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Year 9 Options 2026 - Introduction

Welcome to Peacehaven Community School's options process. This is an important time for you, as this is the first time that you will need to make decisions which will affect your future career choices. At Peacehaven Community School, we will offer you a wide range of options for Years 10 and 11.

We believe that our options are both exciting and unique and reflect our intention to offer an appropriate curriculum for all our students. All students will have to follow some 'core subjects' but they can then choose from a variety of subjects. This allows all our students to choose the subjects that interest them the most. We aim to help guide you in making the right options choices.

All students will have information from various sources, from assemblies to taster sessions, to conversations with students who have already started their options choices. There will be an options/parents and carers' evening which you and your parents/carers will be able to attend to ask questions about options subjects. Take time to speak to teachers who run different courses to ensure that you are making the right choice for you.

When making your choices, think about your strengths and future career plans, do not base your choices on which teachers you like and what your friends are doing. Take advice from your teachers and parents/ carers - ultimately the decision must be yours.

You are going to have to work hard at your options for the next two years so it is important you choose subjects that you enjoy and that you can be successful in. If you are unsure about the options process, please talk to your mentor.

KEY DATES

Monday 12 January 2026	Options assemblies
Monday 12 January 2026	Options information evening
Thursday 22 January 2026	Year 9 parents and carers' evening
Friday 6 March 2026	Deadline for completion of choices

1. Quality Rather Than Quantity

The majority of options courses result in a GCSE or equivalent. Most students will study for nine qualifications. Gaining eight or nine qualifications with higher grades is more useful than having a larger number of low-grade qualifications.

2. A Balanced Curriculum

Make sure your choices are broad and balanced- even if you have a specific career path in mind. It is normal to change your mind about what career you want so it is worth keeping as many doors open as possible.

A broad and balanced curriculum will allow you flexibility in your career choices once you have finished your education and it will also show that you are well-rounded. Take subjects you enjoy even if it is not something you think will help you in your career.

CHOOSING OPTIONS DO'S & DON'TS

Do	Don't
Make sure you are well informed, especially about the new courses you have not studied before.	Just choose what your friends are doing, these are <u>your</u> choices not theirs.
Think about your likes and dislikes – these courses will be studied for the rest of your time at Peacehaven Community School.	Make choices based on teachers that you like – they may not teach you next year.
Think about your future aspirations – don't close the doors by picking courses that are all very similar.	Choose what you ought to do rather than what you want to do – make sure you choose subjects that you will enjoy and be successful at.
Think about your chances of success. The better the grades, the greater the opportunities post-16.	Follow family traditions if they are not right for you. Choose a course because you want to and feel you will be successful at it.

1. Compulsory Subjects

All students will work for GCSEs in English Language, English Literature, Maths and Sciences (usually Combined Science). Students with the highest grades in year 9 Science will be able to choose Triple Science. All students will also study practical Physical Education, PSHE and Religious Education. These subjects are not examined unless students opt for GCSE Religious Education as an option.

2. Option Subjects

All students alongside their compulsory subjects above will select three additional subjects to complete GCSE or equivalent qualifications in. Note, we offer an ASPIRE pathway for students wanting to follow a more academic route post 16 (see below).

Students will need to select one subject from each of the three options:

<u>Option 1</u>	<u>Option 2</u>	<u>Option 3</u>
Computer Science Geography History Religious Studies French Spanish	Art & Design Business Studies Creative iMedia Computer Science Design Technology Drama French Further Maths Geography Health and Fitness Health and Social Care History Hospitality and Catering Music Photography Religious Studies Sociology Spanish Triple Science	Art & Design Business Studies Creative iMedia Computer Science Design Technology Drama French Further Maths Geography Health and Fitness Health and Social Care History Hospitality and Catering Music Photography Religious Studies Sociology Spanish Triple Science

3. ASPIRE subjects

These subjects are being used by colleges, universities and employers to judge student achievement, with the emphasis being on a traditional academic curriculum.

To achieve the ASPIRE pathway, students must pass at least eight GCSEs or equivalents, including:

English Language and Literature
 Mathematics
 History or Geography
 French or Spanish
 Triple Science

4. Reserve Choice

All students must make two reserve choices on the options form. These can be from any of the subjects offered. The reserve choices should be listed in order of preference. We will always try our best to ensure that you get the choices you have made; however, there are times when this proves impossible.

There are several reasons for this; for example, some courses may not run if there is not enough demand or some subjects may clash on the timetable. We will always let you know if this happens.

Forms will be emailed to parents and need to be completed and returned by Friday 6 March 2026.

Any questions regarding the options process should be directed to Mr Verniol - mat.verniol@swale.at or Ms Pollard - michelle.pollard.pcs@swale.at in the first instance.

For any questions relating to specific subjects, please contact the Subject Leaders listed below. Unfortunately, PCS cannot guarantee to run an option subject if an insufficient number of students choose it and we are unable to guarantee any combination of options.

For more information on specific options, you can talk to the following teachers:

Art/Photography	Charly Parr
Business Studies	Mat Verniol
Computer Science	Sam Hamblin
Creative iMedia	Sam Hamblin
Drama	Emily Stephens
Design Technology	Phillip Cornish
English	Lauren Haywood
Geography	Basil Loggenberg
History	Robin Fleury-Beechman
Hospitality	Gavin Desborough
Mathematics	Ezra Leonce
Modern Foreign Languages	Kate Hayhurst
Music	Thomas Himsworth
PHSE / Health & Social Care	Olivia L'etang
Physical Education	James Clarke
Religious Education	Ian Cuthbertson
Science	Lisa Murray
Sociology	Anna Wharfe
SCLN Teacher	Susie Scotting
SEND CO	Nicky Channon

College websites provide excellent insights into what subjects and grades you need to be achieving. The prospectuses from colleges should be used as a guide to their individual requirements. Below is a rough guide:

- To study three A Levels, you will need to have six GCSEs at grade 4 or equivalent including English and Maths. Some colleges will need more.
- The majority of students will study three A Levels, some students study four A Levels. Check the college website for requirements especially if choosing double Maths.
- To study the International Baccalaureate you will need at least seven GCSEs at grade 4 or equivalent, including English or Maths and Science.
- To study a vocational level 3 course, you will need five GCSEs at grade 4 or equivalent including English or Maths depending on the college.
- To study a vocational level 2 course, you will need five GCSEs at grade 3 or equivalent including English depending on the college.

