

SIR WILLIAM ROMNEY'S SCHOOL

Striving for Excellence Together

Year 9 Options

A Guide for Students, Parents and Carers

For Academic Year 2024/2025



PROGRAMME OF STUDY YEARS 10 & 11 2024 - 2026

This is an exciting time for Year 9 students beginning to make choices in their education that will start to shape their future careers. We are proud of the curriculum offered at Sir William Romney's because of its breadth whilst allowing flexibility so that every student can choose a suite of subjects that allow them to achieve their own personal academic excellence.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a suggested route of study for students at KS4. It includes studying many of the core GCSE subjects. It is not compulsory, nor is it a qualification, but if you are suited to an academic route and plan to go on and study A Levels after your GCSEs, you should seriously consider taking the EBacc subjects. The subjects included in the EBacc comprise:

English
Maths
Science
Geography or History
A Foreign Language

It is important that students take the time to research the different subjects and also start considering the pathway they intend to take with their post 16 education. It is unlikely that pathways will be closed if they have selected a broad range of subjects, but it is always worth considering the possible requirements of sixth forms and colleges.

We will support students as they go through the process of choosing their options. Although students will be making the final decisions, we will talk to the student and their parents if we feel that the subjects they have chosen may not be suitable. It is important to choose courses that suit their needs, that will challenge them and help develop their character as they prepare for their future after SWR.

We look forward to working with you over the next few weeks and will ensure that your child chooses a suite of subjects that will set them up for further success at SWR.

Will Ruscoe
Headteacher

GUIDANCE NOTES (2024 - 2026)

Students will be asked to choose a total of 4 subjects and 2 additional reserve subjects.

They should aim to choose a broad range of subjects. For example, this might include one language and one humanity within your choices.

Subjects will only run if sufficient numbers of students have opted for that class. Classes also have a maximum number so changes will need to be made if maximum numbers are exceeded in any class.

Students should use all of the information they have been given, including their experiences in the taster sessions attended at the end of term to help them make informed choices. To help even more, subject leads have created a series of informative videos that can be accessed by going to the Sir William Romney's YouTube Channel.

www.youtube.com/@sirwilliamromneys2164

Students should also talk to:

- Their tutor
- Subject teachers
- Older students
- Staff at the Options Evening on Wednesday 7th February 2024

When making choices they should consider:

- How the subject is assessed. Some subjects have a practical element alongside an examination element which may suit your learning styles
- How much you currently enjoy the subject or related subjects (they will be studying more of it than they do currently)
- Whether the subject choices are challenging yet realistic

YEARS 10 & 11 CURRICULUM (2024 - 2026)

CORE

English	All students study two GCSEs: English Language and English Literature
Mathematics	Full Course GCSE
Science	All students study Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
Religious Education	Non examination
Personal Development	Non examination
Physical Education	Non examination

OPTIONS - all GCSE unless stated otherwise

Art, Craft & Design	Health & Social (BTEC)
Computer Science	History
Design & Technology - Graphic Design	Media Studies
Design & Technology - Product Design	Music
Drama	Physical Education (GCSE or VCERT)
Food Preparation & Nutrition	Religious Education
French	Spanish
Geography	

OUR TWO PATHWAYS

Students will either follow the EBacc Pathway or the Open Pathway. Both pathways lead to 4 subject choices and a broad and balanced curriculum. Students and parents will be guided as to what pathway is best for them and more information on the EBacc Pathway can be found on Page 8.

1 - The EBacc Pathway					
Step 1 - Select a Humanity	History		Step 2-Select a Language	French	
	Geography			Spanish	
<p>Step 3 - Select 2 subjects from the list below by ticking them. (It is possible to do 2 humanities by selecting one in step 1 and one in step 3. It is not possible to do 2 languages)</p> <p><i>Place a 'R' next to 2 subjects that will be your reserves IF you are unable to do your first choices</i></p>					
Food and Nutrition	Music		Computer Science	Geography	
DT Graphics	Drama		Media Studies	Religious Studies	
DT Resistant Materials	Art		Health and Social Care	History	
Sport (GCSE or VCERT)					

2 - The Open Pathway					
<p>Select 4 subjects from the list below that you would like to do. It is not possible to do 2 languages.</p> <p><i>Place a 'R' next to 2 subjects that will be your reserves IF you are unable to do your first choices</i></p>					
History	Geography		French	Spanish	
Food and Nutrition	Music		Computer Science	Religious Studies	
DT Graphics	Drama		Media Studies	Sport (GCSE or VCERT)	
DT Resistant Materials	Art		Health and Social Care		

Finally, they will be asked to indicate the one subject which they most want to do out of all their choices. We will prioritise this subject above all others if a student is unable to do their first choices in all the blocks. **It cannot be guaranteed that all students get all 4 of their first choices, however we will work hard to ensure that preferences are met as much as possible.**

Submitting their option preferences

Students will be provided with an Options form to fill in that will also require a signature from a parent/carer. It is crucial that this form is handed in by the deadline. Forms will be available through their tutor.

