



**Saffron Walden
County High School**

**Year 9
Options Handbook
2026**

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

Year 9 Options February 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

In the week commencing 2nd March, you will be asked to use your child's SIMS profile to indicate which subjects your child would like to **continue** studying in Year 10. **This will need completing by 9th March**. This is same platform you used when selecting subjects last year. We will write again when this is open for completion.

We hope this booklet, together with the Progress Check that is published this week and the Parents Evening on 26th February, will help inform those decisions. Much of this information was shared with you last year but there is a condensed version again for your reference and to help you and your child make an informed decision.

All students will continue to study English (English Language and English Literature), Maths, Science, Core PE and, for the vast majority, at least two EBacc subjects (Computer Science, Geography, History and a Language).

In addition, all students will continue to follow a Personal Development programme, which includes PSHE, RSE, Careers and finance, Core Computing and Core RPE (but not leading to a qualification in these subjects).

Beyond this, students should consider which of the additional **subjects they are currently studying** would be most appropriate for them to take to GCSE level. We strongly encourage students to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum. This will include the vast majority of students at SWCHS continuing with **at least two EBacc subjects** (from History, Geography, Computer Science and Languages). We advise students to **strongly consider continuing with a language in addition to at least one other EBacc subject**, as this will keep a wide range of future pathways open to them.

Please note that timetabling constraints and rooming capacity mean that we cannot guarantee to accommodate the individual options requests of every student, and we require a reserve choice for all. We will contact parents where this is an issue, or where we feel that course choices are inappropriate for an individual student, given their academic profile. Please be aware that, as we design our timetable in response to curriculum choices, we are unlikely to be able to accommodate late changes.

The Year 9 pastoral team will help to ensure that appropriate guidance and support is offered to those involved in this important decision-making process, if needed. Your child can request a tutorial with a Careers Advisor or discuss possibilities further with Mrs Pieri in Learning Support. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need further explanation or discussion.

Finally, in the section headed "Key Dates", you will find a timetable of the options process, which outlines the school's support mechanism for students and parents.

The current Year 9 are a group of young people with immense potential. We look forward to continuing our work with them and helping all to make a smooth transition into KS4.

Yours sincerely,



Mr M Norman, Deputy Headteacher

Key Dates

- Progress check published w/c 9th February 2026
- Options booklet issued w/c 9th February 2026
- **Year 9 online Parents' Evening: 26th February 2025**
- Options portal opens: 2nd March 2026
- Options portal closed: Monday 9th March 2026

The Core KS4 Curriculum

In Years 10 and 11 students will follow the following core subjects:

Subject	Periods per Cycle
English and English Literature (2 GCSEs)	7
Mathematics	7
Science (separate or combined)	10
Core PE	4
Core Personal Development provision will include Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education, including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE); Careers and financial Education, core computing and core Religious Education (not leading to GCSE qualification for either)	

In Core RPE Students learn about 'Religion, Peace and Conflict'. In this topic we focus on the issues surrounding conflict, including weapons of mass destruction and the Just War Theory. We learn about Christian and Muslim responses to war and views on pacifism.

Students can select **four additional subjects**, each with an allocation of 5 periods per cycle. The vast majority of students will continue to study at least two EBacc subjects (from History, Geography, Computer Science and Languages) and two additional options, which can include additional EBacc subjects, if desired. We also strongly recommend that students follow a creative subject to GCSE level, as skills developed in these subjects' compliment those nurtured in more desk-orientated ones.

Your child will take all their GCSE examinations in the Summer of 2028.

Alternative Provision

Where this best meets their individual learning needs, a small number of students will be invited by the school to follow a Study Support programme in Years 10 and 11.

The English Baccalaureate Performance Measure

The EBacc is not a qualification but rather a suite of qualifications that many educationalists believe gives students the best future opportunities and keeps the most options open for them. Young people's ambition, aspirations, and career thoughts change a lot through these years and so it is important that they do not overly narrow their curriculum at GCSE. Students 'achieve' the 'EBacc' by gaining 9-4 grades in each of the following subject categories:

- GCSE English Language (not Literature)
- GCSE Mathematics
- Two GCSE Sciences – *either* two of the three 'separate' sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) *or* GCSE Combined Science *or* Computer Science with one other GCSE Science (but where at least two have been studied)
- Either GCSE Geography *or* GCSE History
- A GCSE in a modern or ancient foreign language: at SWCHS, French, German, Spanish or Latin count

At SWCHS, the majority of students achieve the EBacc.