Many courses need specific grades at GCSE. **You must check this information yourself. The list below is a general guide and will differ from college to college.**

Any Art A-level	Minimum requirement of a GCSE Grade 4 or 5 in Art (Dependent on college)
Any Science A-level	Two Grade 6 GCSEs in Science, including the Triple Science selected (e.g. Physics for Physics A Level) or Combined Science, plus Grade 5 in Maths and English.
Any Languages A-level	At least a grade 6 achieved at GCSE in the chosen language and 4 in English Language
Maths	Grade 6 GCSE in Maths (and 4 in English for BHASVIC)
Double Maths (Maths and Further Maths)	Grade 7 GCSE in Maths (and 4 in English for BHASVIC)
Computer Science	Grade 6 GCSE in Maths
Music	Grade 6 or above GCSE in Music or Grade 5 instrumental exam

For any other A Level course, a GCSE in the same subject is NOT a requirement e.g. Drama, Sociology, Psychology. However, if you have taken the GCSE, a specific grade may be required.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

GCSE English Language

Course Content

English Language is designed to develop your reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The course will teach you to read fluently in order to understand and analyse a variety of texts. It will also develop your communication skills to enable you to express yourself appropriately and with accuracy. By the end of the course, you will have developed the skills you need to understand and communicate effectively in the adult world. The course will build on the skills you have been learning at KS3. In reading, you will be expected to become an active and critical reader. In writing, you will be expected to develop your vocabulary and the accuracy of your grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to express yourself precisely. In spoken language, you will be expected to listen attentively to others and to express your ideas effectively using Standard English.

Course Structure

You will read and be assessed on high-quality, challenging texts from the 19th to 21st centuries. The texts, across a range of genres and types, will support you in developing your own writing by providing effective models. The texts will include literature and extended literary non-fiction, and other writing such as essays, reviews and journalism (both printed and online). You will develop your skills in critical reading and comprehension, summary and synthesis, evaluation of writers' techniques, comparing texts, producing clear and coherent writing, writing for impact, presenting information and ideas and responding to others' spoken language.

Homework

You will be set homework on Seneca, for either English Language or English Literature, each week. The tasks have been carefully chosen to further develop the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills that you are developing in class.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exams: 100%

(There are two separate exams for this subject)

Course Progression

The course will prepare you for further study in any subject area because it focuses on developing your core reading, writing and spoken language skills.

Possible Careers

English Language students go on to study a wide variety of exciting courses, including Journalism, Publishing, Advertising, Linguistics, Creative Writing, Politics and Law.

Curriculum Leader - Ms Haywood - lauren.haywood@swale.at



GCSE English Literature

Course Content

English Literature is designed to develop your knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, you will have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written. Studying GCSE English Literature will encourage you to read widely for pleasure. By the end of the course, you will have developed the skills you need to appreciate a wide variety of literature. The course will build on the knowledge and skills that you have acquired at KS3. In reading, you will be expected to become an active and critical reader. In writing, you will be expected to develop your ability to write essays about the texts that you have studied.

Course Structure

Your reading will deepen your understanding of literature, giving you the confidence to apply the skills to any text. You will study a range of high-quality, challenging texts in detail. These will include at least one play by Shakespeare, at least one 19th-century novel, and a selection of poetry since 1789, including representative Romantic poetry and fiction and drama from the British Isles from 1914 onwards. You will develop so you can read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across your reading. You will read in-depth, critically and evaluatively so that you are able to discuss and explain your understanding and ideas. You will develop the habit of reading widely and often and appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage. You will write accurately, effectively and analytically about your reading, using Standard English while acquiring and using a wide vocabulary.

Homework

You will be set homework on Seneca, for either English Language or English Literature, each week. The tasks have been carefully chosen to supplement the work covered in class and to extend your knowledge and understanding of historical and social context.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exams: 100%

(There are two separate exams for this subject)

Course Progression

The course will prepare you for further study in any subject area requiring extended reading and analytical skills.

Possible Careers

English Literature students have gone on to study a wide variety of exciting courses, including Journalism, Publishing, Advertising, Education, Creative Writing, Politics and Law.

Curriculum Leader - Ms Haywood - lauren.haywood@swale.at

GCSE Mathematics

Course Content

This course will develop your numeracy, problem-solving, investigation and analytical skills allowing you to apply these skills in everyday life. It will teach you how to break problems down into small steps, spot patterns and analyse data.

Course Structure

During the course you will be studying six strands of Maths:

Numbers

Algebra

Ratio and Proportion

Geometry

Probability

Statistics

Homework

It is recognised that for a student to make expected progress in Maths they need to complete 45 minutes of homework a week in Years 10 and 11. Maths GCSE homework allows students to reflect on what they have learnt and check whether they are able to use the skills independently.

Assessment

Foundation Students

(Expected to achieve grade 1 to 5)

Exam Board: Edexcel

Written Exams: 100%

(There are three separate exams for this subject)

Higher Students

(Expected to achieve grade 4 to 9)

Exam Board: OCR

Written Exams: 100%

(There are three separate exams for this subject)

Course Progression

A-Level Maths, Sciences, Sociology, Engineering, Accountancy.