The completed student option form should be returned to your child's tutor no later than **Monday 19th February 2024.**

OUR TWO PATHWAYS

Subjects on Offer

The following pages give basic information about the subjects on offer. If you wish to obtain further information on any subjects, please refer to the videos on our YouTube channel, contact the Heads of Subject or Mr Skipp, Deputy Headteacher.

Information to Examination Boards

Please note that personal information is passed to the Examination Boards and other regulated Authorities and is subject to the regulations of the Data Protection Act.

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (EBACC) 2024-2026

What is it?

The EBacc is a suite of GCSE subjects at grade 4 or above. It is not an additional qualification and is not certificated on completion.

To have the EBacc, students must take:-

- **English language and literature**
- **Maths**
- **Science**
- Geography or History
- A language

The first 3 of these are covered in our core offer whilst the last 2 would be specific choices made by the student.

Why is it worth considering?

Thinking of going to university?

It is important to stress that not studying these subjects will not stop you being able to go to university. However, a study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education.

Transferrable skills

Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths due to the fact the skills are reinforced and developed in the other subjects of the EBacc.

Is it for everyone?

No – Students may have passions or talents in other areas. Choices should be based on the subjects that will maximise your success and your opportunities in the future. Students who are particularly well suited to the EBacc will be spoken to by teachers to ensure they have considered this combination of subjects as an option.

CORE SUBJECTS

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ENGLISH

An English GCSE is an essential qualification for the next stage in all students' lives, whether it be entry into Further and Higher education, an apprenticeship or another form of employment. It is therefore a compulsory part of the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 and is a core subject of the National Curriculum.

At KS4 students will study both English Language and English Literature, leading to two GCSEs. There will be no controlled assessments and students' overall grades will be determined entirely by examination at the end of the course.

The courses students will be following are:

AQA GCSE English Language - This is a stimulating language-based course which assesses the three components of English: reading, writing and speaking & listening. The course comprises of two final written examinations, each worth 50% of the overall grade. A compulsory element of the GCSE is a formal Speaking and Listening assessment, for which students will receive a Pass, Merit or Distinction certificate. However, the results from these will not contribute to the overall GCSE grade.

As part of this course, students will explore a range of writing forms and develop their own ability to adapt their use of language to a range of contexts. Spelling, punctuation and grammar forms 20% of the overall marks for this qualification.

AQA GCSE English Literature - This course assesses the skill of reading and engaging with texts from contemporary and heritage literature. It comprises of two final written examinations totalling 4 hours, one exam being worth 40% and the other 60%. Students will study a 19th century novel, a whole Shakespeare play, a modern text (either a play or a novel) and a selection of poetry.

There are no tiers of entry in these examinations but students will be supported closely to ensure they are able to access the materials.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics and its understanding is fundamental in enabling students to achieve their potential. Most employers and post-16 providers expect a good foundation in numeracy and problem solving skills and often require specific GCSE grades in mathematics. It is our expectation that all students will achieve or exceed their target grade and we will work continually to support them.

GCSE Mathematics is studied in Years 10 and 11, with the examination being sat at the end of Year 11. Students will follow the new GCSE syllabus and sit three papers; two calculator and one non-calculator. There are two tiers of entry, Higher (offering grades 4-9) and Foundation (offering grades 1 to 5). The entry tier will be discussed with individuals closer to the examination. There are three assessment points in each year which are all GCSE style papers.

SCIENCE

AQA Trilogy Combined Science

All students in Years 10 and 11 will study the AQA Trilogy Combined Science course (called Trilogy by AQA). This is a two year course leading to the award of two GCSEs. It is taught in ten, one hour lessons per fortnight which is usually shared between two teachers. The skills developed during the course include scientific literacy; a knowledge and understanding of science and how science works; application of knowledge and understanding; literacy; numeracy and problem-solving skills. The Combined Science course will allow students to embark on future scientific studies such as A-level.

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Cell Biology. Organisation. Infection and Response. Bioenergetics. Homeostasis and response. Inheritance, variation and evolution. Ecology.	Atomic structure and the periodic table. Bonding and structure. Quantitative chemistry. Chemical changes. Energy changes. Organic chemistry. Chemical analysis. Chemistry of the atmosphere. Using resources.	Forces. Energy. Waves. Electricity. Magnetism and electromagnetism. Particle model of matter. Atomic structure.

