



Saffron Walden County High School

PARENTS' HANDBOOK

2023-2024

**SAFFRON WALDEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SEEKS TO BE
A LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Saffron Walden County High School. We have produced this booklet to assist you with the vital job of supporting your child during their secondary education. In it, you can find information about our curriculum, our pastoral care, and our systems to support achievement. We seek to create an ethos and environment in which all can flourish.

A supportive partnership between the school and the family is a key to success at school for any child and we would ask you to stay interested and involved in your child's education throughout their time with us. Our aim is to ensure that your child makes excellent progress and achieves whatever they are capable of, in and out of the classroom. We are sure you will want to encourage your son or daughter as much as possible. It is vital therefore that you regularly discuss your child's academic progress, especially when progress checks are sent home. In that way, we can build a successful learning partnership between home and school.

We would urge you to make full use of the Student Planner as the best means of day-to-day communication with the school. Homework will be recorded in the planner and asking about homework can often be a useful starting point to discuss progress with your child. This year, we will continue to make use of the Microsoft TEAMS platform for homework activities and for communication from the pastoral team to your child.

Our staff will continue to work hard to ensure all students make strong progress and achieve their potential. We will also make sure that there is an exciting and varied extra-curricular programme. You may also be interested in the way we support student well-being and you can find further information about our 'Crocus well-being' provision on our website.

We look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Polly Lankester', written in a cursive style.

Polly Lankester
Headteacher

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ACADEMIC INFORMATION

SWCHS ACHIEVEMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Saffron Walden County High School has outstanding levels of achievement.

In order to achieve and maintain this, we have high expectations of staff and students.

IN THE CLASSROOM, students are expected to:

- Enjoy their learning! We want our students to be fully engaged in their lessons and we will help them to develop all aspects of the 'Skills Builder' skills and attributes outlined in this document.
- Raise their hand if they wish to ask a question in class.
- Focus on the task in hand, NOT unrelated chat with friends.
- Abide by the seating arrangements directed by the teacher.
- Enter and leave the classroom in an orderly manner.
- Ask questions at an appropriate point, if they do not understand.
- Present their work in accordance with the whole school presentation policy outlined in this document.
- Be in possession of the necessary equipment and books for that lesson.
- Produce work which is the best of which they are capable.
- Produce homework by the stipulated time.
- Contribute towards an environment in which all can learn safely, productively and without distraction.

STUDENT PROGRESS INFORMATION

The home-school partnership is of upmost importance; we aim to communicate progress information to parents throughout the academic year.

- **A parents' consultation evening**
Once a year, parents will be invited to request appointments with subject staff, using the online platform SchoolCloud.
- **Progress checks**
Please see below information about how we will keep parents in each year group informed of students' progress. Please also see later in this handbook more information on Learner Scores and Improvement Codes.

The following will be reported to parents:

Year 7: In the Autumn and the Spring terms, staff will provide Learner Scores and Improvement Codes. There will be a Parents' Evening in the Summer term.

Year 8: In the Autumn term, staff will provide Learner Scores and Improvement Codes. There is a Parents' Evening in the Spring term. In the Spring and Summer terms, in addition to Learner Score and Improvement Codes, each subject will report where students are in relation to the SWCHS end of Year 8 Standard for that subject i.e. whether students are Well above/Above/Meeting/Working towards that Standard.

Year 9: In the Autumn term, staff will provide Learner Score and Improvement Codes. There is a Parents' Evening in the Spring term. In the Spring and Summer terms, in addition to Learner Score and Improvement Codes, staff will report where students are in relation to the SWCHS end of Year 9 Standard for that subject i.e. whether students are Well above/Above/Meeting/Working towards that Standard.

Year 10: In the Autumn term, staff will provide Learner Scores and Improvement Codes. In the Spring and Summer terms, parents will receive a progress check that will include the following for each subject: a learner score (and associated improvement codes), the end of year 11 target grade (the grade that the student should aim to achieve) and the end of year 11 forecast grade (the grade that teachers believe, based on their current work, students are most likely to achieve). The Year 10 Parents Evening is in the summer term.

Year 11: In the Autumn and the Spring terms, parents will receive a progress check that will include the following for each subject: a learner score (and associated improvement codes), the end of Year 11 target grade (the grade that the student should aim to achieve) and the end of Year 11 forecast grade (the grade that teachers believe, based on their current work, students are most likely to achieve). The Progress Check in the Spring term will also include students' mock results. There is also a Parents Evening in the Spring term.

Accessing progress information

These progress checks are accessed via the school's Go4Schools website. Apart from those without computer access, no paper copies are sent home. This electronic system, which is used by many other schools, allows parents to have more immediate and on-going access to progress and attendance information. Please see the instructions on the next page.

The Progress Checks outlined above provide a "snapshot" of student achievement. Go4Schools provides "live" access to students' achievement: teachers may make changes to forecast grades during the year (e.g. in light of performance in particular assessments) and parents will be able to see these changes.

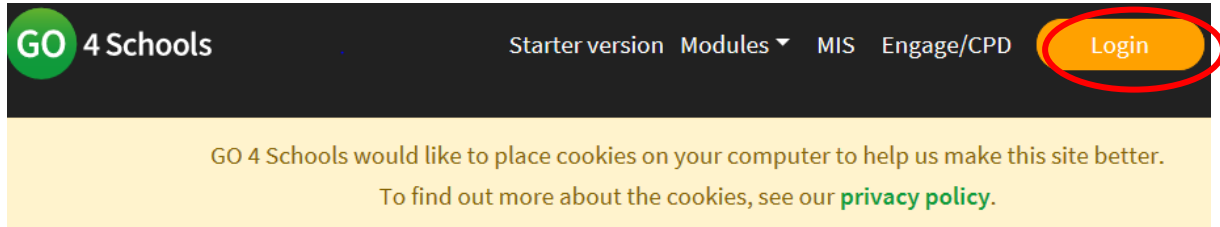
Parents can also view student progress information in the student planners. Students will record progress information and complete a reflection activity following each progress check.

LOGGING IN TO GO4SCHOOLS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

How to set up your Go4SchoolsAccount

If you have not done so already, there are three basic steps which you need to follow before you can access your child's data for the first time:

- 1 First, go to www.go4schools.com and click on Login and select 'Parents Login' from the drop down box in the top right hand corner of the screen



- 2 Click on 'First Time User?' – enter the email address you have given SWCHS as your contact email address and click on 'New password'. A password will immediately be sent to your email address.

First-time User?

If you haven't logged on to GO 4 Parents and Guardians before, type your email address and click the "new password" button. (Please note that you need to provide an email address that has been registered in GO by the school(s) that your child/children attend.)

Email address:

Please note, if you are having problems with your password please contact your child's school. For Data Protection reasons we are unable to divulge or set passwords for parents ourselves.

- 3 Return to www.go4schools.com where you should now be able to log in using your email address together with the password which you have just retrieved from your email account.

Welcome

Welcome to the GO 4 Schools login page for Parents and Guardians. If you have been provided with access by your child's school you can use GO 4 Schools to access their reports and to see their attainment, attendance and, for many schools, their behaviour records too.

Email address:

Password:

Remember my email address

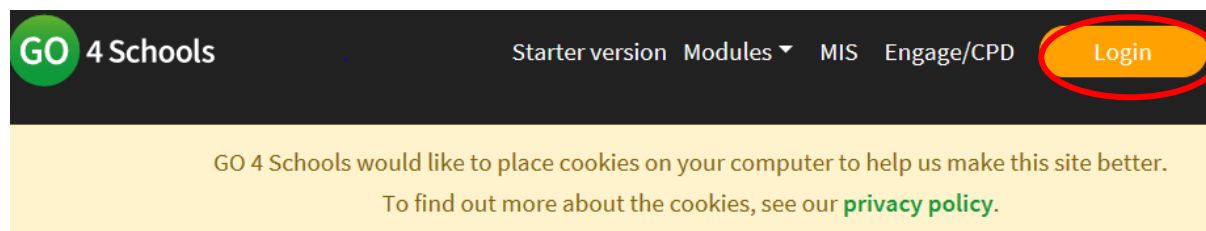
If you wish, you can go to 'My Settings' and change your password.



Logging into Go4Schools to view reports

Please note that the Student Profile pages will not always be available (e.g. while new data is being entered). You will be notified when pages are accessible to view.

- 1 Go to www.go4schools.com and click on 'Login' and select 'Parents Login' from the drop down box in the top right hand corner of the screen



- 2 Where Go4Schools says 'Welcome' enter your email address and password. If you are using a secure computer, you can tick the 'Remember my email address box' for future use, if you wish.

Welcome!

This is the GO 4 Schools login page for Parents and Guardians

In order to login, you will need to use the email address that your child's school holds for you.

If you don't have a password yet, or have forgotten your password, you can request a password reset email using the [First-time User?](#) and [Forgotten your Password?](#) links.

If you are having problems logging on, please contact your child's school.

Important notice about Microsoft Internet Explorer 11

The screenshot shows the login form with the following fields and options: 'Email address:' with a text input field, 'Password:' with a text input field, a checkbox for 'Remember my email address', and a 'Sign in' button.

[First-time User?](#)

[Forgotten your Password?](#)

- 3 When you log in, your child's profile page will open. On this page you will be able to see four sections: 'At a Glance', 'Detailed Progress', 'Attendance', and 'Progress and reports'. To view your child's current Progress Check details please click on 'View Report'.

Progress and reports

Subject	13 Oct 2015	26 Feb 2016	Forecast
Computer Science	-		
English	-		
French	-		
Geography	-		
Maths	-		
Physical Education - Core	-		
Product Design	-		
Religious Studies	-		
Science	-		
Attendance	100.00%	99.06%	99.06%
	View report	View report	

To view the full Progress Check (which will show the Learner Scores and Improvement Codes) click on the 'View report' link at the bottom of each dated column

If you have any difficulty accessing this, please contact sfairall@swchs.net or rpymm@swchs.net or phone the school (01799 513030) and ask to speak to Sally Fairall or Richard Pymm.

HOMEWORK

AIMS OF HOMEWORK:

- To encourage independent learning
- To develop self-discipline and personal organisation
- To reinforce and extend learning in school

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SETTING HOMEWORK

- Students should understand the **purpose** of homework and be able to see that it will have an **impact on their learning**
- Homework should be **linked to learning**
- Homework should be scaffolded and modelled effectively by the teacher so students know **what** they need to do and **how** to do it
- Students should receive **specific and timely feedback** on their homework (*Feedback can be given in many ways – e.g. Whole class feedback, individual verbal feedback or written feedback*)
- Teachers should set at least **one piece of homework per cycle** (Core Subjects with greater lesson allocation may choose to set homework more frequently – i.e one per week).
- At certain times (e.g. when preparing for an assessment), a **longer piece** may be set
- Homework **should not be set for the following day** – however, on occasion, where lessons are timetabled on consecutive days, shorter homework tasks (of 10-15 minutes) may need to be set in order to prepare for learning in the next lesson.
- Students should be encouraged to **note down the amount of time to take on each piece of homework** in their planners
- Students will need to **spend more time working at home before exams, controlled assessments** etc.

PERSONAL READING

Every department should encourage students to read widely and research around topics independently and regularly. All students in Years 7-11 are required to have a book which they are reading in English lessons and it is expected that students will read for at least 15 minutes each evening in addition to English homework that they may have.

TIME GUIDELINES

Across a two week cycle we expect students to be spending the following time on homework tasks:

Year 7	8 - 10 hours a 2 week cycle
Year 8	10 - 14 hours a 2 week cycle
Year 9	10 - 14 hours a 2 week cycle
Year 10&11	12 - 16 hours a 2 week cycle

Subject teachers will follow the time guidelines given for their subject as laid out in the SWCHS Teacher Handbook. It should be emphasised that the quality of students' response to homework tasks is more important than the time taken. It should be noted that at certain times of the year, for example the last week of term, the above guidelines may not apply.