Possible Careers

Engineer, Scientist, Statistician, Architecture, Social Scientist.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Leonce - ezra.leonce@swale.at

GCSE Science - Combined & Triple

Course Content

There are two different routes available for students: **Combined Science** and **Triple Science**. Combined Science will result in two GCSEs in science, whereas Triple results in three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Triple Science provides a more challenging route for those who are more confident in Science or wish to study it in the future, as it covers each of the sciences in greater depth. Students must choose Triple Science as an option if they wish to take it.

Both courses teach you a combination of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It provides you with the knowledge and skills you need to understand the world around you, to know how things work and to allow you to make informed decisions. You will undertake both practical and theory-based lessons, providing you with practical investigative skills, critical analysis and evaluation.

Course Structure

Science students will study the fields described below. Triple scientists will follow similar modules but go into greater depth. Alongside these modules, students will be taught practical skills. **Biology:** Cell level systems, Scaling up, Organism level systems, Community level systems, Interactions between systems and Global challenges. **Chemistry:** Particles, Elements, Compounds & Mixtures, Chemical, Reactions, Predicting and Identifying Reactions, Monitoring and Controlling Reactions and Global Challenges. **Physics:** Matter, Forces, Electricity and Magnetism, Waves and radioactivity, Energy and Global challenges.

All students will sit six exams in Science, in Triple Science these are longer resulting in three science GCSEs instead of two.

Homework

Students will have three Science teachers. They will each set a piece of homework each week. This will typically be through our online platform Educake.

Assessment

Exam board: OCR

Written Exams: 100%

(There are six separate exams for this subject)

Course Progression

Many college courses will ask for Science GCSEs including A-level Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Environmental Science and Physical Education. Please note that although three Science GCSEs is desirable to progress onto 'A' levels in the Pure Sciences, it is not essential and the Double Science GCSE provides a solid foundation for 'A' levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Possible Careers

A sound knowledge of the sciences forms a useful background to many diverse and varied careers, for example in the fields of Medicine and Nursing, Forensic Science, Engineering, Sports Technology, Veterinary Science and Environmental Monitoring.

Curriculum Leader - Miss Murray - lisa.murray@swale.at

Physical Education

All students will continue to participate in PE lessons, as a non-exam subject, until they leave.

The format will follow on from their first two years. They will be introduced to different sports and activities, developing skills and understanding the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. In Years 10 and 11, students can select a specific “route” that they would like to participate in.



Each route is designed for different types of performers and much of the content students experience is designed by the students themselves.

In year 9 students can opt for the NCFE V Cert in Health and Fitness, which is the equivalent to a GCSE and is taken in addition to core PE.

Curriculum Leader- Mr Clarke - james.clarke@swale.at



ASPIRE SUBJECTS

GCSE Geography

Course Content

Geography is the study of the world and the problems facing our population both now and in the future, as well as proposing ideas to help solve these issues. The subject helps you to think creatively, innovatively, analytically and critically to tackle the ever-changing world in which we live in. You'll have the opportunity to carry out both human and physical geography fieldwork to study the subject in real-world settings. You will also gain geographical skills to apply in a range of situations by better understanding maps, photographs, statistics, diagrams and graphs.

Course Structure

Paper 1 - Physical Geography: Tectonic Hazards, Weather Hazards, Climate Change, Ecosystems, Tropical Rainforests, Hot Deserts, Rivers, Coasts.

Paper 2 - Human Geography: Urban Issues and Challenges (city studies of Lagos and London), The Development Gap, The Changing Economic World (country studies of Nigeria and the UK), Resource Management - Food, Energy and Water Issues.

Paper 3 - Geographical Application: A paper assessing your fieldwork studies, geographical skills and evaluative skills based on a pre-release booklet combining all your geography knowledge from the course.

Homework

Homework is set following the homework timetable. Tasks are based around consolidating knowledge using online quizzes and preparing for assessments by creating revision resources and practising answering past paper questions.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exam: Unit 1 - 35%

Unit 2 - 35%

Unit 3 - 30%



Course Progression

GCSE Geography is a very broad subject that has many links to other subjects and has options for future study such as: A Levels (Geography, Science, Politics, Environmental Studies, Economics, Sociology, History), BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary/Extended Diploma (Travel and Tourism, Agriculture, Countryside Management, Adventure Education).

Possible Careers

Geography is an incredibly useful subject to help you get a job as many careers welcome the skills that geography gives to an employee. Possible careers could include roles in the following fields: sustainability, green engineering, human rights, international relations, architecture, town planning, urban regeneration, hazard management, weather forecasting, and renewable energy. Geography can lead to a huge range of fascinating and important career paths to help shape the world of the future!

Curriculum Leader - Mr Loggenberg - basil.loggenberg@swale.at

GCSE History

Course Content

GCSE History enables students to learn about key events and people in the past so they have a better understanding of the world today and their place in it. In History, you will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the past. You will analyse, evaluate and use historical sources to make substantiated judgements, as well as analysing and evaluating why interpretations of history may differ.

Course Structure

Medicine Through Time c1250 - Present. This thematic study focuses on change and continuity from the Middle Ages to the present day. The key theme is understanding how changes in communication, technology and society have influenced medicine over time. Case Study - Medicine on the Western Front. In this case study you will develop your source evaluation skills by examining historical documents to investigate how medicine developed as a result of World War One. Early Elizabethan England 1558-1588 In this British depth study you will study the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, from her accession as a young monarch to her victory over the Spanish Armada. You will gain a greater understanding of Elizabethan England and will explore all the challenges she faced, including the infamous threat from Mary Queen of Scots. Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39 In this modern-depth study you will study the legacy of the First World War, the Weimar Republic, Hitler's rise to power and what life was like in Nazi Germany. Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-91 This unit covers the relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union in the 20th century. You will study the origins of the Cold War, key events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and why the Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Homework

Homework is set following the homework timetable. Tasks are primarily based on exam technique.

