



## Term 1, 2026 Year 5 Learning Overview

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to 2026 to all our returning students and our new families. We look forward to a busy and exciting term with lots of opportunities for learning and personal development.

### Introducing the Year 5 Teaching Team

Mrs Jo McFarlane (Dean) 5JMF

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Your child's homeroom teacher will be your first port-of-call should you have any questions, or queries and can be reached on the above email address or in person at drop off and pick up times. **Teachers are generally available in their classrooms from 8.00am onwards.** If your child needs to be at school earlier than 8am, please note that the library is open, but there may not always be teaching staff present. Alternatively, teachers can be reached by phoning the school office – 07 855 2089.

We look forward to establishing an amazing partnership between students, teachers and parents.

## **Useful things to note about Year 5**

### **Week Ahead**

This will be emailed to Parents and Caregivers every Friday from the School Administrator. It is important that you are receiving this and that you read it carefully, as it has useful information about what is coming up in the week ahead.

### **Learning Conferences**

Learning Conferences will take place in Week 3, on the 9th-12th of February. Boarder's conferences are held on Friday, 13th February. Please book online as soon as possible to get your preferred slot. The link has been emailed to you from the School Administrator. Learning Conferences are a great opportunity for you to get to know your child's teacher, and for the teacher to learn more about your child.

Teachers will be involved in collecting assessment data to inform their teaching and your input as a parent will be invaluable to our staff as part of this process. A short questionnaire will be sent home with your child in Week 2. Please bring this to your conference.



### **Camp**

Camp this year will take place during Week 5, from 23rd - 27th February. On Monday we will be doing activities at school. On Tuesday, we will travel to Ngaruawahia and spend three nights at the CYC Camp, returning on Friday afternoon. Please click [HERE](#) for the camp timetable.

Please click [HERE](#) for the gear list which outlines the necessary equipment that is needed over camp week.

All information including the cost for camp can be found on the school website. This cost will be charged to your account. More specific details including an in-school bike awareness course will be sent home closer to the time.



A camp meeting for **all** parents will be held on **Friday the 13th February (Week 3) at 5.30pm**. We will be outlining the camp programme, expectations and there will be a chance to ask questions.

### **Uniform**

It has been lovely to see our learners ready for learning and smartly dressed in their uniforms. To remain sun-safe, our school hats are compulsory in Terms 1 and 4 and all children must wear their hats during break times. Please help us to return uniform items to the right family by making sure **all items of the School uniform are clearly named**.

## Lunches/Snacks

Named water bottles are important especially during hot weather. Please send a drink bottle along each day. The children will be able to access their drink bottle at any time of the day. We will have a fruit/vegetable break each morning, additional to their morning tea.

Please provide your child with some sliced / peeled fruit or vegetables, or a small container of raisins or other dried fruit. **Please NO NUTS (we are a nut free school).**

## Timetable

This will come home pasted in the diary in the next couple of days. Please check for the days that your child needs to have their library books and PE uniform at school.



You will notice on The Week Ahead that we have labeled our weeks as Week A or Week B. This is to help us run a balanced timetable across two weeks and maximise our resources. For example, there may be PE on a Monday and Thursday in Week A but a Tuesday and Friday in Week B. Bringing gear on the right day will help students to keep organised.

## Homework

All students are set reading homework four nights of the week (Monday – Thursday). In addition to Reading homework each night, students in Year 5 have optional additional homework, which can be completed to assist with their learning in Mathematics and Spelling. This homework will be set by your child's class teacher or Mathematics teacher and will reflect the learning they are doing in class.

At Southwell School, Homework in Year 5 is designed to:

- allow flexibility for learners with differing needs and abilities
- reinforce current learning
- understand the importance of developing routines and managing their time
- share learning with parents.

Homework should be a stress free situation. Tasks should be relatively straightforward and students should be able to complete these independently in most cases. If homework is becoming stressful or students are struggling to work within the time-frames, please contact your child's teacher through the diary or email. We understand that our students learn at different levels and paces. We also understand that our students are busy learners with activities outside of school hours, so contacting your child's teacher helps us to balance the workload.