Topics studied in Year 10 and 11 are as follows:

Students will sit six, 75 minute papers (two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics) at the end of Year 11. Each of the papers are equally weighted and can be sat at foundation and higher tier. There are no longer controlled assessments in Science GCSE. Instead, students are assessed on their practical skills in their exams. Students will be graded on a 17-point grading scale from 9-9, 9-8 through to 2-1, 1-1.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At Key Stage 4 students will be timetabled for an hour a fortnight in Religious Education. During these lessons we focus on developing our student's knowledge of the world. Across the two years, we study Religion across the world and students have the opportunity to research different countries and create a travel blog along the way.

Religion across the world allows students to develop their independent and research skills whilst increasing their awe and wonder of the world around us. We discover what it would be like to travel to different countries including looking at places to visit, places to eat, the etiquette, where to stay etc. Students then get to be creative in designing and creating their travel blog.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

At Key Stage 4 students will continue to follow the Personal Development programme once a fortnight. The aim of this programme is to guide our students through preparing them for their opportunities and responsibilities during their experiences in life. The programme offers a space for students to develop and understand their own wellbeing (including mental health), self-esteem, aspirations, opportunities, place in society and spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

In order to offer a programme that well-equips students and offers them a rounded education, we cover a variety of topics which are based around the statutory guidance whilst meeting the needs of our students at the time. Topics covered build on those studied at Key Stage 3 which offers a spiral curriculum where we revisit key information throughout. At Key Stage 4 students look at a range of topics some of which have been highlighted below:-

Year 10

- Looking after yourself at KS4 (including wellbeing and mental health)
- Work experience (including CV writing)
- Relationships (including how to stay safe)
- Families (including different family types)
- Career Pathways (including responsibilities in the workplace)
- Finances and money management (including gambling)
- Drugs (including role models and the media)

Year 11

- Supporting GCSEs (including managing stress and study skills)
- Life beyond SWR (including Post-16 options and the application process)
- Relationships (including negative relationships)
- Looking after yourself (including introducing a work-life balance and self examination)
- Looking after your community (including British Values)

We are proud to work in partnership to deliver lessons with invited speakers from Schoolbeat, St John's Ambulance, Teenage Cancer Trust and St James' Place amongst others.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students who choose Qualification Sport for KS4 will be directed towards one of two courses on offer. Information regarding GCSE Sport is included below. A second, more Vocational course, will also be available. In negotiation with the student, the PE Team will guide the student toward the most suitable course for the specific students based upon a range of factors, including Target Grades, Attitude to Learning, and level of Practical Performance currently undertaken for example. Details of the Vocational Course will be shared in due course.

Students are offered a range of different activities during PE lessons at Key Stage 4. The more traditional options such as netball, rugby, football, hockey, cricket, rounders and athletics form the core of learning. The student's curriculum and experiences are enhanced through the wider context of health & fitness (classes and fitness suite), sports leadership, cross country, tennis, badminton, softball and basketball to name a few. Students will continue to participate in both single and mixed-gender classes to further develop their experiences, as well as try out some of the more non-traditional sports such as girl's rugby, football and cricket, as well as boy's hockey for example.

During Key Stage 4 students tackle complex and demanding activities, further developing and applying their knowledge of skills, techniques and effective performance learnt at Key Stage 3. Physical activity is mainly focused on competing or performing, promoting health and well-being, or developing personal fitness, as well as being exposed to a range of new and varied opportunities to try new things. We hope students will gain the confidence to get involved in exercise and activity out of school and in later life.

For the examined element of PE, students study the AQA specification of GCSE PE.



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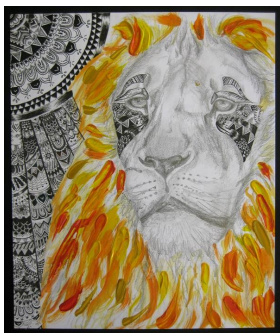
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ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

At SWR students will undertake the AQA GCSE Art, Craft and Design course. This is a broad course which promotes learning across a variety of experiences and through various processes, tools, techniques, materials and resources to generate a range of outcomes. It is the variety of this course and the increased freedom of choice that students find enjoyable.

The aims of this course are to encourage students to:-

- develop transferrable life skills such as self-confidence, resilience, self-expression, patience and problem solving
- develop creativity, using their imagination to explore and create original and personal images and artefacts. Becoming confident in taking risks and learning from their mistakes
- develop aspirational attitudes and independence
- develop critical understanding of various artwork through investigation, experimentation and reflection



ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

The GCSE consists of two components:

Portfolio (coursework) 60%

Students create two projects, each involving a sketchbook and final piece. The first will be more teacher-led so that students can learn the structure of the course and what is required. An increasing level of independence will be given to the students throughout the project. The final piece will be personalised so students will have some freedom of choice over what they want to create.

