

Term 4, 2026

Year 8 Learning Overview



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to Term 4. We find ourselves moving from one action-packed term into another, yet there is something special about this one. It is the final, exciting chapter of our Year 8 students' Southwell journey. To help mark the occasion we have a range of events planned, where we will have the opportunity to celebrate learning, friendship and to reflect on the many memories made together. It is important that our students remain focused, positive and engaged in their learning over the remaining weeks. We thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring your child is being the best they can be.

Calendar and Week Ahead

Click [HERE](#) for the Term 4 School Calendar. Please note - this is updated regularly so please check it often. Please also read the Week Ahead that is emailed to parents every Friday to keep them informed of what is happening at Southwell.

A List of Year 8 Events in Term 4:

(Friday's 'Week Ahead' communication will include these events and all Whole School events)

- **Year 13's Return Visit**
- **Y8 Carol Service and family picnic**
- **Year 8 Fun Day & Social in the evening (we learn dances throughout the Term)**
- **Senior Prizegiving on the last day, Dec 9th**

Athletics

Athletics heats will be held all day on Wednesday, the 18th of November. Our full school Athletics Day is scheduled for Friday, 27th November. We invite you to come along to share in the fun, support your child and be part of the Southwell community. Year 8 students compete in the shot put, discus, cricket ball throw, long jump, high jump, 100m, 200m, 75m hurdles, 800m, 1500m (optional).

Year 8 Assessments

Assessments in Mathematics (PAT and SMART), Reading Comprehension PAT, and Writing assessments will take place throughout Term 4. There are also scheduled testing days for some Secondary Schools.

Devices

A reminder that mobile phones can only be used after 3:20 pm, **to communicate with parents/caregivers**. At all other times, they must remain in students' school bags and be put on silent. Please do not expect your child to reply to messages during the school day. Laptops are to be used as a learning tool only. A teacher will inform parents if there is an issue of misuse.

Learning in Term 4

Inquiry: Who We Are

'Navigating the Journey,' from childhood to adolescence and beyond is the focus of our learning this coming Term. We will learn how our relationships and choices affect our overall well-being. The Lines of Inquiry we will follow include:

- How positive relationships and supportive communities help us navigate change and promote holistic well-being.
- How our choices and actions reflect personal responsibility for our own health and the well-being of others.
- How changes during adolescence influence our well-being, sense of belonging, and relationships.

Connection, Responsibility and Change will be the specific concepts explored through all homeroom subjects over the course of the Term.

Please click [HERE](#) for further information around this.

Reading

We will continue to target individual reading needs and teach students the skills required to understand and interpret what they are reading, as well as to build a lifelong love of reading. To help support what we are doing at school we encourage regular reading at home. Our weekly school library visits will remain a highlight of our weekly timetables. Guided reading of novels, journals, poems, articles and more, linked to the above themes, will provide students with an opportunity to draw on prior knowledge, and to think critically about the purpose and structure of texts.

Writing

Our focus for Writing over Term 4 will be: reflective writing, summarising and synthesising information, letter writing and learning about literary techniques that can be used to enhance their own creative writing. All writing tasks are designed to challenge individual students at their level and to build independence. All students are encouraged to follow the writing process of planning, drafting, editing, revising, and at times publishing. The process of developing ideas, thinking critically and being an effective communicator, are emphasised in the writing programme.

Mathematics

Statistics, Problem-Solving and Revision will feature in our Mathematics programmes throughout Term 4. Maths Buddy will continue to be the platform used for regular homework to practise the concepts taught in class.

Science - Miss McMaster

Ever wondered how high you could jump on Mars, or what drives Earth's seasons and eclipses? In our Year 8 '*Out of this World*' unit this term, we are investigating the forces shaping our cosmos. We will explore the solar system—from the Sun to inner rocky planets, outer gas

giants, moons, asteroids, and comets—to see how gravity governs planetary orbits, weight, and motion. Through hands-on inquiry, we will model space impacts and decode everyday phenomena like day, night, and moon phases.