Homework can include a diverse range of activities including: written work, watching specified TV programmes, learning, reading, revision, collecting data, completing worksheets and preparing a talk. In Key Stage 4, the emphasis is on independent self- study and there may be an even wider range of activities expected. This can include tasks such as: revising for tests and exams; preparation for controlled coursework; learning scripts; reviewing work and acting on feedback; instrumental or drama practice as well as written work.

Concerns

If a parent or student has concerns about the quantity or quality of homework being set in a particular subject, they should contact the subject teacher concerned or the Area Coordinator for that subject in the first instance.

If a parent or student has concerns about the quantity or quality of homework across the curriculum, they should contact their child's Form Tutor, Year Achievement Coordinator or Student Support Officer.

**To support homework or to encourage independent study
the following websites are recommended:**

English

British Film Institute <http://www.bfi.org.uk/>

BBC Bitesize <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/>

Englishbiz <http://www.englishbiz.co.uk/>

Sparknotes www.sparknotes.com

Shmoop www.shmoop.com

Lots of full, unabridged audiobooks for children- useful for reluctant readers!

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=full+audio+books+for+kids

A section of the SWCHS website with useful information and links about reading

A punctuation and grammar website which contains clear information and activities

http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar_tutorial/index.htm

A series of pages covering many reading and writing skills

<https://www.bbc.com/education/subjects/z3kw2hv>

A spelling website containing a variety of lists, activities and games

<https://www.spellzone.com/games/index.cfm?wordlist=7359>

A quiz website with lots of useful revision/ learning resources

<https://quizlet.com/198294084/english-ks3-language-techniques-flash-cards/>

The 2018 shortlist for the prestigious Carnegie Book Award for books for young people

The Poetry Society website, which is full of competitions and poetry news

<http://poetrysociety.org.uk/education/>

The Poetry Foundation website, which contains lots of poems for students to read

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems>

Maths	Science
<p>https://hegartymaths.com This is an excellent site and we subscribe to it. This means students will sometimes be set homework on it but should also use it independently for revision.</p> <p>My Maths</p> <p>www.mymaths.co.uk</p> <p>Username = swchs</p> <p>Password = angle</p> <p>BBC Bitesize</p> <p>www.corbettmaths.com</p> <p>www.mrbartonmaths.com</p> <p>www.nrich.maths.org is brilliant for puzzles and problem solving</p> <p>www.mathsguru.co.uk/ is brilliant for KS3 and KS4 students</p> <p>www.subtangent.com/maths/</p> <p>Exam revision A level</p> <p>www.examsolutions.net</p> <p>Revision and practice GCSE</p> <p>http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/</p>	<p>www.educake.co.uk (this is our main homework platform – further details will be emailed to parents and carers)</p> <p>https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize</p> <p>http://phet.colorado.edu/ - physics simulations</p> <p>http://www.gcsescience.com/ - bit clunky but good</p> <p>Content</p> <p>https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/ (good GCSE and A-Level revision for Biology, Chemistry and Physics)</p> <p>http://www.planet-science.com/</p> <p>http://www.chemicalelements.com/</p> <p>http://www.saps.org.uk/</p>

General
<p>YG&T website for this area -</p> <p>http://www.excellenceeast.org.uk/</p> <p>- not specifically English, Maths or Science</p>

THE STUDENT PLANNER

The student planner is more than a homework diary, it is designed to help students:

- **PLAN** their work.
- **MANAGE** their time.
- **RECORD** their achievements.
- **SET TARGETS** for improvement.

Students should:

- Keep all the sections up to date.
- Record all homework set.
- Check their planner every evening to make sure they can meet deadlines for when work is due in.
- Include information which is important to them. Teachers will help with some of the detail.
- Plan work making sure they understand what they have to do.
- Record progress information and complete reflection activity carefully following each progress check.
- Make sure that parents see the planner and sign it every week.

Recording homework in the planner is a key element to the planner. Students should remember to:

- Write down clearly what homework they must do.
- Plan when work is going to be completed.
- Monitor deadlines and ensure they are met.
- Try to do homework in a quiet place.
- Always do homework as carefully as they can.

The Home/School Agreement at the front of the planner should be signed by the student and their parent/carer. The details are as follows:

As a student, I will:

- Work hard to achieve the targets set with my teachers.
- Get involved in school life and opportunities both in and beyond the classroom.
- Show respect to fellow students and all school staff.
- Follow instructions given by all school staff.
- Accept correction without argument.
- Wear my uniform correctly.
- Bring all of the equipment I need each day.
- Behave well in and out of class, always following the community code.
- Take care of property belonging to others and to the school.
- Complete all homework and coursework by the deadline.
- Attend regularly and arrive each morning by 8:30am.
- Talk with my parents and teachers about any concerns in school.
- Seek to make excellent progress.
- Accept the fundamental values of our country: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance.

As a parent, I will:

- Take an active interest in all aspects of my child's school life.
- See that my child attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped.
- Communicate to school all relevant information which may affect my child's work, behaviour, health or safety.
- Notify the school on the same day if, for any reason, my child cannot attend.
- Support the school's behaviour policy and any associated action taken by the school.
- Support the school's policy on homework, provide suitable facilities at home and encourage my child to make the required effort.

- Attend parents' evenings and other meetings at which my presence is requested.
- Use the school's Go4Schools website each term to access data about my child's progress and learning.

SWCHS will:

- Provide a stimulating and safe learning environment for each child.
- Ensure that each child has the opportunity to make progress as a learner and develop as a member of the school community.
- Offer a broad and balanced curriculum to students of all abilities.
- Encourage all students to take responsibility for their own actions, feel proud of their achievements and enjoy their time at school.
- Keep parents informed about their child's progress and general school matters.
- Insist that all students observe the school's Community Code.
- Set homework and provide regular feedback.

SkillsBuilder

At SWCHS, we want all students to become effective learners and to develop a passion for life-long learning. Our 'SkillsBuilder' skills and attributes have been identified by employers as being important both for preparing for life beyond school, and also supporting effective study habits during their time at SWCHS. The core elements of 'SkillsBuilder' are:-



These skills will be developed as students progress through the school, through a combination of careers-related timetable collapses and activities, and increasingly as part of subject-based delivery. All students now have the facility to record their progress and achievement in each skill area using the Unifrog careers package.

THE LEARNER SCORE

At each assessment point during the academic year, students are given a Learner Score in each subject. The Learner Score reflects how effective they are as a learner. The skills and attributes summarised above are embedded in the Learner Score. We expect all students to gain a Learner Score of a 1 or 2 if they are to be successful.

When teachers are deciding what Learner Score to give students, they consider how hard the student is working and how successfully they are demonstrating and developing these 21st century skills and attributes.

1. Your child has an outstanding work ethic and demonstrates outstanding learner skills and attributes.

2 Your child always works hard and demonstrates consistently good learner skills and attributes

3 There are some concerns about your child's work ethic in this subject and/or concerns about the development of their learner skills and attributes (please see improvement codes for detail)

4 There are serious concerns about your child's work ethic in this subject and/or serious concerns about the development of their learner skills and attributes (please see improvement codes for detail)

Code to Improve

Alongside a Learner Score, your child may also be given up to two improvement codes to improve to help them understand what they need to do to become an even more effective learner.

If your child is given a Learner Score of a **2**, **3** or **4** in a subject then the teacher will give them one or two areas to prioritise for improvement. The teacher might also choose to give them a code even if they achieve a Learner Score of a **1**. In this situation the teacher will want to reward your child for being an excellent learner but might also feel they want to give them some feedback to stretch them even further.

To be a more effective learner, your child needs to do the following:

B	Improve behaviour and not disrupt the learning of others
C	Improve quality of GCSE coursework
D	Meet all deadlines
E	Bring correct equipment
F	Get started on tasks promptly and keep going without reminders.
H	Improve quality of Homework
I	Take responsibility for learning and progress and give time to independent work to address gaps
L	Focus on their literacy and ensure they proofread and edit work.
M	Act on marking and feedback
O	Work more effectively when collaborating with others
P	Participate by making more contributions to class discussion

Q	Improve the quality of written work
R	Be more resilient and stick at tasks
S	Use more effective revision strategies
T	Be more prepared to take risks
W	Undertake wider research around the subject
Z	Work harder and give more time, care and attention to tasks.

WHOLE SCHOOL PRESENTATION POLICY

1. All classwork and homework should be dated, headed and the title underlined with a ruler.
2. All work on loose leaf paper should also include the student's name and form.
3. Blue or black ink only should be used for written work.
4. Diagrams and graphs should be in pencil and labelled.
5. Homework should be labelled "Homework".
6. Corrections and crossings out should be done neatly.
7. Correction fluid (Tippex) should not be used.
8. Doodling and graffiti of any kind should not appear in books or on folders.

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

Saffron Walden County High School's mission, which has not changed in three decades, is to be 'a local school of exceptional quality'. We believe an *exceptional* curriculum not only stretches and inspires students to achieve highly, but also ensures they leave school with a depth of academic knowledge and a rich cultural capital. Students make excellent progress and achieve outstanding exam results at SWCHS, but we do not see the curriculum as being just about examination success; subject enrichment is built into our daily offer to students – teachers are passionate about their subjects and therefore always look for opportunities to enrich and deepen students' knowledge and understanding. We aim to exceed national expectations for our provision at every stage and in every subject. We aim to provide a curriculum that allows all students to fulfil their personal and academic potential and provides students with the best possible progression opportunities.

The current allocation of time across subjects is shown in the tables below, which illustrate the number of taught periods across each two-week timetable cycle:

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9):

Years 7 and 8:

	<i>Timetable Allocation (Periods per Cycle)</i>
Mathematics	7
English	6
Science	6
PE	4
PSHE	2 in Year 7 and 1 in Year 8
Computing	3
Geography	3
History	3
RPE	2
MFL (French/German)	6
Technology	3 in Year 7 and 4 in Year 8
Art	2
Drama	2
Music	2

Key Stage 3 - Year 9

In this year, students continue with a broad curriculum to ensure they have a rich and thorough foundation, before starting their GCSE programmes in Year 10. There are also some changes from Years 7 and 8: students have more time for their language choice(s), can study Latin, can choose from a range of Arts and Technology options, and can choose to try a vocational subject prior to making their final GCSE choices for Years 10 and 11.

	<i>Timetable Allocation (Periods per Cycle)</i>
Mathematics#	7
English	7
Science	9
PE	4
RPE	3
Geography	3
History	3
Language	5
PSHE	1
Option 1	3 (5 periods for a second language)
Option 2	3
Option 3	3

A unit of core ICT will be taught within time allocated to Maths

Years 10 and 11 (GCSE)

	<i>Timetable Allocation (Periods per Cycle)</i>
Mathematics#	7
English	7
Science	10 (Students studying Triple Science have extra lessons after school each Friday in Year 10)
PE	4
RPE	3
Option 1	5
Option 2	5
Option 3	5
Option 4	5

In Year 10, a unit of core ICT will be taught within time allocated to Maths

Subject courses are now aligned with the revised National Curriculum, and new examination board specification requirements for reformed GCSE and GCE courses. The detailed course information given in this booklet and on the website is accurate at the time of writing.