Further Support

Students and parents have online access to 'Unifrog', the school's careers guidance package. Students can research preferred career paths, and which qualifications are most likely to support progression into a particular career. This can be found at: <https://www.unifrog.org/>

OPTION SUBJECT DETAILS

GEOGRAPHY

For further information contact: Mr C McConnaughie: CMcConnaughie@swchs.net

Examination Board: AQA

The course is assessed by examination but includes some compulsory fieldwork in preparation for the final examination. Students will undertake local fieldwork in Saffron Walden to investigate the impact of the new housing on the town. They will also investigate coastal management in Walton on the Naze and Clacton on Sea.

Year 10 & 11 content

Living World

This unit focuses on the natural world around us and the reasons why ecosystems are different all around the world. There will be special attention paid to the Amazon Rainforest and the Sonoran Desert in Arizona as students grapple with the issues facing these areas and how they can be developed in a sustainable way.

Urban Issues and Challenges

In this unit there will be a focus on London and Mumbai as students begin to search for an answer to the question: can a city ever be sustainable? This unit will involve some compulsory fieldwork undertaken in Saffron Walden.

The Challenge of Natural Hazards

This unit looks at the array of natural hazards faced by people globally, before looking at examples of recent earthquakes and atmospheric hazards. It also considers the natural and human factors causing climate change and encourages thinking behind ways of managing this global issue.

The Changing Economic World

We will be thinking about the indicators which show development and the differences between the quality of life of people. Linking with the studies of the UK, students will focus their attention to the future of the UK economy, tracking past developments and changes to project future trends and global links.

Physical Landscapes in the UK

Students will begin to look carefully at the coastal and glacial landscapes around the UK. During this unit, students will undertake another piece of compulsory fieldwork for the GCSE at Clacton-on-Sea.

Resource Management

Students look at the challenges surrounding food, water and energy. They will consider how energy can be managed sustainably to meet the demands of a growing population.

HISTORY

For further information contact: Mrs Hesketh – jhesketh@swchs.net

Examination Board: AQA

The course comprises two written exams.

Year 10 content

Britain: Migration, Empire and the people, c.790-Present Day

In this topic we study how the identity of the people of Britain has been shaped by their interaction with the wider world. Students will learn about: invasions and conquests (e.g., Viking invasions); our relationship with Europe and the wider world (e.g., Britain's role in slavery); the ebb and flow of peoples into and out of Britain, their motives and achievements (e.g., the foundation of the USA and the Windrush generation). Students will also study the causes, impact, and legacy of Empire (e.g., on Egypt, South Africa and India) and the retreat from Empire and decolonisation (e.g., Gandhi in India and Nkrumah in Ghana).

The Elizabethan Age, 1558 – 1603

In this topic we study the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. We look at her character and image, how she attempted to solve her problems and how she established a 'Golden Age' in culture and 'Gloriana' in defeating the Spanish Armada. This topic also includes a study of a 'historic environment': this will involve students investigating a specific site such as a Tudor house, castle, palace, battlefield etc.

Year 11 content

Germany, 1890–1945

In this topic we study a turbulent period which shaped not only the twentieth century but many aspects of our world today. We study: the First World War and the German revolution which overthrew Germany's emperor in 1918; the Great Depression and the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party after 1929. We finish the unit by exploring life in Nazi Germany and how the Nazis used a diabolical mixture of terror and propaganda to maintain their power. We finish the course with the Second World

The Cold War between the East and West, 1945–1972

In this topic we study the 'Cold War' between capitalism and communism, focusing on the conflict between the USA and the USSR. We begin by looking at the end of the Second World War: the effect of the dropping of the first atom bomb and the division of Europe into capitalist and communist countries separated by the 'Iron Curtain'. We then go on to study the development of the Cold War: the significance of the Communist Revolution in China; the Korean War; the Vietnam War; the Arms Race and the Space Race. We then finish with a study of the transformation of the Cold War: the Berlin Wall and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