The second project is decided by the student after discussion with the teacher. The students are introduced to a selection of possible themes for projects. An example of a few of these themes are 'Fragments' and 'Layers'. These can be interpreted in different ways by the students. They will choose one that interests them and then create their project based upon their chosen theme.

The majority of the coursework is created in lesson time. Homeworks are important and will contribute towards their grades.

Externally Set Assignment (exam project) 40%

Students will be given a stimulus involving seven starting points for potential Art projects. Students will choose one of these which suits their skills and which inspires them. They will then build this starting point into a sketchbook project. Students will create the final piece in their final exam.



HISTORY

Are you ready to embark on a journey that will challenge your intellect and shape the future? Look no further – GCSE Computer Science is the key to unlocking endless possibilities!

In today's digital age, where technology is at the forefront of innovation, having a solid understanding of Computer Science is more valuable than ever. This isn't just about coding, it's about developing critical problem-solving skills, fostering creativity, and gaining a deeper insight into the technology that powers our world. Most Computer Science students are not looking for careers in technology but choose it for its academic rigour and status. Computer Science is often referred to as the 'Fourth Science'.

By choosing GCSE Computer Science you are equipping yourself with a toolkit for success in various fields. Imagine being the mastermind behind the next ground-breaking app, creating solutions to real-world problems or even influencing the direction of technological advancements. Computer Science isn't just about writing code but also solving problems.

Technology is evolving at an unprecedented rate and professionals with Computer Science skills are in high demand across industries. Whether you aspire to become a software developer, data scientist or tech entrepreneur, GCSE Computer Science is your ticket to a rewarding and future-proof career.

Our GCSE Computer Science programme follows the AQA specification ensuring you receive a comprehensive, industry-relevant education. The assessment is conducted through two exams with 50% dedicated to coding and the remaining 50% on theory. This balanced approach prepares you for the real-world application of your skills and knowledge.

The world is changing and GCSE Computer Science is your gateway to shaping that change. Take advantage of the opportunity to acquire skills that will set you apart and open doors to exciting possibilities. Enrol in GCSE Computer Science today and set yourself on a path to success in the digital era!

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

GCSE D&T will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on D&T including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making, and apply technical and practical expertise.

This GCSE allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. Students will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth. The key skills that you will develop in this course are your creative designing ability and a range of practical and technical skills. Further to this you will need an enquiring mind and a willingness to develop your investigating, analysing and evaluating skills. **You will learn the core technical principles of all material areas in D&T (Woods, Metals, Plastics, Electronics, Graphics and Textiles) and then develop a specialist technical knowledge in one of these.**

This course will go well with virtually any other GCSE qualification. In fact, to be good at D&T you will need to have a broad range of skills found in other subjects you will be studying. A significant proportion of the exam will involve maths questions therefore mathematical skills are important. The coursework will also involve some extended writing tasks, therefore literacy, ICT and communication skills are vital. An appreciation of environmental issues is also important therefore there are obvious links to Geography and the Sciences. Furthermore, the creative skills promoted in D&T will be complimented particularly well by GCSE Art.

Although there is only 1 GCSE qualification for D&T, we will give you the opportunity to choose a route that can be focussed on your preferred material area. This will allow you to work primarily in this material area during your coursework. We offer the following options in Design and Technology:-

- Design and Technology (Product Design Route)
- Design and Technology (Graphic Design Route)

Product Design Route

This qualification is designed for 14-16 year olds who want to study all D&T materials in a practical way, and in particular understand the working properties of woods, metals and plastics. Learners will have the opportunity to use traditional skills and also modern technologies. This route will help learners develop their knowledge, skills and experience and could potentially open the door to a career in related industries such as engineering and architecture. This course is for you if you:-

- Are creative in making and modelling
- Enjoy practical lessons and learning new skills and techniques
- Have an interest in how things are made
- Like working in a team and collaborating
- Want access to a wide range of academic and vocational qualifications

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DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Graphic Design Route

This qualification is designed for 14-16 year olds who want to study all D&T materials in a practical way, and in particular understand the working properties of paper, cards and boards as well as CAD/CAM. This route will suit learners who want to study graphics in a hands on, sophisticated way that helps them develop the knowledge, skills and experience that could open the door to a career in related industries such as Graphic Design, Media and Advertising. This course is for you if you:-