MATHEMATICS

The reformed Mathematics GCSE requires both breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding – gone are the days when a couple of weeks of last-minute cramming could secure a good grade! Our scheme of work therefore comprises a five year programme of study planned to ensure that students build up the skills they need gradually and to allow skills learned previously to be applied in new contexts. It is imperative, therefore, that students work consistently and effectively right from the beginning of Year 7, asking questions and completing exercises in class, participating in discussions and conscientiously addressing homework tasks. Our scheme has recently been aligned to the White Rose scheme as we have very similar approaches in pedagogy especially a focus on problem solving.

There will be both small topic tests and larger tests along the way to check up on progress and help us assess whether students are in the correct band, but we view these very much as a natural part of the learning process and not as an end in themselves. We also expect students to support one another with their learning and to help develop a positive culture of support and appreciation in every classroom.

Teaching group arrangements

Students are largely taught in form groups for the first few weeks of Year 7 to give them a chance to settle in. All available data including our own assessment is then used to group students into two parallel populations until the end of Year 7. Each student will be placed in either an upper band, core band, or our much smaller support group. These groups are regularly reviewed to ensure that students are in the best place to enable them to make progress. There is also considerable overlap between the material for each band to ensure a full and fair curriculum for all. The groups are formally reassessed at the end of Year 7 and then they follow the same pattern into Year 8.

Homework

Self-study is an integral part of learning mathematics. Activities set for students to do at home may include:

- Written tasks/ online activities to reinforce concepts covered in class.
- Revision/learning work.
- Problem solving/puzzle sheets.

Parents can help by ensuring tasks are completed on time and offering support as appropriate. Students should be encouraged to use mental methods when appropriate and not to become over-reliant on a calculator.

GCSE

All students study the Edexcel GCSE Mathematics course, currently assessed by means of two calculator and one non-calculator examinations at the end of the course in Year 11. For students in the Higher band, there is also an option to study Further Maths GCSE. This is currently offered as an after school enrichment course for an hour a week plus additional, directed self study.

Equipment

Students need to bring a pen plus a scientific calculator and a geometry set (containing a ruler, protractor, pair of compasses, eraser and pencil) to every lesson.

ENGLISH

In the English Area, we aim to engender a love of learning and literature, inspired by a range of diverse texts. We wish to encourage students to become life-long readers, effective writers, and confident speakers, to carry them through school and adult life.

Teaching group arrangements

Years 7 and 8

Students will initially be allocated to a mixed ability teaching group, or to a smaller support group. These groupings will be reviewed at Christmas. In Year 8, on each side of the year, there is one accelerated group and a support group. All other groups are mixed ability. However, all groups are constantly reviewed throughout the year, taking account of the progress made by individual students.

Year 9

In Year 9, students are placed in groups to ensure the course of study matches the needs of individuals and prepares them as effectively as possible for the demands of the GCSE courses. As with Year 8, there are accelerated groups, mixed ability groups, and support sets. The sets will be determined by students' attainment throughout Year 8 and frequently reviewed based on students' progress.

GCSE

During Year 10 and 11, all students will study AQA GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature. This qualification is 100% examined at the end of Year 11 and there are no tiers of entry; all students sit the same papers for both qualifications. They are also all 'closed book' exams so students must learn quotations to use from memory, rather than having the text to refer to.

For English Language, students will be assessed on their ability to read, understand and analyse unseen fiction and non-fiction texts, and on their ability to write for a range of purposes and audiences. They will also complete a spoken language endorsement, which involves students delivering a speech to an audience, and being asked questions afterwards. Students receive a Pass, Merit or Distinction award for this part of the course, alongside their final GCSE grade. Presentations will be filmed for moderation purposes.

For English Literature, students will study a 19th Century text, an anthology of poetry, a modern novel or play, and a Shakespearean play. Students will be encouraged to purchase their own copies of these texts so they can annotate them in class and use them when revising and learning quotations in preparation for the exam.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse>

Throughout Year 10 and 11, students will complete some assessments in exam conditions to assess their attainment and progress.

Homework

All students should read, fiction or non-fiction, for 15 minutes every evening, in addition to completing the homework set by teachers. This will be designed to enhance or further the learning completed in class and may take a variety of forms such as written responses, questions, research, reading, or revision tasks.

Reading interviews are conducted by the Learning Centre and English staff early in Year 7; students then have opportunities to complete reading responses each term. These activities are designed to increase their engagement and reflection on a text, responding in a variety of different ways to their reading material.

In Years 10 and 11, students should be revising independently, alongside completing any homework set by staff. They should use past papers and their class notes to aid them and spend time increasing their familiarity with the texts they have studied by re-reading and learning quotations.

Parents and carers can help support students in English by reading with them, encouraging them to check their written homework for accuracy, and ensuring tasks are completed on time. Talking to students about what they are reading, and encouraging students to read widely, is hugely beneficial in ensuring students continue to develop both their reading and writing skills.

Equipment

A dictionary and thesaurus are essential items to help improve the quality and accuracy of written homework. Alongside their exercise book, and the texts being studied in Years 10 and 11, all students should always have a reading book with them.

SCIENCE

Years 7 and 8

In Years 7 and 8, students are taught in mixed ability groups for Science. Students cover a range of biology, chemistry and physics topics throughout Year 7 and 8. Each topic covers fundamental building blocks of science that will equip students to make progress in science throughout their time at school, and to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of science in their everyday lives. Students do a large amount of practical work, and quickly become competent at safely manipulating equipment and conducting experiments. Assessment is by short tests at the end of each topic.

Year 9

In Year 9, students have three separate teachers; a specialist in each of biology, chemistry and physics. Most students continue to be taught in mixed ability groups, except for two much smaller support groups, who work at a slightly slower pace. Students cover the final, most challenging aspects of Key Stage 3 Science in Year 9, and indeed are exposed to science beyond Key Stage 3 level by their specialist teachers. Practical work remains a priority in the Year 9 Science course and by the end of Year 9, students should be skilled at conducting more complex experiments with greater independence. Assessment is by tests at the end of each topic, and by larger assessments in the summer term. At the end of Year 9, based on their performance in assessments throughout the year, decisions are made about the most appropriate Key Stage 4 route.

Years 10 and 11

Students in Year 10 and 11 will study the Edexcel GCSE course on the Key Stage 4 route judged to be most suitable. On all routes, students are taught by specialist Biology, Chemistry and Physics teachers.

Our Key Stage 4 routes are:

Combined Science

This qualification is the one studied by the vast majority of students, both at SWCHS and nationally. Students work through biology, chemistry and physics topics throughout the two years, including the core practicals, which are essential parts of the GCSE course, as well as a lot of other experimental work.

Students are assessed throughout Years 10 and 11 by end of topic tests and sit a larger assessment at the end of Year 10. At the end of Year 11, they sit a total of 6 external exams (2 biology, 2 chemistry and 2 physics). The marks for all 6 exams are combined, and two GCSE grades are awarded depending on the overall score. The top grade available is 9/9 and the lowest grade available is 1/1. High grades in Combined Science (7/7+) allow progression to any A-Level Science course.

In Year 10, Combined Science students are taught in mixed ability groups. In Year 11, students are taught in a class with students doing the same tier of assessments (either Higher or Foundation). Students doing Higher assessments can access grades 4/4 to 9/9. Students doing Foundation assessments can access grades 1/1 to 5/5. For most students, the Year 10 assessments give a clear indication of the most appropriate tier. For students who are borderline, decisions are made after the mock exams which are held in November and January of Year 11.

Triple Science

Students on the Triple Science route work towards three separate qualifications, GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Triple Science students work through topics of each science during Years 10 and 11. This includes carrying out the core practicals, which are important parts of the GCSE course, and lots of other experimental work. At the end of Year 11, Triple Science students will do 2 exams in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and the three subjects are graded independently. The workload on the Triple Science route is higher, due to there being a third more content than in the Combined Science course. Triple Science students get the same number of lessons as Combined Science within the main school timetable, but also attend additional lessons after school each Friday in order to make the pace more manageable. Due to the higher pace of the Triple Science route, students are selected for Triple Science based on their performance in Year 9. A Grade 6 in a single science GCSE allows progression to the A-Level in that subject.

Entry Level Science

A small number of students complete Entry Level Science alongside GCSE. This course is more “chunked” than the GCSE course and is assessed by smaller tests marked by class teachers throughout the year. Levels 1-3 are available. Entry Level Science is offered to students who find larger assessments more challenging, but completing the Entry Level course builds up student confidence and many students who have completed this course have gone on to experience success at GCSE.

For further information on the GCSE courses, please explore this link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/sciences-2016.html>

Homework

The majority of science homework will be quizzes which are set using the online platform Educake. Teachers set specific quizzes and students complete these at home and get instant marking and feedback. The class teacher can see how individuals and the whole-class have performed and tackle any misunderstandings that student performance in homework quizzes have revealed. There are online study guides built into the Educake platform which teachers link to a particular quiz. Parents and carers can support students by encouraging them to make use of these study guides and by encouraging them to redo questions that they get incorrect.

As well as standard homeworks being set regularly on Educake, the platform is also used to set revision work before end of topic tests and larger assessments, including Year 11 mocks.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Setting arrangements

Year 7 & 8: mixed ability

Year 9 - 11: mixed ability with some broad banding where possible

Homework

We ask students to do half-termly assessments, where we test listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. Students will need to prepare in advance for these. Vocabulary learning is also an essential part of language learning, and students will be tested on this regularly. We frequently use Quizlet to support student learning. Students often find this a fun way to learn and there are some games and challenges to keep them enthused.

Parents can also really support students with learning new vocabulary. It is particularly important that students are organized and learn as they go along and find which method of learning new vocabulary best works for them. With languages it is much better to do "little and often" rather than trying to cram the night before!

We also have a new Key Stage 3 online platform for French (Allez) and German (Echt) which supports our textbook. Students may be asked to do short reading and listening exercises or practise written and speaking tasks. There will also be opportunities to consolidate key grammatical structures, as well as more creative tasks.

At the end of Year 8 students will have to select which language or two languages they intend to continue with into Year 9. Students who choose Spanish in Year 9 currently follow an accelerated course. As this course is condensed into three years, the Spanish course is only accessible to those who have achieved Above or Well Above in their Year 8 progress Check.

GCSE

At KS4 students have the choice of studying French, German or Spanish to GCSE. They can do one of these or a combination of two of them. Years 10&11 follow the AQA specification.

At GCSE we will test students' ability in Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing, with a terminal examination in all skill areas, (25% of marks per skill). The exam aims to encourage more spontaneity in speaking and there will be a greater focus on grammatical competency, translation and cultural knowledge. From September 2023, we will be testing new skills in reading aloud and dictations.

We also regularly use an online platform both in school and for home use, which enables students to practise their reading and listening skills or to consolidate certain key grammatical structures. Consequently, it really is worth students having their headphones.

HUMANITIES

Setting Arrangements

Mixed ability throughout Years 7 – 11.

Homework

Homework is an integral and important part of all courses. Varied tasks are set and these may be extensions of classwork, preparatory work, research as well as more formal extended written pieces. Parents can help by ensuring students complete homework on a regular basis and helping them to organise their time. Parents can also support students by showing an interest in the subject covered, and in the issues around them.

KS3 (Years 7 to 9)

All students have discrete History, Geography and RPE (Religion, Philosophy and Ethics) lessons. Further details of the courses offered can be found on the school website. Some students might wish to join one of our three Year 8 Latin after school lessons. This allows them the option of working towards a Latin GCSE qualification in Years 9-11.

GCSE

All students take a GCSE course in Religious Studies and must choose to continue their studies in one of History and Geography as part of their options choices. Students who have taken part in the Year 8 Latin course may also choose to take the subject at GCSE.