For further information contact: Mrs Popple apopple@swchs.net

Exam Board: AQA 8062

Assessment

Written exam 100%

2 papers (1 hour 45 mins each)

Paper 1: Study of Religion (Christianity and Islam)

- Christian Beliefs (including the nature of God, the Trinity, the nature of Jesus, the significance of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, understanding salvation, Judgement Day, the origin of sin, the problem of evil)
- Christian Practices (including diversity in worship, types and importance of prayer, celebrating Christmas and Easter, understanding the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, the contrasts in pilgrimage, understanding the role of mission and evangelism in a Christian's life today, the challenges Christians face today: persecution and reconciliation).
- Islam Beliefs (including life of Muhammad, Sunni and Shi'a core beliefs, the role of the Imamate, the importance of angels, the role of the prophets and belief in the afterlife)
- Islam Practices (including the Five Pillars, festivals such as Id-ul-Fitr and Ashura, the importance of fasting, how zakah (charity) is used to support Muslims around the world and the spiritual impact of the Hajj)

Paper 2: Thematic Studies (including comparing Christian and Muslim teachings on the topics)

- Theme A: Relationships and the family (including how family has changed, beliefs about marriage, the diverse views about issues such as homosexuality, divorce and contraception)
- Theme B: Religion and Life (including the origins of the universe/human life/animal life, challenges from science such as evolution, the sanctity of life, ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia, diverse views about the afterlife)
- Theme D: Theme F: Religion, peace and conflict (including peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, causes of war, pacifism, responses to war and to the victims of war, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism)
- Theme E: Religion, Crime and Punishment (including types of crime, causes of crime, corporal punishment, capital punishment and forgiveness)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

For further information contact: Mr Laight mlaight@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA 8525

Computer Science requires high levels of proficiency in Maths. We therefore recommend students to be forecast an 'Above' as their Forecast Attainment Band in Maths in their latest Progress Check to continue with Computer Science. We will contact parents where this is an issue, or where we feel that course choices are inappropriate for an individual student, given their academic profile

The course comprises 2 written exams – each paper carries an equal weighting.

Paper 1: Students will be asked to follow and interpret algorithms and write programs in the Python language.

Paper 2: A theory-based exam focusing on 6 strands of Computer Science including ethics, data representation and cyber security.

Year 10 content

Pupils will cover a range of theory topics whilst also maintaining and developing their programming skills. Students will in at least 1 lesson a fortnight develop their practice and understanding of how to solve programming problems.

Across the two years the main topics studied include areas such as Computer Systems, Databases, Searching and sorting algorithms, Data representation, Cyber Security, Networks, Ethical, legal and environmental impacts.

Year 11 content

Further theory topics will be covered and some previously learnt material reinforced with plenty of revision time.

DIGITAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DIT)

Examination board: Edexcel

The course comprises 2 coursework components (both 30% weighting of qualification) and an exam component (40% weighting). The exam is a written paper.

Year 10 content

Pupils will start with preparation for the spreadsheet based coursework component which is assessed by a 6 hour controlled assessment. This component relates to collecting, presenting and interpreting data. Students will learn about the importance of data and develop skills to allow them to fully analyse and present the data.

Pupils will also start preparing for the content for the other two units. Learning about theory topics including communication technologies, accessibility and inclusivity, impacts of technology, laws surrounding technology, systems security.

Year 11 content

At the start of Year 11 pupils will start preparing for the final coursework component. This controlled assessment for user interface design and project management will be sat in October/November.

For the remainder of the year, students will revise and learn new elements of the exam component. The exam will be sat at the end of Year 11.

ART AND DESIGN

For further information contact: Miss Wyman: cwyman@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA

Component 1: Coursework 60% of GCSE award

Component 2: Externally set non exam assessment 40% (set by exam board)

Throughout the GCSE course there are opportunities to visit galleries and museums to build an appreciation of art and design as well as providing a springboard for new projects. The GCSE course focuses on the continued development of subject knowledge and fostering independent creativity across a range of coursework projects.

