



## **Term 2, 2026**

### **Year 8 Learning Overview**



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Year 8 started the year with a bang as we embarked on an epic adventure with our school camp. We overcame many different challenges, climbing mountains, exploring caves, and now we are ready to tackle Term Two with all the lessons we have learned. Over the coming weeks there will be many more exciting learning experiences and opportunities for your child to engage in. Self management, independence and perseverance are important skills to develop for life. At Southwell we expect our Year 8 students to take responsibility for their learning, behaviour and to strive to be the best they can be.

#### **School Calendar**

Click [HERE](#) for the Term 2 School Calendar. Please note this is updated regularly so you do need to check for changes.

#### **Week Ahead**

It is important that you and your child look out for [The Week Ahead](#) in your inbox every Friday. It is here you will learn important information about what is happening at Southwell over the coming week.

#### **Homework**

Homework in Year 8 at Southwell ultimately looks like students independently establishing a routine that prioritises reading regularly and completing any set tasks relating to their learning, across the various subjects. Please ask your child questions about what they are doing at school, discuss the books they are reading and help them use their homework time wisely.

#### **Book Week**

Southwell Book Week starts on Tuesday, April 28th. Our visiting author for all students is Donovan Bixley - author and illustrator of a multitude of fabulous books, from Looky Books, through the Maui picture books, Flying Furballs adventures to thoughtful and beautiful illustrated works about Mozart and Da Vinci.

There will be many exciting opportunities to embrace reading during the week - including House quizzes, class-based activities, Library competitions and activities. The culmination of the week is always the excitement of Book Character Day (Friday, May 1st) when students dress up as their favourite book character and come to school. This is always a sight to behold and we can't wait to see it all happen again! Do have a chat with your children about **your** favourite book, book character or magazine growing up. These conversations create interest and excitement - you are their reading role models!!

## Learning in Year 8

### Term 2 Inquiry

Over Term 2 all Year 8 classes will be exploring the theme "Where We Are In Place and Time," with our theme being "On the Move: The Mechanics of Migration." We will be exploring three key lines of inquiry as we work towards a better understanding of migration and its influence on the world:

- **Causation:** Common causes of migration throughout history
- **Change:** Ways humans adapt to new cultures and change
- **Responsibility:** The rights and responsibilities of migrants and refugees



### Reading - Year 8 Teachers

Students will learn how to seek, evaluate and synthesise information, as well as develop the skill of inferring the unknown from the known, in the classroom programmes. Reading tasks will connect with our inquiry to help build a deeper understanding of the topic. They will learn to compare and contrast factual information, as well as appreciate language features used by authors of fiction. The class library times will be devoted to introducing students to new books, learning about reliable sources of information and reading.

### Writing - Year 8 Teachers

All students will be supported to develop their independence in writing and be encouraged to keep their audience in mind in all forms of written communication. The Writing Process will be used to help them craft written language that flows, is well structured and meets a purpose. Building vocabulary, spelling and punctuation skills, editing skills and awareness of 'writing tools' is an ongoing focus for all.

### Speeches

It's that time again and speeches will be a big part of our in-class writing programme in Term Two. All steps of the speech writing process will be taught, with the ultimate aim of each student writing and presenting a speech to their own class, to the best of their ability. Several speech-makers will be selected to share their speech with our syndicate at the finals.

### Mathematics - Year 8 Teachers / Mr Rees-Gibbs / Mrs van Heuven

This term we will continue to learn about Number and explore Algebra as a topic. Your support with ensuring the online Maths Buddy tasks are completed at home, will continue to enhance your child's success in Mathematics. The tasks assigned are linked to the learning happening in class. Please ask your child's Maths Teacher if you are unsure of expectations.

### **Science - Mrs Steffert**

This term, Year 8 students will be taking a closer look at the New Zealand longfin eel (Tuna), focusing on its remarkable life cycle and specialised adaptations. We will investigate the Tuna's extraordinary migratory path across the Pacific and explore the "special features" that allow it to thrive. To enhance our learning, we will be joined by specialist scientists for a hands-on learning experience, giving students a unique opportunity to examine eel anatomy and engage with current research in this field.