Students in Years 9 - 11 will be taking the following courses:

Religious Studies:	AQA	100% examination
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Students in Years 10 - 11 will be taking the following courses:

Geography:	AQA	100% examination
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History:	AQA	100% examination
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Latin:	Eduqas	100% examination
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Parents wishing to see more detailed descriptions of these courses should consult the school website or the examination board websites.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

In Design and Technology students combine practical and technological skills with creative thinking to design and make products and systems that meet human needs. We aim to inspire and challenge students to become confident individuals who enjoy learning, make progress and develop the necessary skills to prepare them to become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Setting Arrangements: Mixed ability groups from Year 7 -11

Homework:

Key Stage 3: Homework tasks are set in line with the whole school homework policy to support the work that we are doing in lessons. Homework tasks are embedded into all schemes of learning so that a consistent approach is delivered across the different subject areas within Design and Technology. Typical KS3 homework involves research tasks, preparation and planning for practical lessons and extension exercises to reinforce learning that has taken place in the classroom.

Key Stage 4: At KS4, homework is an integral element of supporting coursework progress across all of subjects and is set in line with the whole school homework policy.

KS3 – Students work in mixed ability groups and follow modules in Graphics, Textiles, Food, and Product Design

KS4 – Students can select Design and Technology subjects from the following courses:

- **Edexcel GCSE Art and Design: Three-Dimensional Design [Architecture]**
60% Portfolio and 40% Externally Set Assignment (to include 10-hour practical exam)
- **Edexcel GCSE Art and Design Textiles**
60% Portfolio and 40% Externally Set Assignment (to include 10-hour practical exam)
- **Edexcel GCSE Design and Technology: Product Design (option to specialise in Timbers or Metals as the main material area)**
50% Non-Examined Assessment and 50% Written Exam
- **AQA GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition**
50% Coursework and 50% Written Exam

The use of ICT and specific Computer Aided Design packages are integrated into all activities and are assessed as part of the GCSE coursework.

All the KS4 GCSE courses lead well into the two courses that we offer at A Level:

- **Edexcel A Level Product Design**
- **Edexcel Art and Design Three-Dimensional Design [Architecture]**

ART & DESIGN

KS3

Art and Design at Key Stage 3 focuses developing student's enjoyment of the creative process and building their technical skills through exploration of thematic projects. Students explore a wide range of exciting media and materials including painting, drawing, sketching, three-dimensional design and construction, clay work, mixed media and animation using iPads. All aspects of each project are taught within the context of Art History, facilitating students understanding of artists, cultures and society.

Equipment

Students receive an A4 sketchbook for classwork and homework. However, they should have pencils (B, 2B) sharpener, eraser, rule, a set of colour pencils and paints.

Homework

Is set every two weeks to develop independent study, extend skills taught in lessons and promote further exploration. Homework is linked to class activities.

KS4 GCSE

GCSE Art & Design

Exam Board: AQA.

60% portfolio 40% externally set assignment.

GCSE Three-Dimensional Design

Exam Board: AQA.

60% portfolio 40% externally set assignment.

The GCSE Art and Design course builds on the creative skills taught at Key Stage 3 and extends students technical understanding of a wide range of processes and techniques. Students explore painting, drawing, print making, collage and ceramic work in depth. Again, understanding of artists, cultures and societies enrich the development of students' work. The foundation year focuses on the acquisition of creative skills necessary to succeed at GCSE.

The Three-Dimensional Design course focuses on the creative design process with a range of three dimensional media including ceramic work, card construction and mixed media work. Within the 3D course students learn about decorative ceramic techniques including slipware, glazing, creating relief and incised surfaces.

Equipment

Students will need an A3 sketchbook, a set of pencils (B-6B), sharpener, eraser, ruler, different colour media e.g., paint, oil pastels, colour pencils. It is recommended that students take advantage of the 'Art kits' offered at the start of Year 9 which include all the necessary equipment.

Homework

Set not more than once in a two weekly cycle and will be used to enrich and support coursework units and exam preparation work.

Notes

- Art Club for all years every Tuesday 3.20-4.30. Art Club can be attended to complete ongoing work or to take part in a programme of activities including painting, printing, ceramics, ICT etc.
- KS4 may use Art facilities at other times through negotiation with their Art teacher.
- Scheduled Wednesday catch up session providing support and advice for Years 10 and 11 to ensure coursework units are completed.

DRAMA

Setting Arrangements

Year 7 – 11 Mixed ability groups.

Homework

Key Stage 3: Homework tasks are set to support the work we are doing in lessons. Tasks could be practical or written work and could include learning lines, finding a prop to use in the lesson, writing an evaluation of their performance or producing a piece of writing in role.

Key Stage 4: At KS4 homework will vary depending on the component the students are working on. Homework will include writing in role/creating a monologue, learning lines, reading scripts, keeping detailed notes on the devising process, research, evaluation of live theatre or practical rehearsals after school.

In Drama, Year 9 is a skills-based foundation year, which prepares students for the GCSE specification to be studied in Years 10 and 11.

There are two after-school Drama clubs, which run on a weekly basis, one for students in Year 7-9 and one for students in Year 10-11. Additionally, all students are invited to audition for the school productions.

GCSE

Eduqas (WJEC) examination board.

Three Components:

Component 1 – 40%

A devised practical performance based on a theme, linked with a practitioner or a genre. Students complete a written account of the practical work. Students can choose to be assessed on a theatre design skill rather than acting. This component is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 2 – 20%

Students perform a scene from a published play. Students can select to be assessed on a theatre design skill rather than acting. A visiting examiner externally assesses this unit in March/April.

Component 3 – 40%

Students will sit a 1.5 hour written examination and will be assessed on their ability to analyse **one** set text as an actor, designer and director and to evaluate a piece of live theatre seen during the course. This is externally assessed in June.

MUSIC

Setting Arrangements

Mixed ability Years 7 – 11

Homework

KS3: Set when appropriate.

KS4: All students are expected to practise for at least one and a half hours per week: this is best done over a series of days. Other work of a self-study nature may include draft composition, performance preparation, research tasks, project work etc.

GCSE

Examination board: Eduqas (WJEC)

Year 9 is a Foundation and skills-building year.

Notes

All students receiving instrumental lessons are expected to take part in an ensemble and these take place on the following days:

Monday: Lower School Choir – Lunchtime
Wind Ensemble – Lunchtime
Concert Band – After School

Tuesday: Orchestra – After School

Wednesday: Intermediate strings – Lunchtime
Brass ensemble – Before school
Show Choir – Lunchtime
Sax Ensemble – Before school
Senior Strings - Lunchtime
String Quartet – After school

Thursday: Intermediate Concert Band – Lunchtime
Senior Chamber Choir - Lunchtime
Jazz Band – After School

Friday: Intermediate Jazz band – Lunchtime
Classical Guitar Ensemble – After school

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Setting arrangements

Students are grouped by ability from Year 7 onwards. This results in a single group consisting of more able students and two mixed ability single sex groups for boys and girls in each half year group. Some lessons, when appropriate, will also be taught in mixed gender groups. The mixed ability groups are generally smaller in number than the more able group but follow the same PE curriculum.

Homework

At KS3 homework will rarely be set but attendance at extracurricular clubs will be strongly encouraged.

At KS4 GCSE students' commitment to extracurricular activities linked to their practical coursework is an integral component of the course.

Theory-based homework will be set once a fortnight and marked in line with SWCHS homework and marking policies.

GCSE

Students follow the AQA syllabus, which comprises two-year course leading to an examination, based on 30% practical ability and 70% theory. **Homework and classroom-based theory work are integral parts of the course as well as attendance at the extra-curricular sporting clubs. GCSE PE students are expected to attend a minimum of one extracurricular sports club each term.**

The ability to perform in a range of sports to a good standard is vital for success at GCSE level (there are choice restrictions for sports chosen).

Notes

The Physical Education Area offers a wide range of sports in the curriculum and an equally wide range of extracurricular opportunities for all students. We strongly encourage and value participation in both aspects of Physical Education. An extensive programme of intra- and inter-school fixtures are a major feature of the PE area along with sports tours, activity weekends and outdoor adventure trips. These are available for students to opt into or be selected for as appropriate to the trip.

The Physical Education Area is staffed by 12 Physical Education specialists, 1 Teaching Assistant and a Curriculum Assistant.

SWCHS currently holds the Sportsmark Gold Award for its Physical Education provision.

DANCE

Key Stage 3

In years 7 & 8 dance will be taught in single sex groups as part of PE lessons, in addition to this, year 7's will take part in dance lessons once a fortnight in their form groups. In year 9 dance is offered as a Hybrid option within curriculum time. We run a large-scale dance production each year in the Saffron Hall; students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are encouraged to be a part of this production. Extra-curricular dance opportunities are offered to students in Years 7 & 8, and we run the Step into Dance programme for years 9, 10 and 11.

GCSE (Years 10 and 11)

Students will study the GCSE course with the AQA exam board. This comprises of several sections including:

60% Practical this is broken down into two sections: **Performance** and **Choreography**.

For Performance (worth 30%) students are required to perform two solo phrases (approx. 1 minute in total) as well as a duo/trio group performance piece (between 3-5 minutes long) For Choreography, also worth 30%, students will select a stimulus provided by the exam board in Year 11 and create their own solo or group piece. Practical work is videoed in Year 11 and is then externally moderated by the exam board.

40% Theory this comprises of a written paper taken at the end of the course.

Students are required to draw on knowledge gained from their practical experiences as well as to study 6 professional dance works to gain an understanding of staging, set, lighting, costume and aural features of choreography.

The course therefore has a 3:2 split of practical to theory work, and homework is an integral part of the course. Students must feel confident in performing and dancing with others. Dance experience is preferable as the practical work has technical elements.

Notes

Dance offers a wide range of diverse dance styles and skills across the curriculum and as well provides many opportunities for students to involve themselves with extracurricular activities, dance shows/performances and theatre visits.

We run an annual dance production where we encourage students from all years and of all abilities to get involved.

Dance is staffed by dance specialists within the PE department.

COMPUTING

Setting Arrangements:

Taught in mixed ability sets.

Homework:

Homework for all year groups is set as per the homework policy. Some homework that is set requires access to a computer. Pupils are able to use the Learning Centre computers to complete this work. They can do this during lunch times or afterschool.

General Information:

Year 9 students can opt to take Computer Science, IT or both subjects. This year gives the students a real taster of what to expect in examination courses studied in Years 10 and 11, whilst developing a love for the subject through a variety of activities.

If the pupils do not take Computer Science or IT as an option in Year 9 they will not receive a qualification in Computing but we have a core provision so that they will experience some Computing throughout years 9-11.

KS4

Computer Science Exam board: AQA

This course is assessed by 2 written exams at the end of Year 11.

Info: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/computer-science-and-it/gcse/computer-science-8525>

Specification: [AQA | GCSE | Computer Science | Specification at a glance](#)

BTEC Digital Information Technology Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) Exam board:

This course is assessed by 60% controlled assessment, 40% exam.

Year 10 – Collecting, Interpreting and Presenting Data – 30% of final grade.

Year 11 – Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques 30% of final grade.

Year 11 Summer term - 40% written exam.

Info: [Digital Information Technology \(2022\) | BTEC Tech Award | Pearson qualifications](#)

Specification: [Specification - Pearson BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Digital Information Technology](#)

Some useful websites:

<http://codingbat.com/>

<http://www.codecademy.com/>

<http://www.scratch.mit.edu>

<https://python.org>

Clubs:

We run a physical computing club on Tuesdays after school:

Year 8 – Sep - Feb half term

Year 7 – Feb Half term – May half term.