Year 10 content

During Year 10 students work on portfolio projects based on the theme of natural forms and 'Still Life and Cubism'. The natural forms project focuses on drawing using a wide range of media and developing ideas into print. The Cubism project focuses on painting, mixed media, developing students experience of working on a larger scale.

Year 11 content

In Year 11 students undertake their mock exam project based on a cultural theme, the project focuses on three-dimensional design, developing clay sculptures. The second part of Year 11 consists of the externally set task, set by AQA. This consists of a 'lead in period' followed by a practical task completed under exam conditions. The GCSE Art course provide an excellent opportunity for students to follow specialist pathways in creative Arts subjects; teaches the required drawing, painting skills, creative understanding and aesthetic appreciation to successfully progress onto A Level courses. Studying Art and Design provides an excellent platform to further study at university in all creative subjects. Art courses offered within the art department provide a high level of specialist support and challenge for students of all abilities.

3D DESIGN: ART CRAFT AND DESIGN:

For further information contact: Miss Wyman: cwyman@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA

Component 1: Coursework 60% of GCSE award

Component 2: Externally set non exam assessment 40% (set by exam board)

Throughout the GCSE course there are opportunities to visit galleries and museums to build an appreciation of art and design as well as providing a springboard for new projects. The GCSE course focusses on the continued development of subject knowledge and fostering independent creativity across a range of coursework projects with a focus on making three-dimensional works of Art.

Year 10 content

During Year 10 students work on portfolio projects based on the theme of 'natural forms' and 'sculptural heads'. The natural forms project focuses on drawing and designing using a range of media and developing ideas three dimensional ceramic pieces. The sculptural project focuses on clay construction techniques, glazing and decorative techniques for ceramics.

Year 11 content

In Year 11 students undertake their mock exam project based on a cultural theme, the project focuses on three-dimensional design, developing clay and other three-dimensional materials. The second part of Year 11 consists of the externally set task, set by AQA. This consists of a 'lead in period' followed by a practical task completed under exam conditions. The GCSE Art course provides an excellent opportunity for students to follow specialist pathways in creative Arts subjects, teaches the required drawing, painting skills, creative understanding and aesthetic appreciation to successfully progress onto A Level courses. Studying three-dimensional Design provides an excellent platform to further study at university in all creative subjects. Art courses offered within the art department provide a high level of specialist support and challenge for students of all abilities. The GCSE 3D Art course teach a high level of practical skills, a vast array of media and creative processes whilst celebrating individual creativity, embracing experimentation and independent learning.

3D DESIGN – ARCHITECTURE

For further information, contact Mr D Bennett: dbennett@swchs.net

Examination board: Edexcel

Overview

Studying 3D Design-Architecture opens an exciting world of creative exploration and practical learning. For students, it means diving into the fascinating realm of architectural design, where they'll learn how to bring their ideas to life in three-dimensional form. Through hands-on projects and engaging lessons, students will master the art of architectural drafting, model-making, and develop their creative and critical thinking.

This course also equips students with valuable skills that are highly sought after in today's job market. Whether they're dreaming of becoming architects, designers, or pursuing careers in related fields, studying 3D Design-Architecture at GCSE level opens doors to a wide range of exciting opportunities in the creative industries.

Assessment

Component 1: Portfolio work 60% of GCSE award

Component 2: Externally set assignment (set by exam board) 40% of GCSE award

Year 10 content

Students embark on Component 1, which involves producing a personal portfolio including a sketchbook and a three-dimensional model. They undergo the design cycle, involving the analysis of the project theme, research, investigation, design, development, physical manufacturing of an architectural model, and evaluation. The theme for this project is 'Organic Architecture,' aimed at fostering an appreciation for the profound influence of the natural world on architecture.