A reminder that to meet health and safety requirements, students need to wear covered shoes when they come to the laboratory. This can be their black school shoes or a pair of sneakers. If your child wears boots for their sport code, please consider leaving a pair of old sneakers at school so they have covered shoes on the day of their Science lesson.

Healthy Choices - Mrs Bradding

In Healthy Choices lessons this term, the Year 8 girls will look at relationships and hospitality and how these concepts are interlinked. This term's Year 8 Inquiry Topic of 'Who We Are' and the concept of 'Connection' will inform discussions and activities, with a focus on how positive relationships have an influence on well-being.

Starting in Week 1, the classes will continue to have the opportunity to cook in alternate fortnights. Recipes will specifically be chosen to enable the students to prepare simple meals for themselves, their whanau and guests. Towards the end of the term, the girls will use the skills they have acquired to plan and prepare some of the snacks that will be provided for the students to enjoy at the Year 8 Social.

Physical Education - Various teachers

Athletics (Weeks 1-6) - The aim of the unit is for students to participate in a variety of field and track events. Through video, peer, and teacher feedback, students can apply this knowledge to improve their performance.

Swimming (Weeks 7-8) - This unit will see students exploring a range of different sports and challenges within a swimming context.

Just let me play! (Weeks 7-8) - Students will have the chance to simply enjoy a variety of games, from classic favorites to new challenges. While playing, they'll also sharpen their basic skills, deepen their understanding of rules, and refine their tactical thinking.

Languages & Te Reo Maaori- Whaea Whetu and Mrs Grant

This term, tamariki will focus on learning waiata and a local haka as part of our leaving ceremony. Aakonga will also explore Tukutuku panels and their meanings. They will also use their French learning to prepare for the End of Year Social, exploring dance, music, and dining.



Technology - Mr Williams

Students will take on engaging, hands-on STEM challenges that encourage creativity, collaboration, and independent problem solving. Through the engineering design process, students will explore how their design choices and actions can create positive change, improve well being, and make a meaningful difference to themselves and their communities.

Christian Education - Chaplain

This term students will be exploring who they are and where they stand, learning about the concepts of whakapapa, whakaaro, tūrangawaewae and tapu. Students will be invited to consider how their thinking, their relationships and their choices shape a flourishing life.

Music - Mrs Albery

In this unit, students will look into the art of songwriting. They will learn how to create a chord riff as a foundation for their song, explore techniques for writing memorable melodies, and develop their lyrical writing abilities. Through collaboration, students will gain confidence in a creative process, culminating in an original song.

Drama/Dance - Mrs Taylor

In Term 4 students will build on their knowledge of dance elements and choreographic devices to deliver a message through movement pieces they create. They will work collaboratively in small groups to devise and structure movement pieces, performing their different creative motifs to the class.

Art - Mrs Wing

In Term 4, students will focus on building their art skills, learning about mixed media and experimenting with a variety of art materials. Using the work of Dr. Seuss as inspiration, students will explore colour, line, shape and composition while developing more complex painting and mixed media techniques.

Pottery - Mrs Wathen

This term in the pottery room, students will be completing the making and glazing of their pieces. Once these are finished, they will move on to creating their own Dr Seuss book using slab, pinch, and coil techniques. This project links to our ongoing inquiry Topic of 'Who We Are' and the concept of 'Connection', encouraging students to explore identity, culture, and a sense of place through hands-on creativity.

Library - Mrs Walch

In the Library we will be continuing to promote great literature, encourage critical thinking, and reinforce any inquiry skills which may be required for classroom learning. We will also continue to teach around the concept of misinformation (with specific reference to AI) and encourage students to think critically about what they come across online. We encourage students to know themselves as readers (i.e. what they like and don't like, what genres they prefer, what font size they are comfortable reading etc.) This will stand them in good stead for High School. We will also continue to stress the importance of developing a Reading For Pleasure habit. You can encourage this by encouraging your child to read for pleasure every day.

Thank you for your ongoing support. We look forward to having a wonderful final Term at Southwell School with our Year 8s.



Josh McCabe (Year 8 Dean)
Candy Hart
Mark Pearson
Rebecca Stark
Sarah Gregory
Pen Holah

Year 8 Teaching Team