We run Competitions for students when opportunities present, so sometimes there will be after school or lunch time sessions for a short period of time – pupils will be informed during lesson times and on their teams when this is happening.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION (PSHEE)

PSHEE is taught through lessons in Year 7 (2 per timetable cycle), Year 8 (1 per timetable cycle), Year 9 (2 per timetable cycle), Year 10 (1 per timetable cycle) and Year 11 (1 per timetable cycle). Other inputs in Years 7 to 11 are made through timetable collapses and inputs during form time. A spiral approach to the curriculum is used whereby students revisit key elements of the PSHEE curriculum throughout their time at SWCHS, in an age-appropriate way. There is planned provision for a range of different activities in PSHEE lessons. Occasionally, appropriate external agencies are invited into school to allow our students to work with experts in particular PSHEE themes. Participation and progress is monitored closely to ensure that all students access their entitlement to PSHEE provision.

The PSHEE programme now incorporates the statutory Relationships and Sex Education content introduced from September 2019.

PSHEE provision is co-ordinated by the PSHEE Coordinator and is taught by internal specialists. External agencies provide expert inputs to some topics. PSHEE is also supported and taught across the curriculum in other subject areas such as RPE, PE and Science.

The PSHEE programme is reviewed annually, but will typically include:

<p>Year 7 SMSC (social, moral, spiritual and cultural): British values, online safety, equality, Neasden Mandir Respectful relationships: incl. consent Mindfulness Careers Education Healthy living: including first aid and masturbation</p>	<p>Year 8 Physical health and fitness Respectful relationships Mental wellbeing Changing body Drugs, alcohol and tobacco Online safety: body image, gambling, harmful behaviour Careers Education</p>
<p>Year 9 Mental wellbeing: incl. suicide Health: incl. sleep and masturbation SMSC: Equality Families Respectful relationships: incl. consent Online safety: rights and responsibilities, pornography Careers Education Computing</p>	<p>Year 10 Mental wellbeing Respectful relationships Online safety: pornography Being safe: laws relating to FGM, forced marriage, honour-based violence and domestic abuse Drugs, alcohol and tobacco: incl. vaping Sexual health: pregnancy, miscarriage, adoption, abortion and menopause, pleasure of sex</p>
<p>Year 11 Drugs, alcohol and tobacco Respectful relationships: incl. pornography Health and prevention: incl. self-examination and screening Sexual health: fertility, menstruation and endometriosis Stress and anxiety support: techniques</p>	

The school subscribes to National Online Safety and parents will receive regular briefings from this organisation covering topical concerns relating to children's use of social media, gaming and the internet.

The School's PSHEE Policy can be viewed on the school website.

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (SRE) PROGRAMME

The PSHEE programme incorporates the statutory Sex and Relationships Education content introduced from September 2019 in Department for Education guidance.

At SWCHS we aim to provide a balanced sex and relationships education programme which combines the emotional, physical, moral, legal and social aspects of sex and relationships.

In addition to the National Curriculum requirements in both Science and Religion, Philosophy and Ethics, we deliver sessions during PSHEE lessons, timetable collapses and follow up Form Tutor inputs as part of our PSHEE programme. Material covered includes healthy relationships, sexually transmitted infections, contraception and pregnancy, and the safe use of social media.

We encourage our students to explore their own attitudes and values providing them with the skills to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner. As we seek to prepare our students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, we regard sex and relationships education as an important part of their learning.

The statutory guidance for SRE retains the right for parents/carers to request withdrawal of their child from specific elements of the School's Sex Education programme. Any requests to do so should in the first instance be sent to the relevant Year Achievement Coordinator and will be followed up by a discussion between the parent/carer and the Headteacher or a delegated senior member of staff. Where a student is withdrawn from school provision, we consider it the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure coverage of the topic missed in school. Please be aware that the statutory guidance also offers students themselves the opportunity to opt back into the school's sex education programme within the three school terms before their 16th birthday.

The School's Sex and Relationships Education Policy can be viewed on the school website.

CEIAG (CAREERS EDUCATION, INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE)

There is a statutory obligation on all students to remain in some form of education, training or employment with formal training until the age of 18. Students therefore experience CEIAG interventions throughout their time at SWCHS, to ensure that they are informed to make the best possible progression choices at the end of Years 11 and 13.

The government published in July 2021 revised guidance for schools on delivering careers education. The school has implemented this guidance, and particularly has worked towards achieving the eight 'Gatsby Benchmarks' now used to define good careers-related provision.

For further information, the School's CEIAG policy is published in the Policies section of the school website. The CEIAG programme is developing all the time and is summarised in more detail in the CEIAG section of the school website.

Key interventions as students' progress through the school include:

- Year 7 – Introduction to the careers programme, SkillsBuilder skills and the Unifrog careers package and 'What's My Line?' experience.
- Year 8 – further exploration of careers options via Unifrog, and development of SkillsBuilder skills; Year 8 options process.
- Year 9 – further exploration of careers options via Unifrog, and development of SkillsBuilder skills; work experience day with parent; Year 9 GCSE options process.
- Year 10 – SkillsBuilder skills development; 'Raising Aspirations Week', which includes a range of in-school careers-related talks and activities; Work experience days.
- Year 11 – Interventions to allow students to make informed choices about post-16 progression, and to assist them in making related applications. Students are introduced to the range of progression options, including school Sixth Forms, local colleges, and

apprenticeships. Students have access to Unifrog which offers bespoke guidance on career options. All students will be encouraged to have a one-to-one guidance meeting from the school's independent Careers Guidance Advisor.

- Year 12 – Rotary Club interviews and work shadowing.
- Year 13 – Progression Week and related activities to support applications to universities, apprenticeships and employment.
- Years 8 to 13 – Students can make appointments or be referred to the school's independent Careers Adviser to receive impartial advice and guidance on course and career options.

As noted above, the school employs the services of independent and impartial careers guidance professional as part of our careers education package with Form the Future CIC. Individual guidance discussions provide structured interventions with individual students or small groups at key progression points. Appointments for students and/or parents can however be requested at any time although provision is prioritised according to need requests can be made through the Student Support Officer in each year group.

There is a fully equipped and resourced Careers Area in the Hartley Centre for Learning, where students can gain access to detailed information about the wide range of careers available. Additional, more targeted, displays, talks and visits are provided for students throughout the school year. All students and parents have access to the 'Unifrog' on-line careers site.

The School also hosts the biannual 'Uttlesford Careers Fair' in Saffron Hall, organised jointly with other secondary schools in Uttlesford. This has evolved into a major careers information event, and offers students and parents the opportunity to discuss progression and career opportunities with a very wide range of universities and colleges, apprenticeship and training providers, and local, regional and national employers. The Careers Fair was held in November 2022. The next event will be held in Saffron Hall in November 2023, managed by the SWCHS careers team. Details of events will be forwarded to parents when available.

LEARNING SUPPORT

What is taught

The Learning Support team reinforces the topics in class, enabling students with learning difficulties to work successfully in any classroom.

How it is taught

Learning Support intervention is carefully planned with subject staff and takes place within the classroom. Some students meet regularly during form time or first thing in the morning for individual programmes of work.

Measuring Progress

Diagnostic testing is a regular part of the process in designing an individual programme for the student. Exam results and test scores are regularly reported to the SEND team and are used for Person Centred Plans.

Homework

The Learning Support team host a Homework club in the Learning Centre at 3.30pm each day. Please encourage students to attend the club if they require extra help with homework etc.

Homework will be planned by teachers with guidance from the Learning Support department. It will be appropriate for the student and should always be completed, although it is recognised that as at school, a level of guidance will be required at home.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP – HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

Please:-

- Attend the Review meetings with your child. All meetings will take place with Learning Support staff.
- Complete and return the Parents views slip promptly.
- Request additional review meetings by emailing or telephoning the SENCO for your year group
- Share any information you may have, including advice from private assessment and work undertaken by private tutors.
- Check your child's planner regularly.
- Ensure that the school bag is correctly packed the night before.
- Encourage attendance to support sessions.
- Contact school immediately with any worries – do not let them grow into major concerns.

A copy of the school SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Policy is available on the website, alongside the school SEND Report.

ETHOS, BEHAVIOUR, PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE

ANTI BULLYING

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We aim to create a culture where the rights of the individual are valued and upheld. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly, consistently and effectively. We aim to be a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Objectives of the Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should understand what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying is repeated and deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is not a one off comment or action”.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/
Transphobic Because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality or gender
- Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet such as social media, email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities
- SEND Where a child's **S**pecial **E**ducational **N**eeds or **D**isabilities is the focus of the bullying.

Your son/ daughter's Form Tutor, Student Support Officer or Year Achievement Coordinator will be able to offer guidance and support in cases of bullying. The Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website.

DIVERSITY at SWCHS

Our approach

We record all incidents of prejudice and report to Governors on a termly basis. Hate Incident Referral Forms developed in conjunction with Uttlesford District Council are used to record all incidents of prejudice around protected characteristics:

- Racism
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender
- SEN and disabilities

Our vision is to end all forms of prejudice at the school and the wider school community.

Racism

We know that some of our students experience racism and that is not acceptable. No student should hear racist language or be subjected to any other kind of racist abuse. Incidents that are reported to staff are dealt with robustly and reported following strict government guidelines. We take a zero-tolerance approach and always use our most serious sanctions for these incidents in combination with further education and restorative approaches.

Curriculum

Our curriculum coverage has always given time to exploring the history of many complex issues including slavery, colonialism and immigration to the United Kingdom. The PSHE and RPE curriculum also cover issues of equality and diversity including current news events, and in English, students study diverse authors including Maya Angelou in Year 8. However, our curriculum is always subject to review and does not stand still. An example of this is that we have now made History a compulsory subject for all students in Year 9, and as a result we will be able to explore key aspects of British, European and World History in more depth. Furthermore, we have asked all departments to audit their curriculum to ensure it reflects modern Britain and celebrates diversity and as well as explaining and exploring inequality.

Terminology: The Language of Equality

Please see the Policies Section of the school website for information about acceptable/unacceptable terms and links to further reading.

Student, alumni and parent involvement in County High's Diversity work

We want to ensure that all students have the confidence and support to call out racism and we hope that our newly appointed Hate Incident Ambassadors in KS4 and 5, our Diversity Allies, our work with external providers and our assemblies will continue to have an impact as we are determined to tackle any intolerance and prejudice. We would expect every student to report any incidents as we are determined that no student should face any form of discrimination or micro aggression at school.

Please encourage your children to contact the Diversity Champions if they would like to join the Allies group within school. It gives students a wonderful platform to really make a difference in the school and wider community.

A number of alumni students have now agreed to become Anti-Hate Alumni Ambassadors. In addition to this, we would like to involve parents in our Diversity work. We would encourage all parents/carers and extended family members who support our goals to join us in our drive to end racism at SWCHS and the wider community.

If you or your children are interested in getting involved in any of our Diversity activities and initiatives, please contact one of:

Paul Singh, Assistant Headteacher; psingh@swchs.net

Tachya Brobbey: Diversity Champion: tbrobbey@swchs.net

Sam Lock: Diversity Champion: slock@swchs.net

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The wearing of school uniform is expected of students in Years 7-11. If there is any reason why a student cannot wear the correct school uniform, then the student should bring a letter from home explaining why and for how long the situation is expected to last. Otherwise students must expect an internal sanction for breach of uniform. A slip will be issued by the relevant Year Achievement Coordinator to any student who is not in full uniform for an acceptable reason. The slip can then be shown to any member of staff who questions the deficiency.

UNIFORM REGULATIONS

Uniform

Special items of school uniform, such as tie, kilt and badge can be bought at Gray Palmers (High Street, Saffron Walden). Trousers, blazer and shirts can be purchased from a range of suppliers.

Please ensure that all uniform is clearly marked with your child's name, not just their initials.