Year 11 content

Students continue to work on completing Component 1, and they also undertake a supportive mock examination project that contributes to the assessment of Component 1. In early January, the exam board releases Component 2. Students are provided with a specific brief by the exam board, tasked with designing and creating a 3D outcome of their choice in response to the given theme. This process mirrors the journey of Component 1, involving the creation of a sketchbook with research, designs, and development work to aid in producing the final model. The final model is produced during a designated 10-hour exam period, during which students are required to work independently in controlled exam conditions.

For students aspiring to deepen their understanding of architecture and pursue further study in the subject, there is a direct progression onto our A-level course.

DRAMA

For further information contact: Mrs C Hassani chassani@swchs.net

Examination board: Eduqas

The Drama GCSE course develops students' creativity, personal growth, confidence, communication and analytical skills through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. It encourages students to explore all key areas of drama such as performing, devising, directing and designing. It provides opportunities for students to see professional and local theatre and to develop their skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

Through the study of this course, students will be given opportunities to participate in and interpret their own and others' drama. They will explore the forms, styles and contexts of drama and will learn to develop collaboratively their ideas, and to reflect on their own and others' performances.

Year 10 content

In Year 10 students complete Component 1. Students initially explore practically the genres of Physical Theatre, Melodrama and Theatre in Education, and practise the written element of Component 1. Students then complete Component 1 – devising from a stimulus using a specific genre.

Final performance - 10% of GCSE

Portfolio – 20% of GCSE

Evaluation in controlled conditions – 10% of GCSE

Year 11 content

In Year 11 students complete Component 2 and Component 3.

Component 2

This unit is the Exploration of script in small groups. Students stage and perform the extracts and write their artistic intentions for performance. They complete a mock exam which is internally examined and then a final performance which is externally examined and worth 20% of GCSE.

Component 3

Students begin preparation for Component 3 which is the final written exam, worth 40% of their Drama GCSE. This involves the exploration of a set text including context, staging, design, characters and style and structure. Students watch a live theatre production to evaluate for their Component 3 exam.

The following skills are highly recommended for GCSE Drama:

- Ability to co-operate in groups.
- Confidence in performance, including the confidence to take risks and to perform in front of a live audience.
- Proficiency in writing, particularly analytical and reflective writing, as this could constitute 40% of the overall exam

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

For further information, contact Ms S Ward: sward@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA

Overview

This is a subject with a great variety of content where students are given the opportunity to work both independently and as part of a team, investigating foods, developing culinary skills and techniques, exploring elements of food science, use of ingredients and nutrition.

While there are ample opportunities for hands-on practical work, the curriculum also emphasises a considerable theoretical focus throughout the course.

Year 10 content

Students will develop their theoretical knowledge and understanding of crucial aspects such as food safety and hygiene, food provenance, production and processing, along with further exploration of scientific principles integral to food preparation. With practical skills, there is a specific focus on fostering creativity in dish selection and enhancing independent culinary abilities. This not only provides students with valuable practical experience but also encourages them to express their creativity in the kitchen.

Year 11 content

Students begin the main Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) coursework, which is divided into two separate tasks; A Food Investigation completed in the autumn term and a Food Preparation assessment completed in the spring term. Together these are worth 50% of the grade.

Task 1 - Food investigation

Students will investigate the working characteristics and the functional and chemical properties of a particular ingredient through practical investigation. They will produce a report which will include research into 'how ingredients work and why'. This component forms 30% of the overall Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) grade.

Task 2 - Food preparation assessment

In this task, students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes to meet the needs of a specific context. Students must select appropriate technical skills and processes and create 3–4 dishes to showcase their skills. They will then produce their final menu within a single period of no more than 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. This component forms 70% of the overall Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) grade.

Once these tasks are complete, students follow a well-structured revision plan for the 1 hour and 45 minute written exam, which accounts for the remaining 50% of their overall grade. This exam occurs in the summer term.