### **Physical Education - Classroom Teachers, Mr Norman and Mr Botha**

***Finding my rhythm (Gymnastics)*** - In this unit, students will master the fundamental movements of swing, roll, balance, spring, landing, and locomotion, with a focus on flexibility. They will then use these skills to create their own choreographed sequence to music using various gymnastics apparatuses.

***What's the game plan?*** - This unit focuses on developing defensive and attacking strategies within team-based activities. The unit aims to enhance students' abilities to devise and execute strategies, promote teamwork, communication, and strategic thinking.

***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

### **Technology - Mr Williams - Girls Term 2**

Students will be learning through STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) using a variety of engineering challenges.

### **Healthy Choices- Mrs Bradding - Boys Term 2**

This term in Healthy Choices our boys are looking at 'Where is Dinner From?'. This links into the Year 8 migration-focused inquiry. The boys will examine the provenance of a variety of staple foods and use these different ingredients to cook a variety of dishes with different cultural origins.

### **Christian Education - Reverend Blythe Cody**

Students will be following the Church's season of Easter as it evolves toward the Feast of Pentecost. Coupled with this will be a series of real-life experiences of people adapting to/challenged by issues of Faith in their everyday lives. Each class will begin with "Daily Prayer" in which the classes form to be a student-led worship unit.

### **Music - Mrs Albery**

In this unit, students will learn to read guitar tablature to explore the concept of change through the lens of a "migrating melody." By tracing the journey of a song like *Amazing Grace* across different cultures and eras, students will investigate how human migration influences and adapts musical identity. As they master melodic playing, they will distinguish between the technical demands of practising new TAB, rehearsing for



fluency, and the final performance. This inquiry not only builds practical guitar skills but also connects musical expression to the real-world stories of movement and adaptation.

### **Drama - Mrs Walker**

Students will continue to develop their understanding of dramatic conventions and how they can use them to structure dramatic plays. They will also collaboratively create a performance based on a social issue and utilise their findings to create a performance.

### **Te Reo - Whaea Whetu**

Our ākonga will expand their vocabulary through simple sentence structures. In addition, we will explore the rich history of migration from a Māori perspective and deepen our connection to local heritage through the study of Waikato waiata.

### **Languages - Mrs Grant**

Students explore self-expression through cultural celebrations, using song, dance, stories, and art to understand themselves and others. In Week 4, they celebrate at the Southwell disco, and later join a Seven Sisters celebration alongside Matariki.



### **Art - Mrs Wing**

Year 8 students will create a mixed media artwork inspired by storytelling and the imaginative world of Dr. Seuss. Exploring a range of techniques, materials, and tools while developing their skills and expressing personal ideas.

Through this process, students will make connections to place and consider how artists use creativity and imagination to share meaning.

### **Pottery - Mrs Wathen**

Students will explore advanced pottery techniques while creating imaginative ceramic pieces influenced by storytelling and the playful ideas of Dr. Seuss. Using slab and coil hand-building methods, students will develop their skills, experiment with form, and explore how clay can be shaped to communicate creative ideas. Through this process, students will build confidence with pottery tools and

techniques while expressing personal ideas and making connections to imagination and place.

### **Library - Mrs Walch**

The focus throughout the year in the library is to respond to the needs of individual classes, with specific reference to encouraging a love of literature, inquiry skills, library skills as well as some teaching around mis and disinformation. Each library session will include some time for children to choose their book and read, as well a teaching session.

We aim for each child to have an ongoing reading/listening book for Just Read time (every day after lunch) - the goal being that children read that book from beginning to end. We would love you to support this initiative by chatting with your child about what they are reading.

Thank you for your ongoing support from the **2026 Year 8 Teachers**,

Josh McCabe (Dean)

Sarah Gregory

Candy Hart

Pen Holah

Mark Pearson

Rebecca Stark