Assessment

Exam Board: Pearson (Edexcel).

Written Exams: 100%

(There are three separate exams for this subject)

Course Progression

GCSE History is excellent preparation for future academic study such as A Level History, A Level Government and Politics, A Level Law.

Possible Careers

There are careers which use History directly such as Museum and Heritage work, Tourism, Archaeology or Teaching. History can provide valuable skills such as critical thinking, research, communication, and problem-solving, which apply to many other fields like law, politics, business, and more.

Curriculum Leader - Mrs Fleury Beechman - robin.fleurybeebecham@swale.at

GCSE French

Our aim at Peacehaven Community School is for all of our learners to consider themselves 'World Citizens' who belong to a mutually cultural and respectful world. We support our students in understanding new cultures and link these to our own personal experiences. We encourage our students to be curious and interested in the world.

Course Content

You will learn and understand about French people and their lifestyles, explore French culture through film, media and literature; develop your communication skills; learn how to speak spontaneously in new situations; learn the skills required for translation. You may have the opportunity to partake in a study trip abroad to use your language in context.

Course Structure

You will cover a range of topics including: identity and culture, youth culture, lifestyle, customs and traditions. Local, national, international and global areas of interest; home and locality, French-speaking countries, and global sustainability. Current and future study and employment: current study, world of work, careers and future plans.

Homework

Homework will be set weekly and should take approximately an hour. It will be based on exam-style questions, consolidating language introduced in class and using online language tests to secure vocabulary knowledge.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Speaking exam - 25%

Role-Play. Reading aloud in French and a photo card discussion.

Listening exam - 25%

A range of listening comprehensions. A dictation written in French.

Reading exam - 25%

Understanding and responding to written texts. Understanding single words in sentences. Translation from French into English.

Writing exam - 25%

Two writing tasks. Translation from English into French. A grammar exercise (foundation tier).

Course Progression

A Level French.

Possible Careers

Travel and Tourism, the Foreign Office, Customer Relations, Journalism, Translating, Teaching, Hospitality, International Business.

Curriculum Leader - Miss Hayhurst - kate.hayhurst@swale.at



GCSE Spanish

Our aim at Peacehaven Community School is for all of our learners to consider themselves 'World Citizens' who belong to a mutually cultural and respectful world. We support our students in understanding new cultures and link these to our own personal experiences. We encourage our students to be curious and interested in the world.

Course Content

You will learn and understand about Spanish people and their lifestyles, understand Spanish culture through film, media and literature and develop your communication skills. You will learn how to speak spontaneously in new situations and learn the skills required for translation. There may be the opportunity to partake in a study trip abroad to use your language in context.

Course Structure

Identity and culture: youth culture, lifestyle, customs and traditions.
Local, national, international and global areas of interest: home and locality, Spanish-speaking countries, and global sustainability. Current and future study and employment: current study, world of work, careers and future plans.

Homework

Homework will be set weekly and should take approximately one hour. It will be based on exam-style questions, consolidating language introduced in class and using online language tests to secure vocabulary knowledge.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Speaking exam - 25%

Role-Play. Reading aloud in Spanish and a photo card discussion.

Listening exam - 25%

A range of listening comprehensions. A dictation written in Spanish.

Reading exam - 25%

Understanding and responding to written texts. Understanding single words in sentences. Translation from Spanish into English.

Writing exam - 25%

Two writing tasks. Translation from English into Spanish. A grammar exercise (foundation tier).

Course Progression

A Level Spanish

Possible Careers

Travel and Tourism, the Foreign Office, Customer Relations, Journalism, Translating, Teaching, Hospitality, International Business.

Curriculum Leader - Miss Hayhurst - kate.hayhurst@swale.at



GCSE Computer Science

The OCR GCSE Computer Science course teaches students how computers work, from hardware to software, alongside learning how to write working code in a chosen programming language. Students develop essential problem-solving, logical thinking, and analytical skills necessary to design, debug, and create digital solutions.

Course Content

Computer Science will give you an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and a look at what goes on, “behind the scenes”. You will analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of problem-solving. You will be producing algorithms, writing code (using Python) and debugging computer programs. This course will help you develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills.

Course Structure

Unit 1 – Computer Systems. Explore how computer systems work by studying key areas such as systems architecture, memory, storage, networks, system security, system software and a range of ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns.

Unit 2 – Computational Thinking. Algorithms and Programming. Demonstrate computational thinking through algorithms and programming, techniques. Produce robust programs using computational logic, translators and facilities of computing languages and data representation.

Unit 3 – Programming Project. A practical assessment which requires students to plan, develop, test and evaluate a computer program which provides a solution to a given problem.

Homework

Homework is set following the homework timetable. Homework takes the form of practical tasks, research and exam questions.

Assessment

Exam Board: OCR

Written Exams:

Unit 1 - 50%

Unit 2 - 50%

Programming Assessment: Unit 3 - Assessed by subject teacher



Course Progression

A Level Computer Science or other related computer science/ICT related courses.

Possible Careers

Computer Science is relevant to and useful in almost all career pathways. Computer Science careers include; Computer Systems Analysts, Software Developer, Web Developers, Database Administrators, Computer Programmer, Software Engineer.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Hamblin - sam.hamblin@swale.at

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

GCSE Art and Design (Art, craft and design)

If you enjoy being creative, want to increase your practical skills and improve your analytical, communication and research abilities, Art and Design is a great choice. The skills you gain make it a great complement to other subjects. Art and Design is a way of seeing things and making sense of the world around you. It can help you with further study and prepare you for the world of work. Studying Art and Design helps to create a broad and balanced curriculum, which is an excellent foundation for whatever you want to do afterwards. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing have an advantage. Art makes students look at things anew. Communicating with colour, shape and form awakens the imagination.

