



Term 1 2025 **Year 8 Learning Overview**

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

***"We're off to Great Places! Today is our day! Our mountain is waiting, So... get on your way!"
Dr Suess***

We look forward to working with you and your child, to make 2025 a memorable year and to help them achieve their goals. Listed below are the contact emails for your child's Homeroom Teacher.

Year 8 Teaching Team Contact details:

Kerrie Martin (Dean) - 8KMA

kerrie.martin@southwell.school.nz

Pen Holah - 8PH

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Donna Rudduck (Week 6)- 8DR

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Rebecca Stark - 8RS

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Candy Hart- 8CH

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Mark Pearson - 8MPE

mark.pearson@southwell.school.nz



Upcoming events and useful things to note about Year 8:

The 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.

Diaries

This year, Years 6-8 will not be issued with a School Diary. The majority of communication between home and school is done via email and the organisation of homework is done through Google Classroom. Homeroom classes can post their individual class timetables on Google Classroom and the School's Weekly Themes can be found here [School's Weekly Themes](#).

Komodo

Student wellbeing is central to what we do at Southwell. We have a network of support to help us engage with our students to achieve good outcomes. We add to this network by partnering with Komodo, a wellbeing survey platform that can help us with levels of student wellbeing. It is also another avenue that students can use to 'check

in' with their teacher. We have been using this successfully for the last few years. Wellbeing surveys are sent out fortnightly, starting after Camp, but it will not be compulsory for students to complete these. Here is a link to an [information sheet about Komodo](#).

Learning Conferences

Learning Conferences will take place in Week 3 on the 10th-13th of February. Boarder's conferences are on Friday, 14th 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. A short questionnaire will be sent home with your child in Week 2. Please bring this to your conference.

Specialist classes

Your child will be made aware of their timetable and may need your help initially to get them into a routine. They need to have their P.E. gear and library books at school on certain days. For Science lessons, covered shoes need to be worn in the Lab. It is important for our students to work towards being organised and self-managing.

Uniform and Behaviour (On and Offline)

Please refer to the [handbook](#) for correct uniform details. We have discussed the expectations and [Code of Conduct](#) with our Year 8 students. In our Home Rooms we will be working together to create an Online Safety Agreement, agreeing on specific boundaries that will help maximise in-class learning time. Students have been informed that if they do bring a phone to school it must stay in their bag from when they first arrive at school until the last bell of the day.

School hats are compulsory in Terms 1 and 4. All children must wear their hats during break times. Please ensure your child brings their hat to school each day this Term or leaves it hanging on their hook at school. Please make sure all items of school uniform are clearly named. This is very important.

Sport

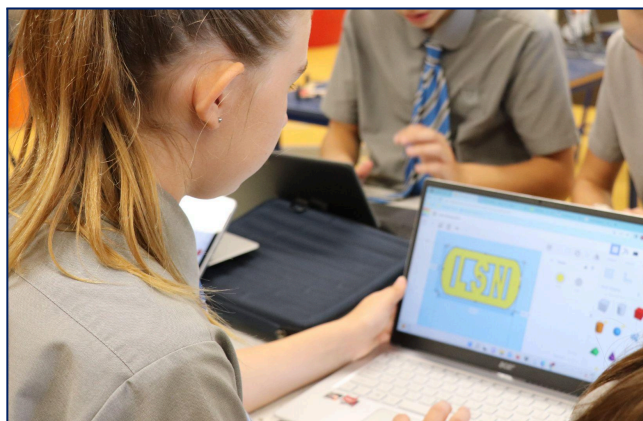
Trials and practices start in week 2. Year 7 & 8 Summer Sports musters are scheduled for Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th February. Once the sports programme is underway sports gear will be required at school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in addition to the days your child has PE. If the weather is inclement, coaches will supervise teams in their classrooms until normal collection times.

Sport practice days and times

Tuesdays 2.30—3.20pm

Thursdays 3.30—4.20pm

NB: there is no after-school sports training in Week 3 (Thursday 13th February) due to Learning Conferences.



Communication with your child

If you are needing to communicate with your child during the school day, we ask you to call or email the office and the message will be forwarded to the Homeroom teachers.

Students do not have access to their phones during the day.

We also remind you that students need to sign out at the office if they are leaving the school grounds during school time. They are required to be wearing their full school uniform.

Homework

The homework guidelines for Year 8 are as follows: Homework as a general guide, should be able to be completed within 45 minutes. We would like all students to read daily for at least 20 mins, complete class related tasks and any specialist/ Maths Buddy tasks set. If, for any reason your child can not / has not completed the tasks assigned, they need to communicate with their teacher.

Stationery

Each student has been issued with a stationery pack to start the year. As teachers, we have also found that it is helpful if students bring in a set of inexpensive headphones to keep in the classroom to assist with audiobooks and text to voice apps on the computers. All stationery to be named.

Brain Food

For those who need it, provision is made for students to have a “brain food break” at 10am daily. Please include a healthy snack of fruit or vegetables in their lunchbox for this. Boarders are able to take extra fruit from the boarding house before school for this reason. A reminder to avoid all nuts and nut products in any foods coming to school.

School Hours

Children will be supervised in the classroom from 8.00am onwards and the school day finishes at 3.20pm. Any children that are not collected by 3.30pm will be supervised at After School Care in the Library.

Camp 2025

Thank you once again for all the kind offers of help. We will have a small team of parents joining us on camp. To those parent helpers, please mark Friday February 14th, 5.30pm on your calendars, as there will be a short Camp Parent Helper Meeting. It will be in 8KMA, above the library.

Please read the information in [this link](#) carefully, as it covers everything you need to know regarding Year 8 Camp. It has a link to the OPC Form, please complete it ASAP- lots yet to come in. Camp Q & A Meeting and Camp Parent Meeting- dates & times.