MUSIC

For further information contact: Miss Law: claw@swchs.net

Examination board: Eduqas

The Eduqas GCSE in Music is centred on three areas and offers a broad and coherent course of study: Component 1 – Performing; Component 2 – Composing; Component 3 - Appraising

Year 10 and 11 content

Students will:

- Engage actively in the process of music study.
- Develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control.
- Develop composing skills to organise musical ideas.
- Recognise links between the activities of performing, composing and appraising.
- Develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate as musicians.
- Develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing.
- Develop awareness of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music.
- Recognise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music, and develop some awareness of musical chronology. Four Areas of Study from a wide variety of genres develop students' knowledge and understanding of Music. Two set works of music form a core focus for study.
- Develop as effective and independent learners with enquiring minds.
- Reflect upon and evaluate their own and others' music.
- Engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music, in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

Students will be expected to attend at least one extra-curricular activity to help with Area of Study 1 & 2 above.

PRODUCT DESIGN

For further information, contact Mr J Duddy: jduddy@swchs.net

Examination board: Edexcel

Overview

This course aims to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of design and manufacturing, enabling them to generate ideas, develop, and skilfully manufacture high-quality prototypes in response to diverse issues, needs, problems, and opportunities. By encouraging students to take design risks, the course cultivates resourcefulness, innovation and develops independent skills.

With access to a wide range of specialised machinery, equipment, tools, and software, students have ample opportunities to produce exceptionally innovative practical outcomes. This hands-on approach not only hones their skills but also enhances their understanding through exploration of woodwork, metalwork and precision engineering techniques.

Year 10 content

Students immerse themselves in focused projects for the majority of the year, honing both theoretical understanding and practical skills. In June of Year 10, students undertake the main coursework component, which constitutes 50% of the overall GCSE grade. Students will undertake a single design and manufacture project from a set contextual challenge set by the exam board. The main investigation and research section of the coursework is completed within this year.

Year 11 content

Students continue with the coursework project, dedicating a significant portion of the year to the design and manufacture stages —from the initial concept to the creation of the final physical outcome. Upon completing the coursework, students follow a well-structured revision plan for the 1 hour and 45 minute written exam, which accounts for the remaining 50% of their overall grade.

In the written exam, students will begin with a 'core section' assessing their understanding of various materials, processes, and principles of design & technology. Subsequently, they will delve deeper into the topic of Timbers, which will cover the remaining portion of the examination.

For students aspiring to deepen their understanding and pursue further study in the subject, there is a direct progression onto our A-level course.

TEXTILE DESIGN

For further information, contact Miss T Costa: tcosta@swchs.net

Examination board: Edexcel

Overview

Textile Design is a creative subject that involves the selection, manipulation and creation of new fabrics and uses a range of technical processes to create exciting practical outcomes. It teaches students to work in multi-disciplinary ways and gives students the skills to progress their career in the fashion or textiles industry.

The course is primarily fashion based and covers a variety of design and make projects. The course is suitable for all students and can be adapted to suit personal preferences i.e. menswear or womenswear. The course encourages creative thinking and allows students the freedom to explore their own personal influences.

Assessment

Component 1: Portfolio work 60% of GCSE award

Component 2: Externally set assignment (set by exam board) 40% of GCSE award

Year 10 content

Students begin their component 1 coursework in the form of a personal portfolio. The coursework project comprises of a sketchbook, garment and portfolio pages. Students will complete a design and make project using an internally set assignment. Throughout the project students will produce a variety of sketchbook pages of research, designs and practical textile samples. Students then use their inspiration, designs and development work to make a corset or jacket inspired by their theme.

Year 11 content

Students continue to work on completing Component 1, and they also undertake a supportive mock examination project that contributes to the assessment of Component 1.

In early January, the exam board releases Component 2. Students are given a set brief by the exam board and are asked to design and make a fashion garment/accessory. Students create a sketchbook featuring research, designs, development work to help produce their final product. The final model is produced during a designated 10-hour exam period, during which students are required to work independently in controlled exam conditions.

FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH

For further information contact: Mr J Sleightholm (Jsleightholm@swchs.net) - French, Ms C Hall (Chall@swchs.net) - German or Ms S Hargett (Shargett@swchs.net) - Spanish

Examination board: Edexcel

Studying a language at GCSE boosts cognitive skills (memory, problem-solving), enhances cultural awareness, improves employability in a globalised world, builds confidence, and provides a foundation for further learning. This makes you a more adaptable and valuable candidate for higher education and careers in diverse fields like diplomacy, business, and technology. It strengthens literacy and communication, benefits performance in other subjects, and opens up travel and personal growth opportunities.