Course Content

This is a vibrant and dynamic subject where students will follow a broad-based course exploring practical and critical/contextual work through a range of 2D and 3D processes. Art, Craft and Design will encompass working in Fine Art, Textile Design, 3D Design and recording using Photography. It is important to be aware that a great emphasis is placed on a student's ability to draw using a range of techniques and for different purposes. Drawing will form the backbone of all units and exams and is a vital skill in this subject. In addition, students will be expected to produce substantial written analysis and evaluations of their work as it develops. The use of specialist vocabulary and terms is essential and must be explicit throughout their portfolios.

Unit 1 - Organic Elements: students will be given the opportunity to choose from two different pathways: 'Underwater' and 'Plant Life'. They are given a list of recommended artists and designers and are encouraged to explore their own pathways, developing ideas for their own portfolios. Skills, techniques and processes will be taught that complement their pathways. Students are encouraged to explore a range of media and techniques - they can explore 2D art but they can also explore 3-dimensional materials and processes, from willow cane and air-dry clay to wire and modroc plaster.

Unit 2 - Mock Exam unit: This unit will be delivered as a mock exam spread over 12 weeks and culminating in a 5-hour exam in the Autumn Term. The theme will be 'Architecture'. This shorter project will be finalised with a set of lino prints to be completed in the mock exam period.

What skills will you learn?

Alongside improving your practical expertise, you'll learn how to: develop, refine and record your ideas, present a personal response that realises your intentions, improve your creative skills through the effective and safe use of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies. Successfully use visual language and the formal elements eg colour, line, form, shape, tone, texture. Use drawing skills for different needs and purposes.

Homework

Homework is normally set weekly. Students will be expected to spend, on average, two hours a week on the tasks. However, some larger projects will be set over three or four weeks, with two hours per week expected. Self-management and commitment are key to producing your best work and ALL tasks will be evaluated for your assessment. A small range of art materials will be required at home to complete your homework tasks and will be available to buy at the start of the course. Alternatively, students can stay at one of our weekly art clubs to access materials and gain additional support. Homework is not optional.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Portfolios: 60%

Controlled Assessment: 40%

Course Progression

You can continue your Art and Design studies at AS and A-level, in Photography, Graphic Design, 3D Design, Fine Art and Textiles. You'll also be able to choose areas of study to specialise in within a particular title. If you don't want to take your Art and Design studies any further, the transferable skills you gain will still be valuable.

Possible Careers

Art and Design opens the door to lots of exciting careers; try these for starters: Fashion Design, Graphic Design, Theatre Designer, Animator, Video Game Designer, Illustrator, Museum Curator, Photographer, Architecture, Product design, Textiles Design, Ceramics, Advertising, Publishing, Interior Design, Fashion and Media Journalism, Hair and Make-up Design, Retail Design, Exhibition Design, Jewellery Design, Artist, Visual Media, Teaching. New technologies are creating a whole new range of courses where art is being used in innovative ways.



Curriculum Leader- Mrs Parr - charly.parr@swale.at

GCSE Art and Design (Photography)

This is a vibrant and dynamic subject where students follow a broad-based course exploring a range of traditional and digital photographic techniques and processes. Students take a creative journey through the process of lens and light-based media. This will include work created using film, digital imaging or light-sensitive materials, and subject matter such as documentary photography, photojournalism, studio photography, location photography, experimental imagery and installation. Photography GCSE will teach you the basics of darkroom use, how to shoot/develop film, printing your own photos and how to use a digital camera. The word photography can be interpreted as 'a graphic representation with light' therefore drawing will be part of the course.

Students will need to purchase a black paper portfolio, an A3 folder, white gel pens and a camera film. The items will be available to purchase through the art department using ParentPay.

Course Content

Year 10 - For the first two terms, students will be taught how to use a digital camera. They will learn about aperture, depth of field and how to plan and set up their own photoshoot. They will be taught how to create contact sheets in order to select final photographs. They will also explore different media and techniques in order to create 'physical edits' of their photographs as well as learning how to create digital edits. Students will then complete a main project on the theme of 'Distortion - places and objects' and 'Distortion - portraits'. The projects will be finalised in term 1 and 2 of Year 11.

Year 11 - In January of Year 11, all coursework is submitted and students are given the AQA question paper for the final exam. They have a thirteen-week period whereby they create a portfolio of work on their chosen question before sitting a 10 hour exam over 2 days in which they will conclude the project by creating their final personal response.

Homework:

Homework is set weekly and many tasks require students to actively take photoshoots on location. We recommend having your own DSLR camera, but it is not a necessity. Students can also stay for one of our twice-weekly Art intervention days after school, to access materials and gain additional support. It is vital that students understand the requirement of independent photography at home and on location. Homework forms the students' coursework and is graded upon completion.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Portfolios: 60%

Controlled Assessment: 40%

Course Progression

A levels in: Photography, Graphic Design, Media Design, Textiles, Fine Art and 3D design.

Possible Careers

Photographer, Commercial Photographer, Graphic Designer, Magazine Features Editor, Camera Operator, Journalism/ News Photography.

Curriculum Leader- Mrs Parr - charly.parr@swale.at



GCSE Business Studies

Course Content

GCSE Business Studies allows you to examine how businesses of all sizes—from small local enterprises to large multinational corporations—operate in the modern world. You will explore the dynamic nature of business and how it adapts to changing external factors such as technology, ethical considerations, and the global economy. The course helps you develop a range of skills including data analysis, problem-solving, and the ability to construct well-reasoned arguments. You will learn how to think like an entrepreneur and understand the strategic decisions that lead to business success or failure.