A: Compulsory	B. Optional	C: Choose 1	D: Choose 1
<p>Blazer: Plain black with badge and Year Bar</p> <p>Smart black shoes – low heeled and sensibly styled in the interests of safety - leather or leather effect (heels no higher than 4cm) – no trainers, plimsolls open-toed or boots</p>	<p>Black V necked jumper</p> <p>Outdoor Coat: An anorak is recommended as it can be worn over the blazer.</p> <p>Denim, leather jackets and hoodies must not be worn.</p>	<p>Buttoned up white shirt with collar, with long or short sleeves, tucked into trousers or kilt and school tie knotted closely to the collar with the crest visible</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Regulation white fitted, revere necked blouse with ¾ short or full length sleeves</p> <p>Polo shirts are not allowed</p> <p>Shirts and blouses should be tucked in.</p>	<p>Kilt in Dress McKenzie tartan worn just above the knee with plain black socks or tights</p> <p>OR black trousers – tailored and of suiting material, not tight, stretchy or denim.</p> <p>Approved trousers for girls: Plain black trousers: a choice of four styles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Luke: 'eco uniform' black trousers available from Gray Palmers • Banner: 'Trimley' black trousers available from Gray Palmers • Banner Black trousers with crocus logo available from Gray Palmers • Black zip pocket trousers with adjustable waist,(available from Marks and Spencer)

During the summer term only, **Black Tailored Shorts** may be worn instead of trousers or a kilt. **These should be worn with plain black ankle socks.**

Approved shorts are available at:

Gray Palmer: David Luke black senior Bermuda shorts

Gray Palmer: David Luke black senior (girls) City shorts

Marks and Spencer: Black regular/slim leg shorts (up to age 14)

Marks and Spencer: Collection black cotton rich tailored shorts

Second Hand Uniform

The school has a supply of second-hand uniform which is available to borrow or to buy. Please contact your child's Year Achievement Coordinator or Student Support Officer for further information.

Make up and nail varnish

If worn make up should be discrete. Heavy eyebrows or false eyelashes are not permitted. Nail varnish, acrylic gel or nail extensions should not be worn. Students wearing nail varnish or excessive make up will be asked to remove it.

Jewellery

Students are only allowed a watch and small earrings (one in each ear) either stud earrings or small hoops – a useful measure for hoops is that they should not be able to slide onto the little finger. Facial and body piercings are **not** allowed, this includes tongue piercings.

Any other jewellery will be confiscated, put in a sealed envelope with the student's name, form and the date on the outside, and taken to the Main Office for safekeeping.

If it is the first confiscation for that academic year the item can be collected at the end of the day. If it is not the first confiscation for that academic year the item will be kept in school and will be returned at the end of the following day upon production of a letter from parents requesting return of the item.

In the case of repeat offenders the Year Achievement Coordinator may decide to put additional measures in place.

Personal Property

All personal property should be clearly marked. Students should not bring valuable items into school.

Mobile phones, Smart watches (web enabled or storage devices)

These should not be brought into school; if they are seen or heard on school premises they will be confiscated. They will be taken by staff to the main office for safekeeping.

If it is the first confiscation for that academic year the item can be collected at the end of the day. If it is not the first confiscation for that academic year the item will be kept in school and will be returned at the end of the following day upon production of a letter from parents requesting return of the item. In the case of repeat offenders the Year Achievement Coordinator may decide to put additional measures in place.

Confiscated items

Other items (e.g. clothing which is not part of school uniform) may be confiscated and held in the relevant Year Office/by the member of staff concerned. If it is the first confiscation for that academic year the item can be collected at the end of the day. If it is not the first confiscation for that academic year the item will be kept in school and will be returned at the end of the following day upon production of a letter from parents requesting return of the item.

In the case of repeat offenders the Year Achievement Coordinator may decide to put additional measures in place.

Hairstyle

Students may not dye their hair an UNNATURAL hair colour, and highlights/streaks, coloured braids and dip dyed ends are not allowed. Extreme hairstyles are not permitted. It is important that long hair is well managed. No students may have their hair cut shorter than a barbers' number 2. Students breaking the hairstyle regulations can expect to be placed in Isolation.

These hairstyles are acceptable: braided extensions; weaves; Afros; cornrows; dreadlocks and twists.

If you have any questions about hairstyles, please contact your child's YAC/SSO.

BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE AT SAFFRON WALDEN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

The SWCHS Behaviour Approach

Underpinning principle

At SWCHS we believe that maintaining very high expectations of our pupils and their behaviour is vital in allowing us to set the conditions necessary for our pupils to make excellent academic achievement and progress. We also believe that these high expectations are the *decisive element* in supporting a safe and mutually respectful community within which our pupils can learn and our staff can work.

The SWCHS Behaviour Approach is built upon a foundation of clear routines, systems, and boundaries applied consistently across the school by staff at all levels. It is our assessment that this approach will work for the vast majority of our pupils and support a safe and happy community.

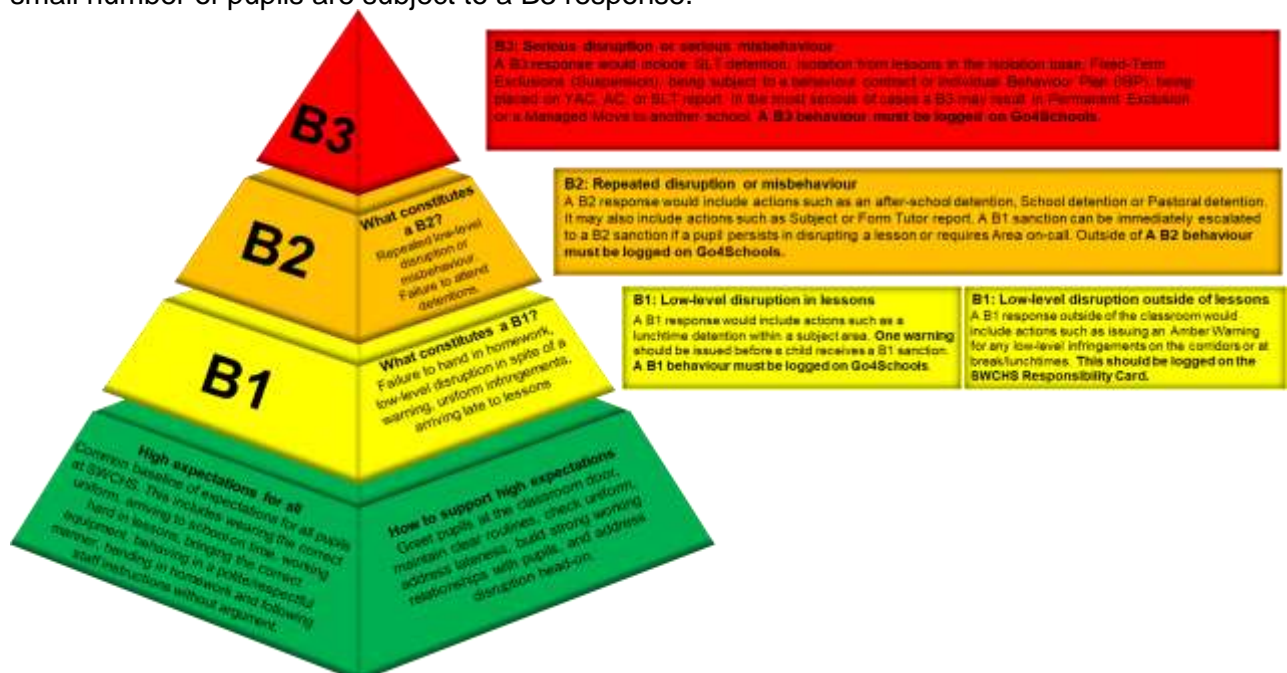
Whilst having very clear structures and systems to support robust behaviour management at SWCHS we also recognise that for some pupils, an element of nuanced judgement is required to ensure that we as a school do not alienate ourselves from those who often need the most support.

A joined-up approach

At SWCHS, we believe that high standards of behaviour should be exhibited in all aspects of school life whether that be within Curriculum Areas such as in classrooms, or within wider parts of the school including in assemblies, on corridors, at break times, at lunchtimes, on the field, and on trips. As such, there is a common set of expectations that apply across the school at all times along with a corresponding response for those who fall short of our expectations. Go4Schools is the centralised behaviour logging system for the school, enabling us to blend the worlds of Curriculum and Pastoral into a single, unified, log so that appropriate monitoring and intervention can take place across the school by Teachers, Form Tutors, Area Co-Ordinators (ACs), Year Achievement Co-Ordinators (YACs), and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

How we respond to poor behaviour at SWCHS

The illustration below outlines the foundations of our behaviour management system at SWCHS with the guiding principle that high expectations will support the vast majority of our pupils to remain within the green slide of the pyramid. As the pyramid ascends from base to peak, the pupils within our behaviour management structures should decrease, meaning that only a very small number of pupils are subject to a B3 response.



High expectations for all

At SWCHS we have a common baseline of expectations for all including:

- Wearing the correct uniform
- Being punctual to school and lessons
- Bringing the correct equipment to support effective working
- Working hard in lessons
- Behaving in a polite and respectful way
- Line up quietly outside of the classroom
- Meeting deadlines
- Following staff instructions without argument
- Following the school rules at all times

To support pupils to meet these expectations we expect staff to do the following:

- Require pupils to line up outside of the classroom quietly before being admitted into the classroom
- Require pupils to line up in pairs if awaiting service from the canteen or pods
- Greet pupils at the classroom door at the beginning of each lesson
- Check uniform upon entry
- Conduct a controlled dismissal of pupils at the end of every lesson
- Issue Amber Warnings for any infringements identified in line with the SWCHS Responsibility Card

At SWCHS we accept that pupils will sometimes make mistakes or get things wrong, therefore, in lessons pupils should receive **one formal warning** before any sanction is issued for low-level disruptive behaviour. This warning should be issued verbally but may also be recorded in a teacher planner, whiteboard or, alternative space for reference.

If a pupil persists in disrupting a lesson in spite of a formal warning or fails to meet a homework deadline, then this constitutes a Level 1 Behaviour (B1) and will require a formal, disciplinary response.

Level 1 Behaviour (B1)

The kinds of behaviours that constitute a B1 sanction are illustrated in the diagram above. Once a formal warning has been issued then a B1 sanction should be logged onto Go4Schools and the pupil informed. Parents will be informed that a new behaviour event has been logged for their child via email.

If, within a lesson, a pupil continues to exhibit repeated disruption or misbehaviour this constitutes as Level 2 Behaviour (B2) and requires the next level of response.

Level 2 Behaviour (B2)

A B2 response represents an escalation from a B1 response as illustrated in the diagram above. For some behaviours, they may automatically represent a B2 response and such decisions can be clarified within the log on Go4Schools.

If behaviour continues to deteriorate, or an action is taken by a pupil that represents serious disruption or serious misbehaviour this would represent a Level 3 Behaviour (B3).

Level 3 Behaviour (B3)

This is the most serious level of behaviour at SWCHS and as such warrants the highest level of sanction. By this point, it is highly likely that YACs or members of SLT would be involved in the response. As with B1 and B2 responses, B3 responses will be logged on Go4Schools and parents contacted. Typical B3 sanctions are illustrated in the diagram above.

Amber warnings and the SWCHS Responsibility Card

In order to support the high expectations at SWCHS across all areas of the school the present system of Amber Warnings will remain in place. To that end, any infringements identified in all

areas of the school including but not exclusively; uniform, eating/drinking, jewellery, and low-level disruption in corridors or at break/lunch times will be subject to an Amber Warning on the SWCHS Responsibility Card. Four Amber Warnings will result in a detention with duration of the detention increasing with every four additional Amber Warnings.