- Enjoy exploring skills and techniques around presentation and promotion
- Want to create artistic, relevant and informative products, primarily using CAD and ICT
- Like creating branded products as well as writing
- Are considering career opportunities in Advertising or Graphic Design
- Are keen to learn new skills, methods and techniques not done so far

The GCSE in DT is broken down into the following units:

50% Written Exam: A mix of short answer, structured and extended writing questions assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of: technical principles, designing and making principles along with their ability to: analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology. **Please note that all students (no matter which route they take) will be entered for the same D&T exam and will therefore need to have a core understanding of all material areas (Woods, Metals, Plastics, Electronics, Graphics and Textiles).**

50% Non-Exam Assessment (Extended Design and Make Project): A sustained design and make task, based on a contextual challenge set by the exam board (EDUQAS), assessing candidates' ability to: identify, investigate and outline design possibilities, design and make prototypes, analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in Design and Technology. **Please note that the material area that you will focus on for this coursework project will be based on the route that you chose on your options form (Product Design or Graphic Design).**

DRAMA

What is GCSE Drama all about?

GCSE Drama gives you the opportunity to develop your creative, performance and analytical skills. You will have the opportunity to create and perform your own drama as well as studying and presenting text. In addition, you will have the chance to view and critique live theatre. The course is demanding, diverse and exciting.

The course is split into three areas:

- Devising drama (30%)
- Presenting and performing texts (30%)
- Drama: 'performance and response' (40%)

Will I enjoy the course?

You will enjoy the course if:

- you are practical, organised, creative and analytical
- you have been involved in a production either as a performer or as part of the production team
- you like working as part of a team

The course is designed to give you a breadth of experience. Along with developing your creativity and confidence, it provides you with a glimpse into a variety of career options and gives you an alternative to traditional learning.

How is GCSE Drama assessed?

Drama GCSE consists of one component that is internally assessed, then externally moderated, and two components that are externally assessed.

- 'Devising drama' is internally assessed. This component provides an opportunity for you to devise, direct, design and perform your own drama. You will film your final performance and produce a portfolio identifying your theatrical journey and intentions, along with an analysis of your performance. You can take on the role of performer or designer (lighting, sound, set or costume) in this component. It is worth 30% of the qualification.

Continued over page

DRAMA

- 'Presenting and performing texts' is externally assessed. This component provides you with the opportunity to study a text, selecting two extracts to perform to a visiting examiner. As part of this unit you will submit a 'concept proforma' outlining your intentions for the audience. You can take on the role of performer or designer (lighting, sound, set or costume) in this component. This must be assessed during the visiting examiner window in the year of certification. It is worth 30% of the qualification.
- Drama: 'performance and response' is externally assessed. This component is a formal written exam worth 40% of your GCSE. You will sit a closed book exam, which contains two sections. Section A will be a written response to a text you study practically. You will be required to respond analytically and creatively to the text considering your choices as an actor, director and designer. Section B will be an analytical and evaluative written response of a live performance. This section will show off your ability to identify, and critique, the dramatic choices made by a director.

Which Examination Board facilitates the GCSE Drama course?

We study the OCR Drama GCSE (9-1) course. The course code is J316. If you would like a more detailed account of the course and its requirements, please speak to Mrs Blake. Alternatively, you can download the Drama GCSE Specification directly from the OCR Drama GCSE website.

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

This is a creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure you develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the characteristics of different types of food. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing practical cookery skills to provide a strong understanding of nutrition. You will be involved in a mixture of theory and practical work, including culinary skills and food science investigations. Although there is a strong practical element to this course, there is also a theoretical component, as you learn about the effects of food on the body, as well as how food is grown and the industries it supports. Your lessons will take place in our dedicated Food & Nutrition department, as well as in one of our ICT suites.

This subject is for you if you enjoy hands-on practical work, food and science. You will have an aptitude for culinary moments in the kitchen at home, as well as being well-organised. You will enjoy testing out new ingredients, as well as understanding why ingredients behave in the way they do.

Assessment

50% coursework (two pieces) including a practical assessment

50% exam

Exam Board: Eduqas

FRENCH AND SPANISH

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way" - Frank Smith

For current Year 9, the French and Spanish GCSE exams have been redesigned to make them more accessible, fair, and a better representation of each student's ability. This means the exams students sit will not be the same as any older friends or family members. Changes include making sure all instructions are in English, and reducing the number of words that students are expected to learn by a significant number. We are really excited about the changes and are looking forward to teaching you the new course from September!

EBacc and Life After SWR

Students must choose GCSE French or Spanish to be eligible for the EBacc. The EBacc is considered an academic pathway that offers students a broad and balanced curriculum. It is highly regarded by post-16 providers and universities and should be considered by all students intending to pursue A-Levels and/or University in the future.