Course Structure

The course is divided into two main themes:

1) Influences of operations and HRM on business activity: You will study business in the real world, including business ownership, setting objectives, and the external environment. You will also look at human resources (recruitment and training) and business operations (production and customer service).

2) Influences of marketing and finance on business activity: This theme focuses on how businesses identify and satisfy customer needs through marketing (product, price, place, and promotion). You will also learn about business finance, including sources of finance, cash flow, and financial profit and loss.

Homework

Homework will be set weekly and should take approximately one hour to complete. Tasks will include a mixture of exam-style questions to practice technique, Seneca learning modules to consolidate core knowledge, and research into real-life business case studies.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exams: 100%

Paper 1: Influences of Operations and HRM on Business Activity (50%)

Paper 2: Influences of Marketing and Finance on Business Activity (50%)

Course Progression

The skills gained in Business Studies provide a strong foundation for further study, including A-Level Business, A-Level Economics, or Level 3 Vocational qualifications in Business and Finance.

Possible Careers

A GCSE in Business Studies opens doors to a wide variety of career paths, including: Management and Leadership, Banking and Finance, Human Resources, Entrepreneurship and starting your own business, Law and Politics.

Curriculum Leader – Mat Verniol - mat.verniol@swale.at

GCSE Design and Technology - Timber based materials

Course Content

This GCSE is a design course which places emphasis on understanding and applying design processes. Students will use their creativity and imagination to design and make real and computer-modelled prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs and wants. Students will use primarily timber-based materials such as plywood, but other materials and components enable interesting and more complex outcomes. Recent projects have involved lighting, home delivery, laminating curves, laser-cut plaques and animal care. Design challenges can be team-based, and students are encouraged to think outside the box, experiment and explore, learn from mistakes and build resilience. This is a modern and relevant qualification where students will consider the impact of their design decisions on society and the environment.

Course Structure

Exam Paper:

Core technical principles including new and emerging technologies, energy, new materials, mechanisms and structures, textiles, metals and papers. Specialist technical principles including properties and processes focussed on timber-based materials. Designing and making principles including quality control, iterative design, communication techniques, and social and environmental factors.

Coursework:

A substantial research, design and make task set by the exam board in Year 10.

Homework

Homework will be based on exam-style questions, revision for short tests and research and evaluation work to complement their school-based projects.

Assessment

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exams: - 50%

Coursework: - 50%

Course Progression

A-Level Product design, engineering, design courses, apprenticeships.

Possible Careers

CAD/CAM design, manufacturing, construction work or product design. Apprenticeships in engineering, mechanics, carpentry or building trades.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Cornish - phillip.cornish@swale.at

GCSE Drama

Course Content

The GCSE in Drama takes the form of three components studied over two years. It will enable students to work as either a performer or technical designer. The course aims to provide students with the knowledge and understanding of theatre and drama which will enable them to progress to A Level, Level 3 Btec and equip them with skills for a job in the Performing Arts industry.

Students will develop:

- Performance skills
- Design Skills
- Essay writing skills
- The Ability to critique a performance.
- The ability to work as a team in a group. Responding to a brief independently and to time-sensitive deadlines.



Course Structure

The course is made of three components:

C1: Devising

This component is an exciting and challenging opportunity to work collaboratively with others to explore a range of stimuli in order to create an original performance piece. Devising is essential for the development of new theatre and performance; it allows for personal development and exploration. It allows both performers and designers the opportunity to stretch the limits of their creativity and imagination while exploring a theme or topic of interest to them and their intended audience. Students will develop skills in group work, research and negotiation, while also developing creativity, performance and design skills.

C2: Performing from a text

Understanding a performance text is fundamental to the subject of drama, as this provides students with opportunities to explore plot, structure, narrative and stories from around the world and from different time periods. This component deals with developing knowledge, understanding and skills in exploring and performing from a performance text. Students will interpret this text and rehearse and refine two key extracts, leading to a final performance either as a performer or technical designer.

C3: Theatre Makers in Practice

This component focuses on the work of theatre makers and looks at the theatrical choices made in order to communicate ideas to an audience. Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the ways in which drama can create meaning for an audience through performance. At the end of this unit, students complete a written exam. In lessons leading up to the exam they practically explore a complete performance text; this exploration will give students an insight into how texts are brought to life for an audience and the creative roles within this process. Students will also analyse and evaluate their experience of a live theatre performance as informed members of the audience.

Technical Design Option

In GCSE Drama there is an opportunity to opt to be a design student instead of a performer for Components 1 and 2.

Design Options are:

- Lighting Designer
- Stage/Set Designer
- Costume/Makeup Designer

Homework:

Homework set will be work that will help the students with their Component 1 and 3. When it comes to rehearsing for Components 1 and 2, students will be expected to make arrangements to meet with their groups outside of the lesson to rehearse, but this is flexible and does not need to be more than once a week.

Assessment:

Component 1: 60 marks, 40% of the qualification, marked internally and verified by the exam board.

Component 2: 48 marks, 20% of the qualification. Marked by a visiting examiner.

Component 3: 60 marks, 40% of the qualification, 1 hr 45-minute exam.

Course Progression:

A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies, BTEC National Level 3 in drama, theatre studies or performing arts.

Careers:

Drama students can progress in the performance field, or they can use the design and theatre maker experience to follow a career off-stage as part of the creative team. Outside of the performing arts, students can use a wide range of transferable skills to prepare them for careers in law, medicine, and business.

Curriculum Leader: Miss Stephens - emily.stephens@swale.at

GCSE Further Mathematics and Statistics

Course Content

This is a very exciting course that is targeted at high achieving, mathematically minded students. This course pairs together GCSE Statistics and GCSE Further Maths, thereby allowing students to gain two extra GCSEs. This assesses their higher-order mathematical skills and thus prepares them fully to maximise their potential in further studies. The course offers the opportunity for stretch and challenge, building on the Key Stage 4 curriculum and is intended as an additional qualification to GCSE Mathematics, rather than as a replacement.