Guidance for parents

Saffron Walden County High School is committed to developing young people who:

- Achieve the highest possible academic standards
- Have high self esteem
- Have high standards of social and moral responsibility

Our community code states that:

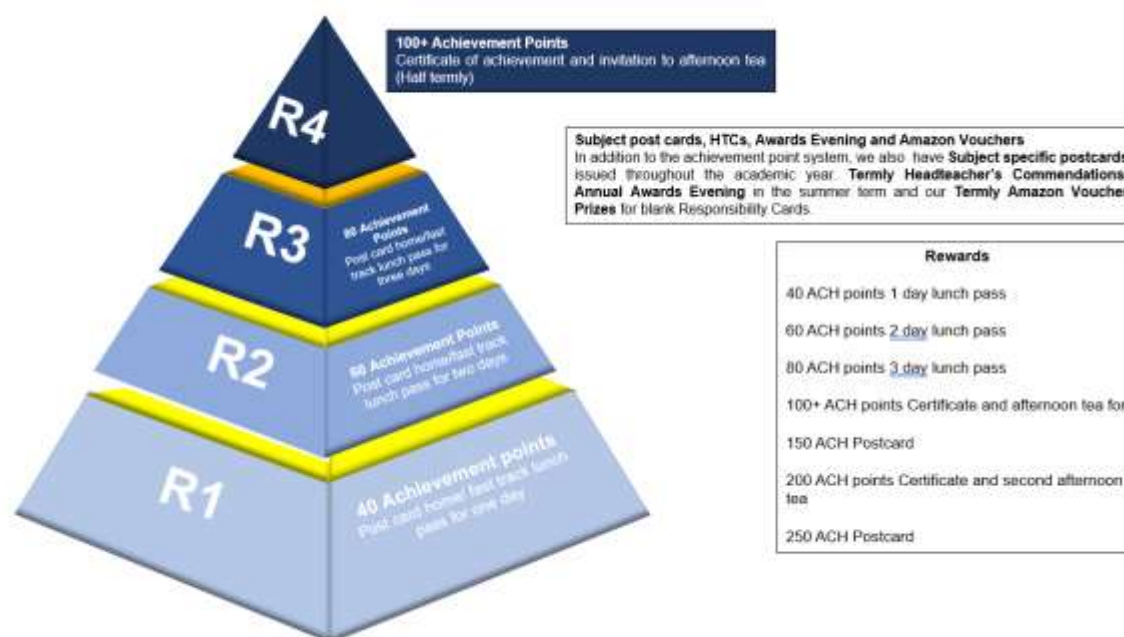
Saffron Walden County High School is a secure and caring community, which encourages a sense of achievement, respect and responsibility for all.

To this end the school employs a balance of rewards and sanctions. It seeks to recognise excellence by positive feedback, merits and Headteacher's Commendations.

Parents will also need to be aware of the school's discipline policy. The school rules are published in the parents' handbook and student planners. There is also a full behaviour and discipline policy, which parents are welcome to see on request.

SWCHS firmly believes that giving rewards raises self-esteem, motivation and has a positive impact on learning and that the vast majority of students respond well to this. This may take the form of an encouraging word or a positive comment - such practice is extremely important and helps to create a warm, supportive atmosphere in which students thrive; over and above this informal encouragement there are certain formal systems:

- Achievement Points
- Postcards
- Headteacher's Commendations
- Award presented at Awards Evening
- Post-Progress Check praise conversation and letter
- Achievement Photographs



Sanctions are used for various reasons. They are often instrumental in modifying an individual student's behaviour. They serve to emphasise the standards and expectations of the school. In some cases they are necessary to preserve the safety and security of all students and staff in the school.

A range of sanctions exists, from verbal admonishment to fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion.

The school places great emphasis on partnership with parents. Immediate contact is made as soon as problems are identified in the hope that we may work together to support the student. Individuals receive support from the school's Learning Support department and, in some cases, the School Counsellor. There is also a school chaplaincy service provided when students and/or their family are in difficulty.

As a matter of policy the school does not link sanctions too closely to specific misdemeanours. However, there are a number of areas to which certain sanctions are usually attached.

Smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes or associating with smokers always results in a letter home and a day in isolation. Repeated offences may result in a suspension requiring a formal re-admission meeting with senior colleagues.

A **Governors' Disciplinary Hearing** may be called to review a student's conduct log in the case of:

- Persistent misbehaviour where a range of strategies undertaken by the school have been unsuccessful
- The learning of others is disrupted by a student's behaviour
- A student's behaviour is having a negative impact on the school community
- A Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) is in danger of failing

Violence towards students, verbal abuse to staff, use of alcohol or solvents and persistent breaches of discipline. **fixed term exclusion.**

Violence towards staff, actions causing gross offence and the use/possession/actual supply or offers to supply illegal substances: **permanent exclusion.**

This is a summary version of the school's Behaviour Policy.

Staff have the right to use physical restraint in certain circumstances to control student behaviour.

The Behaviour Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the policy and guidelines on physical restraint, both of which can be found on the school's website.

DETENTIONS and ISOLATION

Students may be required to complete an Area or after-school detention if behaviour has been poor or work not completed to a satisfactory standard (and the student has not responded to a personal warning or teacher detention).

There is a staged system of such detentions:

Area detention	A detention in a subject area for failure to complete work to a satisfactory standard or for misbehaviour in the classroom. Day, times and location will be given in the letter. Lunchtime detentions are recorded in planners and letters are not sent home.
Pastoral detention	A whole school detention on Thursday in D3 3.20 – 4.20 p.m. with a senior member of the pastoral staff. For persistent lateness, repeated poor behaviour at breaks/lunchtimes or other offences.
School detention	A whole school detention on Tuesday in D3 3.20 – 4.30 p.m. with a senior member of staff. For more serious offences, such as smoking and failure to attend an after school Area or Pastoral detention.
Friday School Detention	A detention after school on Friday 3.20 – 5.00 p.m. with a senior member of staff, for missing a school detention earlier that week. Parents will be notified by telephone of this detention.

Parents will be notified, by letter, of all after school detentions (except Friday School Detention where parents will be notified by telephone)

Isolation	For serious misbehaviour or failure to attend after school detention, a period of between one lesson and two days is spent in the schools' 'Isolation Base'. Students are supervised by a member of staff, and complete their class work, have break and lunch in isolation from other students.
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GENERAL INFORMATION

School Opening times

The official school opening times are 8.00am – 3.30pm. Outside this time, responsibility for students is only accepted if they are involved in events directly supervised by staff. The Canteen is open for breakfast from 8.00am each morning.

Absence

We ask that parents contact the school by telephone or email absence@swchs.net on the first day of absence with an indication of length of absence if possible. Parents should ring/email for every subsequent day of absence unless information has been shared with Form Tutor / Year Achievement Coordinator / Student Support Officer / Inclusion Officer / Attendance Officer.

Following absence we expect students to bring a note from home within 5 days of the absence explaining why they have been away. This should be addressed to the form tutor who will then update the register. The Attendance Officer will ensure all registers are accurate and that an explanation has been given for all absence from school. If we do not receive this information then the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

For any absence of 5 days or longer due to illness, we request that parents provide medical evidence for the absence.

Catching up on work missed

If appropriate, work to be done at home can be arranged for long term absentees. For short term absences, students should catch up on work missed by speaking to their study buddy or contacting the teacher via TEAMS.

Lateness

Students are expected to be in school by 8.30 a.m., ready to enter their classrooms at 8.35 and in their classrooms ready to start work at 8.40 a.m. If students arrive after this time they must sign in at the Reception desk in the main entrance. If no good reason is given, students will be issued with a slip and the period 1 teacher will issue an Amber Warning. Students who receive 4 Amber Warnings across one term will receive a Pastoral Detention.

If a child has a medical appointment and arrives from this in school before 9.45 with a note confirming this, they will receive a 'Present' Mark for that AM session.

If a student is persistently late to school the Form Tutor / Year Achievement Coordinator / Student Support Officer / Inclusion Officer will discuss with parents and may seek to put additional support or sanctions in place.

Application for leave of absence for term time holiday

We actively discourage students from taking holidays during term time. Requests should be made via the electronic Leave of Absence Request form on the school website under attendance.

All holiday leave will be recorded as unauthorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Parents will be notified by letter within 2 weeks if the absence is to be recorded as authorised. A term time absence will only be authorised by the school if there are special circumstances which warrant it. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.)

If absence is taken without a request having been made, parents will be asked to give a reason for the absence upon their child's return to school.

If the unauthorised leave of absence is taken in term time we may refer this to the Child Missing Education (CME) service and they may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (if paid within 28 days) or £60 (if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school. CME can issue a Penalty Notice for any leave of absence which is taken which lasts for at least 10 session (5 consecutive days) irrespective of whether there are existing attendance concerns or not.

Monitoring and Improving Attendance

Year Achievement Coordinators work closely with our School Inclusion Officer to monitor absence and, when necessary, take steps to address concerns. In line with DfE guidance, we expect all students to have attendance of at least 96%.

Attendance is calculated cumulatively across the school year and any student who has attendance of less than 90% at any point in the year will be classed as a Persistent Absentee.

We will work with students and parents where attendance is consistently less than 90% to ensure that this improves. We use a range of strategies including: phone communication to discuss concerns; letters expressing concern or requesting medical evidence; home visits; school-based Attendance Meetings; student rewards to increase motivation to attend.

If attendance does not improve following staged intervention and support then we will refer cases to the Child Missing Education (CME) Service who can call a formal School Attendance Meeting, apply Penalty Notices and can take court action if necessary.

The Medical Room

We are very fortunate in having trained First Aiders throughout the school day. They will look after students if they are ill or injured and will contact you if necessary. This may be if your child is ill and needs to come home or to be seen by a doctor. The First Aiders are only expected to deal with cases that arise during the school day; please do not send students in to see the First Aiders with a known illness or injury – this is the role of your GP.

Leaving School for Appointments

Students may need to leave school during the day to attend a medical or dental appointment. It is essential that students bring a note to explain where they are going. They must also sign out of school at the Reception desk and sign in on their return. This enables us to be clear about who should be in the building in the event of an emergency. Please note that if your child has a medical appointment and arrives from this in school before 9.45 a.m. with a note confirming this they will receive a 'present' mark for that a.m. session (with a comment added stating when they signed in). This is to be strongly advised as this will ensure the appointment does not affect your child's attendance figure.

School Buses

School buses are the responsibility of Essex County Council. Should parents have any query about buses, they should telephone 0345 603 2200

Instrumental Tuition

Lessons are offered by the Music Department on many musical instruments and are usually of 30 minutes' duration. Students are able to take practical exams of the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music. The current price for lessons start at £17.50 per lesson but is dependent on the individual teacher rate. A music Administration charge (MAC) of £25 per student is charged to all students who take lessons.

Children who are entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant may be able to access financial support for music tuition (subject to availability) through a range of bursaries that could contribute considerably to the overall cost. If you wish to discuss this please contact Mr Singh.

If you wish your child to have instrumental tuition, he or she should collect a letter from the Music Department.

Pupil Premium Grant

Pupil Premium is a special additional grant that schools receive to support the learning of certain students in Years 7 – 11.

The PPG (Pupil Premium Grant) brings additional money into schools to address the needs of children from potentially challenging circumstances. In the past, we have used the money given to us for a variety of initiatives to increase the attainment and opportunities of students. You will be sent a support table by SWCHS outlining the support available to your child based on the category of PPG in which they reside.