It is recommended that Year 5 children spend 20 minutes each night reading a book of their own choice. This may also include reading to your child as this helps develop reading

comprehension and fluency. Other optional tasks would be in addition to this suggested reading time.

To develop your child's comprehension of their reading the following short link outlines generic questions that you can ask your child to ensure that they have understood what they have read. They can be used if your child is reading independently, to you or you reading to them. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

To enable teachers to keep track of what your child is reading for homework, we will be setting up routines with their Homework Diaries. More details will come early this term as we begin our learning programmes. The diary includes a space for personal reflection around the [School's Weekly Themes](#).

### **Sport**

Sport is on Tuesday - 3.30 - 4.30pm and Thursday - 2.30 - 3.30pm. Even if it is wet, Sports practice will continue in the coach's classroom. The weekly draw for each code's game will be on the School website under Parent / Sports.

To help your child with their personal organisation, please may they all have a pencil case. This will help them when they move from classroom to classroom for different subjects. Also a set of headphones will be useful, either small buds or bigger ones to cover their ears. We use computers for learning and practice and being able to hear what is being said without disturbing the class is important.

### **Science Footwear**

Please note that children need to bring covered shoes (trainers) on their Science day to ensure they are safe in the laboratory.

### **Learning in Year 5**

Along with the more formal Curriculum areas, many opportunities arise every day where children are able to practice and consolidate skills in interpersonal relationships, managing themselves and developing independence. The focus on these and other important attitudes and values help develop balanced and holistic children who can then take these same skills into other areas of their lives.



### **Reading**

Reading in Term 1 will focus on Reading to children, Reading with children and Reading by children. Structured reading programmes will focus on books used for our Inquiry as well as authentic texts to develop in depth reading comprehension skills and build vocabulary. Children will be encouraged to expand their ability to read on their own to develop reading mileage both at school and home.



### **Just Read**

Southwell recognises the importance of reading for pleasure for all of our students as it supports learning in all areas, as well supporting their well being and essential soft skills (e.g. empathy, understanding, creativity etc...) As such, 10 minutes of Just Read is timetabled into every day to give all students an opportunity to read for pleasure. We still also encourage reading for pleasure at home, as well as some time spent chatting with your child about what they are reading.

### **Writing**

Our writing programme this term will focus on developing the writing process: planning, drafting, editing, proofreading and publishing work. The children will plan to ensure that their stories flow, build stamina to write longer, take responsibility to ensure that their writing is becoming more accurate and present their stories for others to enjoy. We will be developing focused writing based on a single event and elaborating on the details of that event using interesting and engaging vocabulary.

### **Handwriting**

Our Handwriting focus is on starting to join letters to increase fluency. The goal is for handwriting to become "automatic." When your child doesn't have to think about moving the pen, their brain is free to focus entirely on spelling, grammar, and their creative ideas.



### **Structured Literacy**

Year 5's will continue to work on the Structured Literacy programme with their spelling to develop their knowledge and understanding of how letters work together to form different sounds. Discussions and sentence building work will focus on differing types of words and sentences and develop vocabulary knowledge. Steps Web, a computer based literacy programme, will continue to be used to consolidate this spelling knowledge. These will be reinforced with class and group activities in the classroom.

### **Maths**

Year 5 students will be learning through a Structured Maths programme, which will start with a focus on Number - including some addition / subtraction and multiplication /division. Developing knowledge of Mathematical concepts and problem solving strategies to enable children to find solutions to word problems will be a priority. Improving basic facts and knowledge will also be a focus. The Maths Buddy on-line programme will be a part of the class learning as well as being available for children to use outside of school to develop Mathematical skills.

### **Big Idea for Inquiry**

**How we Express Ourselves** in the focus for Inquiry for Term 1. In Year 5 this will focus on identifying role models from various cultures. Finding the right role model is about more than just picking a favorite celebrity; it's a reflection of the core values we hold dear as individuals

and as a community. As our students explore how the figures we look up to mirror the characteristics our society prizes, we encourage them to look inward at their own potential. By identifying and nurturing their unique gifts and talents, children learn that they don't just have to admire "greatness" in others—they can cultivate it within themselves to become a source of positive influence.