The Further Maths Element provides an opportunity for students to study in greater depth and breadth the areas of algebra and geometry, both of which are crucial to further study in the subject. There is an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills. It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs.

There has never been a time of greater statistical significance, with information constantly being updated and we're often bombarded with figures that can be misleading. The Statistics element will provide a strong foundation to understand information students are exposed to and equip them for further academic and vocational study and for employment. It gives students the appropriate mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to help them progress to a full range of courses in further and higher education. This includes Maths courses as well as courses in other disciplines such as Science, Geography, Business and many others, where the understanding and application of statistics is crucial.

Course Structure

In Further Maths students will learn:

Numbers, Algebra, Coordinate Geometry, Calculus, Matrix Transformations, Trigonometry.

In Statistics students will learn:

Data Collection, Data Processing and summarising, Scatter Diagrams and Correlation, Times series diagrams, Probability, Index numbers, Probability distribution

Homework

It is recognised that for a student to make expected progress in Maths they need to complete regular homework. This may vary from independent practice to past paper questions to allow students to ensure they have understood topics covered in class.

Assessment

Students will be taught content to receive two GCSEs for this subject; one in Statistics and one in Further maths. There will be two written exams for each subject at the end of Year 11

Statistics Exam Board: Edexcel

Further Maths Exam Board: AQA

Course Progression

A-Level Maths, or Further Maths, Sciences, Sociology, Engineering, Accountancy.

Possible Careers

Engineer, Scientist, Statistician, Architecture, Social Scientist, Researcher, Analyst.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Leonce - ezra.leonce@swale.at

WJEC Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering

Course Content

Fuel your passion for the industry with this dynamic, hands-on course! Perfect for those who want to experience the buzz of the kitchen and the art of front-of-house service, this qualification opens doors in leisure, tourism, and beyond. You will master essential life skills like budgeting and customer care while exploring how the industry works from every angle—back and front of house. The course blends theory with culinary mastery, empowering you to plan, prepare, and cook stunning dishes. We use an active 'plan, do, review' approach, ensuring you learn by doing in real-world scenarios. This qualification is your passport to hospitality, unlocking diverse opportunities for further education and future employment.

Course Structure:

This qualification consists of two distinct units designed to build your knowledge and test your practical skills. Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry - You will explore the 'big picture,' investigating different types of providers (from luxury hotels to food trucks) and the various job roles available. Key topics include health and safety standards, risk assessments, and the science behind food safety and avoiding food-related illnesses.

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action - This is where you put theory into practice. You will study nutrition and how cooking methods affect food value, learning to plan menus for specific dietary needs. Finally, you will master the technical skills to prepare, cook, and present high-quality dishes, finishing with a professional review of your performance.

Homework

Will be based on exam-style questions, revision for short tests and research work, which will complement your school-based projects. Tasks may extend your knowledge and understanding of the industry and develop your practical skills. There will be many opportunities to take part in the planning and preparation of catering events in and out of school.

Cultural Capital: There are many exciting opportunities to visit local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, theme parks and catering manufacturers along with visits from industry leaders from across the hospitality sector both commercial and non commercial, including the Army and Royal Navy.

Assessment

Exam Board: EDUQAS

Unit 1 - Written Examination 40%. Unit 2 - 12-hour Controlled Assessment (Plan, Prepare & Cook) 60% Grading: Distinction (L2):* GCSE Grade 8.5–9. Distinction (L2): GCSE Grade 7. Merit (L2): GCSE Grade 5–6. Pass (L2): GCSE Grade 4.

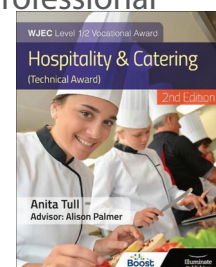
Course Progression

The skills you develop here - organisation, budgeting, customer service, and time management are highly valued in many sectors beyond just hospitality.

Future Study: Progress to Level 3 Applied Diplomas in Food Science & Nutrition, Professional Cooking, or Hospitality & Tourism Management.

Possible Careers

Chef, Hotel Manager, Front of House, Sommelier, Dietician, Nutritionist, Sports Science Support, Food Technologist, Event Planner, Wedding Coordinator, Supply Chain Manager, Retail, Food Stylist, Journalist, Teacher/Lecturer, Logistics & Catering Management (Army/Navy/RAF).



BTEC Music: Level 1 / 2 Technical Award in Music Practice

Course Content

This course is for learners who want to acquire Music sector-specific applied knowledge and technical skills by studying and developing their musical skills and techniques, and by responding to a Music industry brief as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification enables learners to develop their skills, such as using musical elements, music creation, performance and music production. Students explore realistic contexts, and develop personal skills, such as self-development; responding to a brief; planning; and time management through a practical and skills-based approach to Music.

Course Structure

Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles - In this component, you will develop your understanding of different types of music products and the techniques used to create them. You will explore how musical elements, technology and other resources are used in the creation, production and performance of music. You will also practically explore the key features of different styles of music and music theory and apply your knowledge and understanding to developing your own creative work. Component 2: Music Skills Development - As a performer, producer or creator in the music industry, you need to continually develop your skills and techniques in order to be successful and secure a regular flow of gigs and commissions. In this component, you will participate in workshops and classes where you will develop technical, practical, personal and professional skills and specialise in at least two of the following areas: music performance, creating original music, and music production. Component 3: Responding to a Music Brief - This component will allow you to work to your strengths and interests and apply the skills that you have learned throughout your course in a practical way. You will focus on a particular area of the music sector that excites and appeals to you and respond to a music brief as a composer, performer or producer. You will develop and present an original creation based on a piece from a given list and a style from a choice of four. You will then present this as a solo or group performance, an audio recording or a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) project.