Students are eligible for support through the PPG if they:

- Are currently eligible for Free School Meals
- Have received Free School Meals at some point in the last six years
- Are children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months
- Are children who have been adopted from care, have a parent in the services, a parent who has died in service or a parent who was in the services within the last five years

Any parents or carers of children who are eligible for support through the PPG will receive information at the start of the school year about the support which can be accessed; this will depend on the reason for their PPG eligibility. Please be assured that this is managed very discreetly in school.

We receive some information about student eligibility from the Department for Education (DfE) before students join us in Year 7 however, the amount of support received is determined by what we as a school declare as part of our School Census.

As such, it's very important that you let the school know if your child is in one of the above categories and you have not received any information from us confirming this and the support on offer. Please contact your child's year office to discuss this.

For more information or to ask about what support you could access for your child, please go to the school website or contact your child's year office.

Support with School Activities

If your child is **not** supported through the Pupil Premium Grant and you would like support with UK-based school trips, field work, curricular and extracurricular activities then please contact your child's Year Achievement Coordinator.

Support with foreign trips

If your child is **not** supported through the Pupil Premium Grant and you would like support with school trips, field work, curricular and extracurricular activities then please contact your child's Year Achievement Coordinator. There may be funding to provide some level of support.

Are you entitled to additional support?

Please see the website – www.essex.gov.uk/educationawards for all entitlement information. Alternatively, please email educationawards@essex.gov.uk with your query or call 0345 603 2200 and ask for Education Transport & Awards.

Free School Meals (FSM)

Free School Meals are awarded to a household for all statutory full time students as well as sixth form students. The qualifying benefits are:

- Income Support
- Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit with an income below £16,190 (no Working Tax Credit)
- Asylum Seekers with a supporting letter from the Home Office
- **There is currently no entitlement for families receiving any amount of Working Tax Credit**

It is important that you claim for FSM if you are eligible, please contact your child's Year Achievement Coordinator if you have any questions or would like some support with an application. Forms are available online on the www.essex.gov.uk website.

Home to School Transport

The policy of the County Council is to provide free transport for children over 8 years old who live 3 miles or more from, and attend, their designated or closest school. In all other circumstances it remains the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child attends school and to discharge the responsibility to transport or arrange transport as necessary. At secondary school age there is currently a charge for this provision.

There is also a low income policy for secondary schools providing extended rights to free school transport. Low Income families are defined as those being entitled to free school meals or in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credits (no reduction for level of income) with an annual household income below £16,190.

Please see the website – www.essex.gov.uk/educationawards for all entitlement information. Alternatively, please email educationawards@essex.gov.uk with your query or call 0345 603 2200 and ask for Education Transport & Awards.

STUDENT SUPPORT

We have the following facilities available to support students who are experiencing difficulties:

A qualified and BACP accredited Integrative therapist: Mrs Beth Robertson who offers individual appointments.

A qualified Psychological Well Being Practitioner, Children and Young Person therapist: Mr Mike Ellen (from Mind in West Essex) who offers individual appointments.

Students can also access a lunch time 'Walk-In' counselling service (available on a Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 13.30 -14.15).

Students can self-refer for a counselling appointment. Parents can also request a referral via their child's Year Achievement Coordinator. The therapist's offer a confidential service to students so cannot automatically discuss the content of the sessions with parents without direct permission of the student. If you have any queries, please contact your child's year office.

A wellbeing coordinator; Mrs Anna Moorhouse who oversees the wellbeing provision in school and runs the following Wellbeing Courses for students in Years 7-11 throughout the academic year:

- **Mindfulness Course**
- **Exploring and Understanding Perfectionism Course**
- **Resilience Course**
- **Mental Health Awareness Course**

Students who would like the opportunity to attend one of these courses can email Mrs Moorhouse directly or speak to their form tutor or YAC to request a place on the course.

All of the above support strategies take place during the school day. If you do not want your child to have access to these services, please inform their YAC at the earliest opportunity.

We run a daily lunchtime 'listening' service from 1.45pm – 2.15pm in Learning Support respectively.

Students from SWCHS also have free access to the online counselling service **KOOTH**. It is a free, safe, and anonymous on-line support for young people

Useful contacts:

Young Minds: Parent helpline is a free and confidential help line for any adult who is concerned about the emotional problems, behaviour or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25. Helpline telephone no. 08088 025544, www.youngminds.org.uk

<https://www.giveusashout.org/> A free, safe and anonymous on-line support service for young people.

Open Door: A local, free, and confidential counselling service for young people living in Uttlesford for ages 13-26 years. Contact telephone no. 07803 178794
OpenDoorSW@gmail.com

MIND in West Essex Counselling Service: A fee based local service offering individual and family therapy. Contact telephone no. 01371 876641 talking@mindinwestessex.org.uk

Essex Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (EYPDAS). Local support for any young people under the age of 24 years or parents who are concerned about drug or alcohol issues. Single point of contact on 08444 991 323, or Text CHOICES to 80800.
www.children'ssocietyeast.org.uk/eypdas/

<https://www.wearethriving.org.uk/about-us/>

WE ARE THRIVE is a community organisation launched in 2018. Based in Saffron Walden, we have both the qualifications and experience of the mental health and wellbeing sector. Offers a wide range of affordable and accessible wellbeing services that encompass mentoring, counselling, training and workshops to help address any mental health issues.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Our first concern is your child's welfare, and therefore there may be occasions when our concern about your child means that we must consult other agencies before we contact you. The procedures we follow have been laid down by the Education Safeguarding Service. If you want to know more about this procedure, please speak to **Mr Blayney**, Deputy Headteacher: Designated Safeguarding Lead or **Mrs McCormick**, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

You should read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which outlines our procedures in full. This can be found in the policies section on the school website.

COMMUNICATIONS

If you have any queries or problems concerning your child's welfare, please do not hesitate to contact their form tutor.

For problems of a more serious nature, please contact the Year Achievement Coordinator (YAC), Deputy YAC or Student Support Officer using the correct year office email address.

Year 7	YAC Deputy YAC Student Support Officer	Mr A Wheeler Mrs A Thacker Ms Stacey Ridgewell	year7office@swchs.net
Year 8	YAC Deputy YAC Student Support Officer	Miss S Gilbert Miss A Hosking Mrs B Claxton	year8office@swchs.net
Year 9	YAC Deputy YAC Student Support Officer	Miss L Coates Miss L Bailey Vacancy	year9office@swchs.net
Year 10	YAC Deputy YAC Student Support Officer	Mr J Millership Mrs T Brobbey Mrs C Chasey	year10office@swchs.net
Year 11	YAC Deputy YAC Student Support Officer	Mrs B Fox Miss F Muir Mrs Kirsty Yarrow	year11office@swchs.net

For any issues concerning specific difficulties relating to a subject/curriculum or setting policy please contact either the subject teacher or the Area Coordinator:

Area Coordinators

English	Miss R Jermy	rjermy@swchs.net
Mathematics	Mr J Dunning	jdunning@swchs.net
Science	Dr M Gwyer	mgwyer@swchs.net
Humanities	Dr R Mills	rmills@swchs.net
Modern Languages	Mr M Snaith	msnaith@swchs.net
Technology	Mr D Bennett	dbennett@swchs.net
Head of Music	Miss C Law	claw@swchs.net
Head of Art	Mrs C Wyman-Smith	cwyman@swchs.net
Head of Drama	Ms A Mcilwaine	amcilwaine@swchs.net
Social Sciences	Miss C Miller	cmiller@swchs.net
Computing	Mrs J Symonds	jsymonds@swchs.net
PE	Mr B Sindell	bsindell@swchs.net
Learning Support	Mr P Heath (Y10-11) Mrs K Pieri (Y7-9)	pheath@swchs.net kpieri@swchs.net

Senior Leadership Team

Headteacher	Ms P Lankester	assistantpa@swchs.net
Senior Deputy Head	Mr M Norman	mnorman@swchs.net
Deputy Head	Mr M Blayney	mblayney@swchs.net
Director of Sixth Form	Mrs A Kennedy	akennedy@swchs.net
Assistant Head	Mrs K Vanderepere-Brown	kvanderepere-brown@swchs.net
Assistant Head	Mr P Singh	psingh@swchs.net
Assistant Head	Mr S Collins	scollins@swchs.net
Assistant Head	Mr M Eversley	meversley@swchs.net
Associate Assistant Head	Miss R Jermy	rjermy@swchs.net
Associate Senior Leader	Mr M Pitt	mpitt@swchs.net

Communication with SWCHS Parents: Protocol

Parents can expect to receive the following written/electronic communications:

- A regularly updated school and Trust website
- A monthly newsletter
- Additional information letters as required to groups or individuals
- The school calendar
- The student planner with spaces in it for notes between home and school
- A handbook for parents
- Progress checks
- Regular articles in local newspapers about student achievements
- Emails about school-based activities, but not spam
- Twitter and Facebook updates

In the case of emergency communication, parents can expect the following:

- An urgent phone call if the incident involves their child in particular
- In case of an emergency school closure during the day, an Intouch message home and a note on the school website
- In case of an emergency school closure before the start of the school day, messages will go out to parents via Intouch, on the school website (www.swchs.net) and on the LA website (www.essex.gov.uk/education)
- An unexpected change of arrangements in clubs, fixtures or trips will be communicated to parents via email/social media

SWCHS can reasonably expect parents to:

- Sign and uphold the home/school agreement
- Read and respond to letters sent home
- Write messages in the student planner to tutors and teachers
- Phone or email the school to arrange an appointment to meet a member of staff
- Contact their child's form tutor or class teacher in the first instance and avoid the temptation to escalate a matter to more senior colleagues until other channels have been explored (see below for further guidance)
- Keep us informed of changes in contact information and personal circumstances which affect their child - this is particularly important
- Send emails directly to staff members, but be sensitive to the fact that the first priority of every teacher is to teach their classes and that frequent emailing can be disruptive and counterproductive
- Respect the work/life balance of staff and restrict emails that require a response to a reasonable working day (8.30am – 6pm), and avoid contacting staff during evenings, weekends and holidays. Parents can always use the 'delay delivery' function for emails
- Raise concerns with an appropriate member of staff, in a polite manner that is likely to achieve a better outcome for your child, rather than making comments about the school on social media

We can reasonably expect staff to:

- Reply to emails, phone messages and notes in the planner within two working days. There is no expectation that a member of staff should reply to any message received during a weekend or holiday until the next working week begins
- Reply using a holding message if more than two days is required to investigate the matter raised
- Use an appropriately formal tone in emails and letters to parents
- Not reply to any email or letter that is rude or aggressive in tone or content, or sent out of reasonable working hours, but pass the letter to their Area Coordinator/Year

Achievement Coordinator to reply on their behalf. Area coordinators/Year Achievement Coordinators may need to seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team on how to proceed.

We expect **everyone** to:

- Be calm, friendly and polite in all communications (including in writing, in face to face meetings, during parents' evenings and phone conversations)
- Have respect for each other
- Set out to build and maintain a positive home/school relationship in the interests of the child

General guidance for who to contact:

	Who to contact:	Examples might include:
1	Form Tutor	Lost items, friendship issues within the form, changes in personal circumstances
2	Class/Subject teacher	Questions or issues that relate to events that happen in the classroom or matters relating to a specific lesson or task, e.g. homework, behaviour sanctions etc
3	Subject Area Coordinator	Matters relating to curriculum provision or longer term concerns about content of lessons, or behaviour in a particular subject
4	Year Achievement Coordinator or Student Support Officer	More serious concerns: e.g. the general progress of a child across a number of subjects, behaviour matters that are not specific to one subject area, to make the school aware of problems/situations arising out of school which may affect your child's learning etc.
5	Senior Leadership Team	If your query or concern has not been addressed by the staff member you have contacted (see 1-4 above)