The EBacc Pathway

Maths	English	Science (double)	Option 1 History <i>or</i> Geography	Option 2 French <i>or</i> Spanish	Option 3 <i>Open choice</i>	Option 4 <i>Open choice</i>
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KS4 Languages

At GCSE we continue to follow the Conti methodology used at KS3, so your lesson structure will be very similar. You will have already been exposed to much of the vocabulary at KS3. KS4 is all about transferring these words and structures into our long-term and working memories. There will be lots of familiar, similar, and new games and activities to help you. The focus continues to be on building knowledge in a logical and enjoyable way, as well as revisiting and unpicking in greater depth some of the structures learnt in KS3. There are lots more opportunities for speaking practice, group work, and learning about the target culture. There are also trips overseas and in the local area to help build your confidence.

The key topics covered in GCSE Languages are:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and Tourism

These topics help you to review structures and vocabulary from KS3, whilst also discussing and considering issues that are highly relevant to young people today.

FRENCH AND SPANISH

Examinations

The four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing are assessed in final exams at the end of Year 11 and are worth 25% each. Students can be entered for Foundation or Higher tier. We will decide this collaboratively at the end of Year 11. The Speaking exam is conducted in-school and you will have lots of opportunity to practise beforehand. There are mock exams to help you prepare, but final grades are determined on the four exams at the end of Year 11, giving you no coursework, and the ability to perform when your knowledge is at its peak!

The aims of the courses include:

- Insights and understanding of the culture of French and Spanish speaking countries and communities. We study films, music, and festivals
- Practical communication for travel and work
- Using the language imaginatively and creatively
- An awareness of the nature of language learning, which complements learning English and other foreign languages in the future
- Develop a whole range of transferable skills, but most notably: confidence, memory and communication

Independent Learning

We expect students to be enthusiastic and independent in their learning. We use the Memrise app to build vocabulary and there are termly rewards for students who regularly top their class leaderboard, including the infamous £15 Amazon vouchers! The battle for top place each week is fierce as students will be able to see where they stand on leaderboards. Memrise will make up the majority of home learning time, but your teacher will also set you other tasks designed to develop your confidence, exam skills, and more!

Don't forget to rewatch the Options Video on the SWR YouTube channel, and speak to your teacher if you have any other questions.

GEOGRAPHY

The Department offers the dynamic and exciting AQA Syllabus in Geography. It builds upon the knowledge, skills and understanding from KS3 whilst incorporating contemporary developments in our ever changing world such as climate change, threats to some of our most valued natural habitats such as the rainforest and our evolving world economy. Geography can be taken alongside other humanities subjects or on its own, linking well to both the arts and sciences, providing a bridge between the two. As a result it is a highly valued GCSE by further educational establishments. The specification has three elements:-

Unit 1

Physical geography (35%).

This unit focuses on physical processes and the interaction between people and the environment. Students will study the following:-

- Natural Hazards (Plate Tectonics, Climate Change, Extreme Weather & Tropical Storms)
- Ecosystems
- Tropical Rainforests
- Cold Environments
- Rivers
- Coasts

Unit 2

Human geography (35%).

This unit focuses on changes in economic development and population. Students study the following:-

- Urban Challenges
- Changing Economic World
- Resource Management
- Water Management

Unit 3

This is a skills and application section making up 30% of the final grade. Students will need to utilise their critical thinking and problem solving skills on a given topic. This section will also comprise of two fieldwork enquiries that will take place in two contrasting environments. The students' understanding of these enquiries will be assessed during the exam. There will be a field trip that all students will be expected to participate in.

Geography helps us to make sense of our world. It is hands on, it is relevant and it is fun. The GCSE is a good mix of topics as highlighted above. The course will give students the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (BTEC)

The Cambridge National in Health and Social Care introduces you to the specialist knowledge and skills needed to work in the various care settings. It is a vocational qualification, equivalent to the value of a GCSE, and contains both practical and theoretical elements.

As part of the course you will cover:

- Principals of care
- Helping individuals find the support they need following life events
- Planning and delivering creative and therapeutic activities or
- Health promotion and how to plan your own campaign

By developing applied knowledge and practical skills, the course will help give you the opportunity to progress on to A Levels, a Cambridge Technical in Health and Social Care, an apprenticeship or university.

It will also help develop a range of skills which will help you succeed not only in the workplace but also in other subjects too. **These skills include:**

- Effective verbal communication
- Presentation skills
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving
- Research and planning

The assessment involves **one** written examination (70 marks) and **two** pieces of assessment completed in school (60 marks each).

