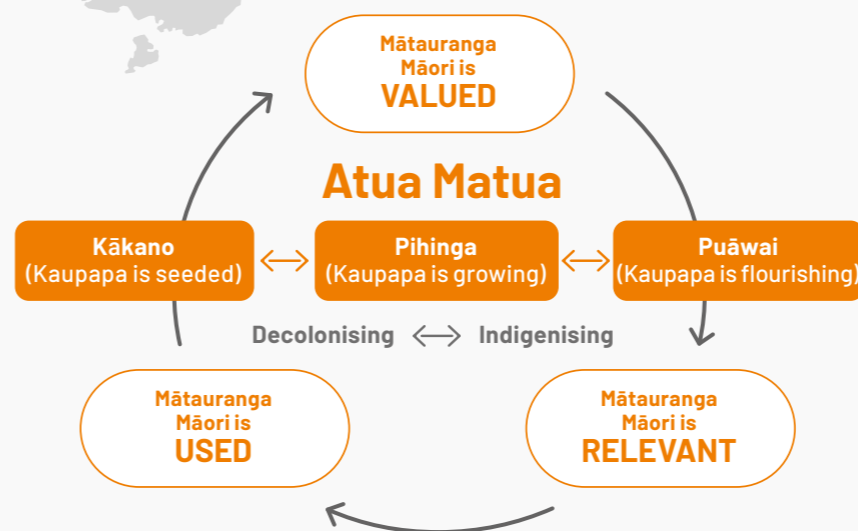
"Mātaiao means to observe the world, that is, observe environmental phenomena and knowledge, and use those as a teaching and learning approach." – Dr Wayne Ngata



## Impact on kura

Mātaiao has supported kura to:

- Build leadership capability and capacity.
- Promote integrated place-based learning.
- Develop taiao-based and iwi centric curriculum.
- Facilitate intergenerational transmission of mātauranga taiao.
- Connect and support whānau and kaumātua to re-engage with kura.



Mātaiao is successfully transforming kura practice and structures.

### Kura shifting from

Gregorian calendar  
RAMs (what you can't do)  
Marautanga o Aotearoa  
Professional development  
Learning in the classroom  
Receiving disseminated knowledge

### Kura shifting towards

→ Maramataka  
→ Tohutaka/Te Kawa Whakatika (what we can do)  
→ Marautanga ā-Iwi  
→ Whakangungu (way of being)  
→ Learning from te taiao  
→ Whaiwhai mātauranga (pursuing knowledge)

### Evaluative rubric

The evaluative rubric below reflects the relationship between time kura have spent engaged in Mātaiao and the level to which the kaupapa is embedded in their practice. Insights suggest that it takes three to five years for kura to embed positive changes resulting from their engagement in Mātaiao.

	Kākano	Pihinga	Puāwai
Description	Kura are more likely to engage in training intermittently and require support to grow.	Kura are committed to Mātaiao and require in depth support to embed the kaupapa.	Kura have a sophisticated understanding of Mātaiao relevant to their context.
Number of Kura	32	16	3
Time	→		

## Impact on kaiako

Mātaiao has supported kaiako to:

- Adopt taiao-centred teaching and learning practices.
- Use mātauranga Māori and physical activity as contexts for learning.
- Collaborate with other kaiako and whānau.

**"Ki a au nei, ka whai take te kaupapa nei ki ia kura. Ko ōna painga mō te katoa, taura mai, kaiako atu.**  
To me, this kaupapa has relevance in every school. Its benefits are benefits for all, both students and teachers."  
Kaiako

## Impact on taura (students)

Mātaiao has benefited taura physically by supporting them to:

- be more active during curriculum time
- use physical activity as a way to engage with their local environments (for example, awa, maunga and ngahere)
- access increased and diverse opportunities to be physically active.

Mātaiao has benefited taura culturally and educationally by improving their:

- taiao literacy
- engagement in learning, including renewed passion for reading and writing
- connection to culture and place
- clarity of purpose and direction
- confidence, belonging and identity as Māori.

**"I have seen my classmates' behaviour has changed and improved from learning outside rather than in a classroom."**  
Taura Tuakana

# Impact story

## Connecting to local knowledge to transform learning

Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Tonga o Hokianga is a small Te Aho Matua kura situated on the southern side of the Hokianga Harbour.

An early adopter of the Atua Matua framework, the year 1-15 kura has been on a transformative journey for five years, focusing on integrating local knowledge and environmental learning into its curriculum.

Tauira have ridden horses, hunted pigs, climbed their maunga Whiria, visited their marae, and learnt how to do hāngī.

Tauira are now more engaged in learning outside the classroom – even choosing to leave devices behind.

“Mātaiao has made it easier for us to think that the classroom is not the only place to learn,” one kaiako said.

“The tauira don't want to stay in the classroom. We see and hear that it is better for them to be in the taiao.”

Being outside in the taiao is also contributing to improved behaviour.

“I have seen my classmates' behaviour has changed and improved as well from learning outside rather than in a classroom,” one tauira said.

Key to Mātaiao flourishing at the kura has been the support of the school's kaumātua, Board, community, and whānau.

“They see the happiness of the tamariki, the learning outcomes of the tamariki, the happiness and support of the whānau,” the Tumuaki said.

As well as an increased connection to te taiao, the kura has also developed a localised curriculum. Each term there is a focus on a mana relevant to their local context and the unique mātauranga taiao tuku iho and Hokianga specific tikanga relevant to that. This change has integrated learning in a way that is relevant and contextualised for kaiako, tauira, and whānau.

The kura has also been supported to take a more strategic approach to employing new kaiako, targeting those who are graduates of the kura or have a background in te taiao.

The increased focus on local knowledge is also leading to the kura building stronger relationships, and seeking the knowledge, of kaumātua and kuia.

“We call upon the kaumātua of this area to feed us with the knowledge, so we know the correct kōrero to give to our tamariki,” the Tumuaki said.

The biggest challenge along the way has been ensuring kaiako feel capable and confident to deliver taiao-centred lessons while also meeting national curriculum standards. However, support and training provided by the Mātaiao team, including new approaches to lesson planning, and keeping safe in the taiao has shifted that. Now, the Tumuaki says, kaiako feels empowered to lead their own growth and keep the kaupapa of Mātaiao flourishing.

“They have learnt the karakia, whakapapa and the taiao as well. The kaupapa is very much alive in our kura.”