% of exam work –

- Listening 25%
- Reading 25%
- Writing 25%
- Speaking 25%

During the GCSE language courses in Years 10 and 11 we will aim to improve students' language skills so that they will be able to communicate more confidently and fluently. They will also increase their independent use of language, by gaining a more secure knowledge of key grammatical structures, vocabulary and the sounds of the language(s) which they are studying. This will enable students to speak and write on a broader range of topics, using language more creatively and giving opinions on various issues.

At GCSE students will also explore more cultural contexts and use a wider range of authentic resources.

Students will also begin to understand the purpose and relevance of language for communication in today's world. In a competitive business environment, language and communication skills are vital and therefore viewed very favourably by employers and universities.

In school students have the opportunity to work in small groups with the Language Assistants, and we also look forward to them participating in one of the numerous and exciting Foreign Language trips that are run at Key Stage 4.

LATIN

Mrs C Wheeldon cwheeldon@swchs.net

Examination board: Eduqas

Latin gives you the unique opportunity to expand your knowledge of language, literature and ancient civilisation and to develop a very wide range of highly transferrable and sought-after skills: attention to detail, lateral thinking, keen analytical and problem-solving skills, and a sophisticated appreciation of literary criticism. Considering the huge number of English words derived from Latin will broaden and enrich your English vocabulary.

Reading Latin texts, written in the original language of 2000 years ago, is an exciting challenge and the set literature covers a variety of genres from historical accounts to witty poems and epic adventure. This opportunity to read what real Romans wrote gives you a unique insight into their intriguing world. These Roman writers have influenced countless artists and writers ever since and shaped our modern world in many ways. This is complemented by some study of Roman culture and society.

GCSE Course

Latin Language - 50%

Roman Civilisation - 20%

Latin Literature and Sources - 30%

From Year 10 onwards we begin to explore the topic for the Roman Civilisation paper – set topics are **Roman Slavery** or **Roman Festivals and Worship**. This is a great opportunity to explore a cultural aspect of the Roman world in depth from a historical point of view: we study a range of ancient artefacts, such as mosaics and statues, and literary sources in English and consider what we can learn from these.

The Latin Literature and Sources paper involves reading engaging un-adapted Latin texts, which are linked by a common theme, such as **Heroes and Villains** or **Come dine with me** (texts exploring food and dining in the Roman world). You will develop a keen sense of literary criticism so that you are able to appreciate the skill with which Roman authors crafted their work to make it so powerful and dramatic that we are still reading their literature 2000 years later.

In addition, we extend learning beyond the classroom to broaden students' knowledge of the ancient world and inspire them. A highlight is the opportunity to visit Pompeii at the beginning of Year 11, giving students the incredible experience of seeing this Roman city frozen in time with their own eyes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

For further information contact: Mr Sindell: bsindell@swchs.net

In Year 10 and 11 students will work on theory in classrooms for 3 of the 5 allocated lessons covering the critical aspects such as; the body in action, diet, health and hygiene and principles of training to improve fitness and performance. 2 lessons of 5 will be used to supplement core PE and extra-curricular sport to enable students to achieve as high a standard of practical performance as possible. Practical performance assessment is an integral component of the course.

Students continuing the course from Year 9 into GCSE should note that **students need to be fully committed to PE at SWCHS and should be actively engaged in regular sporting activity**. A commitment to extra-curricular sports clubs is essential, particularly in sports that students choose to be assessed in. Candidates will be assessed in three sports, to include a combination of team and individual sports.

AQA GCSE PE

Assessments – 70% Written 30% Practical

Paper One

Applied anatomy and physiology
Movement analysis
Physical training
Use of Data

Assessment

Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
78 marks
30% of GCSE

Paper 2

Sports psychology
Socio-cultural influences
Health, fitness and well-being
Use of data

Assessment

Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
78 marks
30% of GCSE

Practical 30% and 10% written NEA

Assessment of three sports (individual/team) and a written Analysis and evaluation in one sport.