HISTORY

OCR's GCSE History B (Schools History Project) consists of five elements and assessment is totally by external examination (3 papers) at the end of the course. This course allows a broader range of topics to be studied by students, giving them a greater sense of not just British history, but history across the entire world.

1. **British History Thematic Study - 'The People's Health c.1250 to the present'**. This thematic study should enable learners to understand changes and continuities in public health in Britain from c.1250 to the present. They will study not only the change in how people lived, but also the deadly epidemics that affected Britain and how authorities responded to this.
2. **British History Depth Study - 'The Elizabethans 1580 to 1603'**. This depth study should enable learners to understand late-Elizabethan society and the interplay of political, religious and social forces within it.
3. **History around Us - 'A Study of the Historic Environment'**. This study enables learners to understand how a Medieval Castle has changed and developed over time, and the stories behind this. Students will also get the chance to visit and study the features of the castle.
4. **World History Period Study - 'The Making of America 1789 to 1900'**. This period study follows the expansion of America from the inauguration of the first president in 1789 to the end of the nineteenth century, understanding the challenges faced by Native and African Americans.
5. **World History Depth Study - 'Living under Nazi Rule 1933 to 1945'**. This depth study should enable learners to understand the impact of the Nazi dictatorship on people's lives both within Germany and across occupied Europe.

Assessment: by examination

Component 1 - British History. One exam paper worth 40%, Duration: 1 hour and 45 minutes. Section A - 'The People's Health c.1250 to the present'. Section B - 'The Elizabethans 1580-1603'.

Component 2 - History around Us. One exam paper worth 20%. Duration: 1 hour.

Component 3 - World History. One exam paper worth 40%. Duration: 1 hour and 45 minutes. Section A - 'The Making of America 1789 to 1900'. Section B - 'Living under Nazi Rule 1933 to 1945'.

MEDIA STUDIES

This is an exciting course that offers students the opportunity to engage with a range of media forms and texts. Students embarking on GCSE Media Studies will use both analytical and creative skills to explore how media texts are designed to impact their audiences and the different ways the media shapes our perception and understanding of the world around us today.

Across the two years, students will study a range of set media texts, such as print-based adverts, television shows, music videos and newspapers, including making comparisons across different time periods and contexts. Their knowledge and study of these texts will be assessed in the two examinations at the end of the course, making up 70% of their final GCSE grade.

The remaining 30% will be assessed through coursework, in the form of a Media Production. This will be a project-based creation that every student will plan, research, design and make with support from their teacher. They will have 12 weeks to work on their productions and will have some choice over the media form and genre they would like to work on.

MUSIC

OCR GCSE Music

Music is an academic GCSE subject recognised by the top universities.

Portfolio 1 - 30%

A solo performance on your instrument.
A composition of your choice.

Portfolio 2 - 30%

A group performance.
A composition to a brief set by OCR.

Listening and Appraising - 40%

A written paper where you will be asked questions about music that you have not heard before that follow four areas of study:

AoS2: The Concerto through time

AoS3: Rhythms of the World

AoS4: Music for film, TV and video games

AoS5: Conventions of popular music

Why take Music at SWR?

A chance to be creative

Music at KS4 involves:-

- Performing
- Listening to all kinds of music
- Creatively composing or arranging music
- The opportunity to create and play music with others e.g. in a rock group, jazz band, orchestra or vocal group
- The opportunity to use music technology

Prepare for later life

Studying music equips you with the skills to succeed in other subjects and, indeed, areas of life. Students are equipped with the resilience and independence to practice a piece of music until it is perfect, attention to detail and commitment to rehearsals and the confidence to perform to an audience. Visits to concerts and musicals give students aspiration and a wealth of performance opportunities offer them the opportunity to collaborate with others.

MUSIC

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to play an instrument to take music?

Musicians who can already play an instrument are at an advantage due to the skills they have and the extra tuition they receive out of lessons. However, it is not essential for the course. You will need to be enthusiastic and eager to learn some instrumental skills. This could be on the keyboard in class or there is always the opportunity to take up an instrument with one of our visiting instrumental teachers.

Does singing count?

Yes it most definitely does. The voice is an instrument and we have had many singers who have enjoyed very high exam success.

Do I need to be able to read music?

We learn various aspects of music theory on the course as required. As with the first question, it is not essential but it is an advantage.

What do we compose our music on?

You will have access to Garage Band, Logic and Sibelius programmes on the music computers to compose on. If you prefer to compose on your instrument and notate on manuscript that is acceptable. Both are there for you to work to your strengths. You can compose anything from a string quartet to a pop song or music technology piece.

What do our current GCSE musicians say?