Learning in Year 8

Inquiry: Our Topic for Terms 1 is 'Who Are We? We are Thinkers, Doers and Leaders'

Over the course of Term 1, Year 8 classes will look at the qualities of a leader and how everyone can learn to lead. By embracing our roles as thinkers, doers, and leaders, we will develop the ways we can contribute positively to the world we are part of; our homes, school, community and beyond.

Writing – Homeroom

The writers in our classes will learn to develop their ideas using the Writing Process: brainstorming, planning, drafting, editing, revising and publishing. They will be taught a range of 'Writing Tools' that they can select from to enhance their writing. Each teacher will work on helping students develop their independence in writing and they will be encouraged to set and reflect on personal writing goals.

Reading – Homeroom

The initial stages of the Reading Programme teachers will be getting to know the students in their class as readers and becoming familiar with their reading habits, behaviours and ability. We will work on developing and building an understanding of the critical role that reading has in communication; reading informs writing and vice versa. Each class will base their learning tasks on a selected novel that is connected to our Inquiry theme.



Mathematics – Year 8 Teachers

Term 1 will involve setting up routines and expectations. Our Mathematics classes are grouped according to learning needs within classes and across the Team. Our focus will be on:

Number The learning will relate to using strategies to solve whole and part number problems. We will endeavour to apply the knowledge to help solve everyday number problems.

Algebra Investigating number patterns and finding and applying rules in number problems.

Library – Mrs Walch

Our wonderful librarians aim to respond to the needs of individual classes, with specific reference to encouraging a love of literature, inquiry skills, library skills and critical thinking. Each library session will include some time for children to choose their books and also a short teaching session. Term 1 will also introduce/recap key library skills.

Science- Ms Voss

Our students will start the year learning how to work safely in the Science laboratory. They will go on to learn about methods of heat transfer and how insulation is important to maintain their own health and well being when in extreme conditions, as may relate to camp and alpine safety.

Technology – Mr Williams

Students will begin the year researching and designing (using Tinkercad) a 2D laser cut tag that represents themselves. We will then move onto individual and collaborative fun Technology Challenges, where the students will follow the design process.

Healthy Choices - Ms McMaster

This term, the Year 8 boys will further develop life skills in our Healthy Choices classes, building on themes introduced in the Year 7 programme. Students will have the opportunity to cook every second week, while alternate weeks will focus on enhancing well-being. These sessions will include examining food choices, managing challenging days, how to be more mindful in our daily interactions and building positive peer relationships. The boys will be encouraged to use a journal and share photos of any meals they prepare at home.

Physical Education- Stand by me

Students will be challenged in a variety of teamwork tasks, focusing on teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, and cooperation while personally reflecting on "What part can I play in this?"

What in the world

Students will explore a variety of national and international cultural games, focusing on transferring their skill sets, including tactical understanding, into unfamiliar games. Reflecting on the question, "How can I use my sporting knowledge in games I don't know?"

Swimming

Students will refine their swimming techniques and reflect on their performance by exploring swimming drills appropriate to their ability level. They will work toward showcasing their progress at our School Swimming Sports!

Christian Education - Chaplain

The Year 8 programme for Term 1 will centre around a series of lessons that will prepare the students for the festival of Easter. This will be achieved through interaction with Biblical story and activities which will aid student understanding of this event in the modern context.

Music – Mrs Albery

Students will experience the practical use of the musical element of harmony. This will be achieved by learning to play chords on the guitar. During this unit of work students will learn the difference between practising, rehearsing and performing.

Drama - Mrs Walker

Students will work collaboratively to create a range of dramatic ideas and learn to represent their ideas theatrically using the conventions of Drama. They will learn about the principles of stage lighting and have opportunities to design and operate their own lighting plots. This term, all Year 8 students will have the opportunity to audition for the 2025 Southwell Opera "Shrek the Musical".



Te Ao Maaori- Whaea Whetu

For the first half of the year, tamariki will explore various concepts of te ao Maaori (Maaori world view) and our place in the world through language activities, waiata and myths and legends. Year 8 students will learn about how some of our local towns and landmarks got their name and the importance of the Kingitanga to the people of the Waikato region.

Languages and Cultures- Mrs Grant

In Term 1, Year 8 *gakusei* will explore the vibrant world of Japanese language and culture — Nihon 日本 and Nihongo 日本語. Students will develop communication skills in both spoken and written Japanese. As part of their learning, they will create a Japanese language book to share with their junior buddy class, fostering connections through language and storytelling. This will also prepare them for Book Week in Term 2. Through this inquiry, we will explore who we are culturally, reflecting on identity, connection, and our role as global citizens.

Art – Mrs Wing

Year 8 students will be working towards creating an Kiwiana inspired mixed media artwork, which demonstrates a variety of techniques, processes and ideas that are used and valued in art. With a focused learning goal to develop their artistic skill base using a range of techniques, materials, tools and technologies.

This term **ART EXTENSION** is happening and is being offered to the Year 8's. If your child would like to be part of art extension please ask them to come into the art room to sign up with Mrs Wing. Spaces are limited.

Art extension will be on a Wednesday afternoon 3:20 - 4:30 pm

Pottery – Mrs Wathen

Students will further explore and expand techniques in clay with pinch, slab and hand building. Students will create artworks reflecting the theme 'Kiwiana'.

Our Guiding Whakatauki- "He waka eke noa." We are all in this canoe together.

This highlights the interconnectedness of all people and the importance of working together for the collective good. Everyone has a role to play and success depends on the contributions of all.

We are looking forward to working with you and your child this year,

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Mark Pearson

Donna Rudduck

Candy Hart

Pen Holah

The Year 8 Teachers