DANCE

For further information contact: Mrs Knowles: kknowles@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA

Year 10 & 11 content

The GCSE Dance course allows pupils to develop new dance skills, as well as those acquired from year 9, and any previous dance experience. The course allows pupils to develop confidence, self-awareness and team working skills. It is a creative subject, where there is great opportunity to express yourself in a non-verbal way and use your imagination.

Pupils will have lots of opportunity to work with others, both performing and choreographing dances across a wide variety of styles, some of their own choice and others from set works. Most lessons take place in the Dance Studio, and theory lessons are integrated into the timetable to compliment the practical elements.

The exam board supplies a range of anthology works for pupils to study in the form of theory based works, these are short films choreographed by professional dance companies. The anthologies are an effective way to support the integration of theory and practice together. Practically pupils will be required to perform, in a group, as a soloist, dancing two short set phrases, as well as in front of a live audience from time to time. Pupils also have to craft and create their own choreography piece using a starting point set by the exam board, this can be a group or solo piece of work.

40% Theory: *Component 2- Dance Appreciation*

Written Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

60% Practical: *Component 1: Performance and Choreography*

Performance: Set phrases through solo performance (approx. one minute)

Duo/trio performance (max 5 minutes duration)

Choreography: Solo or group choreography (solo two to two half mins or group dance for two to five dancers (three to three and a half mins)

COMMENTS

As the course is very practical all students will be expected to use extra-curricular time for rehearsal. We look forward to students using their creative ideas to produce some original dance ideas.

BUSINESS

For further information contact: Mrs Boulton: mboulton@swchs.net

Examination board: AQA

Assessment: 100% Exam

The GCSE Business course develops students' knowledge and understanding of a wide range of business theory. It teaches you how to apply this knowledge to a range of different types of businesses, analyse problems and make judgements.

Year 10 content

You will study business in real world which investigates the purposes of business, the factors that affect businesses when they start up and the decisions that entrepreneurs have to make. Businesses have different issues when they start to grow for example they may want to float on the stock market, expand their product range, open new branches and expand into different countries.

You will also explore the external influences on business and how firms respond to changes in technology, the economic climate and legislation. Businesses also make decisions regarding ethical issues, such as keeping costs low without exploiting their workers or their suppliers. In the study of Human Resources you will look at how organisations are structured, recruitment and selection, motivation and training methods. In Operations the topics covered are production processes, procurement, quality and customer service.

Year 11 content

In Finance you will find out about how businesses raise finance, cash flow, income statements, statements of financial position and how to analyse the performance of a business using ratios. In Marketing you will learn about market segmentation, the different types of market research and how businesses use Product, Price, Place and Promotion effectively.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

For further information contact: Mrs N Thompson (nthompson@swchs.net)

Exam board – OCR

Years 10 and 11 content

Exam: 40% of final grade

Non- exam assessment (coursework): 60% of final grade

Throughout Years 10 and 11 students' study **three units**:

RO32 - Principles of care in health and social care settings (exam)

In this unit students will explore effective communication and the importance of communication to accommodate to an individual's preferences or needs. Students will also identify the rights of individuals and why it is crucial to maintain and uphold these, particularly when dealing with those who are vulnerable.

RO33 - Supporting individuals through life events (NEA)

Students will investigate development through different life stages, studying the factors that affect development and the key events that may take place during each stage.

RO35 - Health promotion campaigns (NEA)

Students will research and critique existing health campaigns and their significance, ultimately creating their own health campaign, emphasizing its importance and impact.

It is essential that students can work independently, show resilience when work is challenging and be a positive contributor to group tasks. Students need to be committed and organised to keep up to date with the coursework.

Students who thrive in Health and social Care show interest in people and the relationships that are formed. They show understanding of others and can evaluate the impact that positive interaction can have on a person. They are open-minded and accept that we all need support at times. Health and s Care is essential for anyone who wishes to work with people in a medical, educational or social setting. However, the course also develops skills that could be used in any workplace including communication, presentation skills, working with others, time management, independence and knowledge of health & and safety.