“It’s fun!”

“We have the freedom to write and play what we want on what instruments we want”

“We learn to master our instruments at a high level”

“I’ve listened to so many different types of music; some I’d never even heard of. I have new favourite pieces and styles”

“Trips are exciting”

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

At SWR students undertake the AQA GCSE Physical Education course. This is a comprehensive course covering both theoretical and practical elements of sporting performance. The course provides students with the knowledge and understanding of how to live a healthy and active lifestyle, enabling them to make informed choices about their own physical development. Students will also learn how to analyse and evaluate performance and suggest effective plans for improvement. The aims of the course are to encourage students to:-

- Understand the theory that underpins physical performance and contributes towards elite performance. This will include training principles and components of fitness, anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, socio-cultural influences, health, fitness and wellbeing, psychological factors and use of data.
- Develop their own physical performance in a number of activities. However, in order to be successful, students need to be proficient and perform regularly in at least three different sports, both individual and team-based in format.
- Develop an understanding of the various roles and opportunities in the world of sport and physical education, and how they can pursue a career in this field.

The qualification is linear, meaning that students will sit all their exams and submit all their non-exam assessments at the end of the course. There are three key areas of assessment which make up the qualification.

Paper 1 - The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

What's assessed?

Applied anatomy and physiology
Movement analysis
Physical training
Use of data

How it's assessed

Written examination 1 hour 15 minutes
78 marks
30% of GCSE

Questions

Answer all questions.
A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Paper 2 - Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity in sport

What's assessed?

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

How it's assessed?

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

Questions

Answer all questions.
A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

Non-exam assessment - Practical performance in physical activity and sport

What's assessed

Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity).
Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

How it's assessed

Assessed by teachers
Moderated by AQA
100 marks
40% of GCSE

Questions

For each of their three activities, students will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (10 marks per activity) and in the full context (15 marks per activity).
Students will be assessed on their analysis (15 marks) and evaluation (10 marks) of performance to bring about improvement in one activity through a written piece of coursework.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This year students have an exciting new opportunity to study Religious Education as a GCSE subject. We will be studying religion through two themes: Religion, Peace and Conflict through Islam, and Religion and Ethics through Christianity; alongside studying non-religious views.

In completing your GCSE in RE you will have the opportunity to develop your knowledge, skills and understanding of philosophical and ethical questions. We will examine questions such as: Is there a God? How was the world created? What happens when we die? Should abortion be allowed? Should we punish criminals? Through examining these issues, you will be investigating religious and non-religious viewpoints as well as grappling with your own ideas.

Paper 1 - Religion and Ethics through Christianity

The content of this paper allows you to explore Christian beliefs, living the Christian life, marriage and family life and matters of life and death. You will be given the resources to analyse how the Bible, both the Old and New Testament, influence a Christian's life and understanding of these four themes. Crossovers will be made here with Islam and non-religious worldviews.

Paper 2 - Religion, Peace and Conflict through Islam

This paper gives you the opportunity to study Islamic beliefs, living the Muslim life, crime and punishment and peace and conflict. You will be given the resources to examine how the Qur'an informs a Muslim's life and understanding of these four areas of study. You will also be comparing and contrasting Christian and non-religious views.

How will you be assessed?

Both exam papers are completed following the structure below:

- 1 hour and 45 minute exam
- Total 102 marks
- In the exam you must choose the religion that you have studied
- You must answer all of the questions
- There will be a mixture of short open, open responses and extended writing questions
- The paper will assess SPaG and use of specialist terminology which will contribute to a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall paper

Exam Technique (you will answer 4 questions 4 times in each paper)

Part A = Outline - Provide 3 facts or short ideas (3 marks)

Part B = Explain - Provide 2 facts or short ideas with a development of these (4 marks)

Part C = Explain - Provide 2 facts or short ideas with development and 1 source of authority or wisdom (5 marks)

Part D = Evaluate - Refer to teachings alongside different viewpoints (both religious and non-religious) whilst coming to a justified conclusion (12 marks)

HEADS OF SUBJECTS

Art, Craft & Design - Mr C Davies

Computer Science - Mr M Duke

DT - Mrs K Cropley & Miss R Lewis

Drama - Mrs L Blake

English - Mrs C Eveleigh

Geography - Mrs R Wagner

Health and Social Care - Mr W Ruscoe

History - Mr J Fairclough

Mathematics - Mr F Blackwood

Media Studies - Mr R Skipp

Modern Foreign Languages - Miss S Nicholls

Music - Mr P Dillon

Personal Development - Miss L Duran

Physical Education - Mr D Mills

Religious Education - Mrs C Love

Science - Mrs K Tall

NOTES

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