The Year 5's will be starting to develop their annual Production based on learning around Role models. This will be a child-centered show with guidance and boundaries set by teaching staff. It is a great opportunity for children to work in groups to develop and present the stories they have heard and to use a variety of Art domains to present some of their learning. Further details for possible props and costumes will be sent home closer to the time. The Production will be presented at the end of the Term.

### **Physical Education – Mr Pickering, Mr Botha, Miss Lovell**

#### *Swimming*

Students will continue to develop their swimming competence by exploring swimming strokes appropriate to their ability level and working toward showcasing their progress at our School Swimming Sports.

#### *Skipping over it*

Students will engage in a variety of skipping activities, ranging from individual to partner and group challenges, using ropes of different lengths. These exercises will emphasise movement, flow, and timing.

#### *Just let me play!*

Students will have the chance to simply enjoy participating in physical activity, whether revisiting a previous activity, discovering something new, or playing old favourites



### **Science – Mrs Voss**

Parents are reminded that students need to wear covered shoes when they come to the Science laboratory. As sandals are worn in Term 1 and Term 4, this is something to remember on the day your child has Science. Shoes used for PE are suitable.

Year 5 students will first have an introduction to safety in the laboratory, as this is a unique environment within the school. We will then launch into a new Science Inquiry under the transdisciplinary theme: "*How We Express Ourselves*." Our focus is **"The Body's Secret Heroes."** We will be getting hands-on to discover how our vital organs function, what threatens them, and why they deserve "Hero Status."

### **Technology – Mrs Bradding**

During Term 1 our students will be exploring what it means to be well fueled for the day ahead. We will learn about the core food groups and how these can be incorporated to create a healthy breakfast that will provide the energy and nutrition required for an active life.

### **Christian Education – Reverend Pickering**

In Term 1, the students will have lessons that explore the basics of the Christian faith, leading up to the core festival of Easter. We will look at who Jesus is and where he fits in the wider Biblical narrative. We will also discuss how this story gives meaning and hope for many people living today.

### **Te Reo Maaori – Whaea Whetu**

This term, tamariki will improve their pronunciation of te reo and enhance their ability to communicate stories through their use of waiata as part of their production journey. We will look at puuraakau (myths and legends) of the Maaori people and how these stories have shaped our nation.

### **Music – Mrs Albery**

Students will be introduced to taonga puoro, traditional Maaori instruments, and their purpose. Students will be learning a variety of different songs and waiata as part of their Year 5 production.

### **Drama – Mrs Albery**

In Drama, students will be building a knowledge and understanding of Drama techniques and their importance when creating characters. This will be transferred into developing stories and characters in their Year 5 Production.

### **Digital Technology – Mr McKay**

This term, Year 5 is getting "digitally sorted"! We are learning how to keep our Google Drive tidy and professional, while also looking at how the internet influences who we look up to. Students will be using Canva to create digital posters that show off the values of their favorite role models.

### **Art - Miss McMaster**

In Art, students have a weekly session and will be learning specific processes and techniques necessary for making artworks. They will keep a record of this work in their personal visual diary. In Term 1 the focus is on line drawing, shading, tone and shape.

### **Library – Mrs Walch**

The focus throughout the year in the Library is to respond to the needs of individual classes and students, with specific reference to developing key **library skills**, encouraging a **love of literature** (which is also supported by the daily Just Read session) and supporting teachers in building up a toolkit of **inquiry skills**, if required.



Each library session will include some time for children to choose and read books and also a short teaching session. Initially, students will be recapping on / learning how to use the library.

We look forward to working with your child this term and seeing their growth and development in both personal and curriculum areas.

Regards

Jo McFarlane (Dean)  
Phillippa Milroy  
Brooke Goodwin  
**Year 5 Teachers**