Homework

You will have one hour of homework per week which will focus on practising your instrument /voice, keeping a rehearsal diary and completing written tasks for each component.

Assessment

Exam Board: Pearson

Component 1: 30%(internally assessed and externally moderated)

Component 2: 30% (internally assessed and externally moderated)

Component 3: 40% (externally assessed)

Course Progression

A Levels (including Music) as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects. Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Music or a BTEC National in Music Technology, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the music sector.

Possible Careers

Musician, singer, musical theatre performer, recording artist, music teacher, music journalist, sound engineer, production, events management, retail.

Curriculum Leader- Mr Himsworth - thomas.himsworth@swale.at

NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness (PE)

Course Content

This qualification will show students the benefits of fitness, the main components used to measure an individual's level of physical fitness, how to use the principles of training in a fitness programme, how to prepare, plan and develop a personal health and fitness programme and how a healthy balanced diet affects lifestyles. Students will learn about the functions of the main body systems, how to use different training techniques and methods and the importance of diet and nutrition. They will develop skills by preparing and planning a health and fitness plan, by carrying out fitness tests and evaluating health and fitness plans. The skills that they develop in literacy, numeracy and ICT are essential for the modern workplace along with teamwork; presentation skills; independent working; working to deadlines and efficient use of resources.

Course Structure

The course is set across eight content areas. Each content area is explained below and all link to both the exam assessment (40%) and the Controlled Assessment (60%). Combined these two assessments that cover all eight content areas equal to the students outcome in the summer of Year 11. This is a two-year course and all content is covered in theory (IT rooms) and practical lessons. We also lead a trip annually for our Year 11 students to the University of Brighton, where all eight content areas are covered amongst theory and practical lessons with specialist teachers at the university.

Learners' study: The structure and function of body systems. The effects of health and fitness activities on the body. Health and fitness and the components of fitness. The principles of training. The impact of lifestyle on health and fitness. Testing and developing components of fitness. Health and fitness analysis and setting goals. Planning, developing and taking part in a health and fitness programme and understanding how to prepare safely.

Homework

Homework will be based on student's needs and will vary from GCSEPod, reading, research and completion of set tasks in our online workbooks.

Assessment

Exam Board: NCFE

Exam: 40%

Controlled Assessment: 60%

Course Progression

This course allows students to study A level, National Diploma and Level 3 as well as a variety of apprenticeships.

Possible Careers

PE teacher, Sports Analyst, Sports Coach, Personal Trainer, Sports Therapy, Nutritionist and more.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Clarke - james.clarke@swale.at



Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care

What is the health and social care sector?

About three million people in the UK work in health and social care. In healthcare, this includes jobs such as doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants and administrators, while social care roles include care assistants, social workers, occupational therapists and counsellors. Demand for both health and social care is likely to continue to rise, so it is sure to continue to play a key role in UK society, and the demand for people to fill these vital jobs will increase.

What does the qualification cover?

This course gives you the opportunity to study how people grow and develop over the course of their lives, from infancy to old age, and the factors that may affect this, such as major life-changing events like marriage or parenthood. You will learn how people adapt to these changes as well as the types of support available to help them. You will also learn about the different health and social care services, and about 'care values' and their importance in making sure that the people who use these services get the care they need. You will be able to demonstrate these care values practically. You will develop skills in interpreting data about someone's state of health in order to design a plan that will allow them to improve their health and well-being. This new qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE and is aimed at everyone who wants to find out more about health and social care. This course will give you the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and techniques, and to review your own performance in demonstrating 'care values'.

Assessment

- 1 - Human life-span and development - Coursework
- 2 - Health and Social Care Services and Values - Coursework
- 3 - Health and Wellbeing - Exam (2 hours, 60 marks)

The three components focus on the assessment of knowledge, skills and practices. These are all essential to developing a basis for progression and, therefore, learners need to achieve all components in order to achieve the qualification.

Where will this take me?

When you have completed this qualification, you will have developed a practical understanding of the health and social care sector. Because you will be building useful skills not generally covered in GCSE courses, you will have a better understanding of whether this is an area you want to continue to study. This course will also help you develop transferable skills and knowledge, such as observation, teamwork, good knowledge of life stages and promoting awareness of rights, communication, respect and competency in the workplace.

After you have finished this course you may want to go on to further study, such as A levels, BTECs or a mixture of both. Or you might want to find work in the health and social care sector as a trainee or apprentice. Students may progress on to Nursing, Midwifery, Counselling and job roles in the NHS, Health Promotion, Teaching and Educational Support work, Social Work, Probation and Police, Youth and Community Work, Nursery Nursing, Child Care Management and and Public Health Work. Opportunities are available in your area of interest.

Curriculum Leader - Miss L'etang - olivia.letang@swale.at

GCSE Sociology

Course Content

Sociology is the study of human society. It draws on a variety of viewpoints in order to understand the social world around us, in an open and critical manner. It concentrates on the way we make society, what it is and how society shapes us.

You will relate this to your own experiences of living in Britain. You will also study how societies have changed over time and how it differs across cultures.

By studying Sociology you will develop a wide range of knowledge and understanding about how Sociologists study and understand social structures, processes and issues.

You are encouraged to take a questioning approach to evidence and issues, thus developing critical, analytical and evaluative skills.

Students should be aware that this is a challenging GCSE. They will need to have strong literacy skills and be confident at writing essays. Students will need to be motivated, independent learners at school and home.

Course Structure

Unit 1 - The Sociological Approach and Research Methods

Unit 2 - Families

Unit 3 - Education

Unit 4 - Crime and Deviance

Unit 5 - Social Stratification



Homework

Homework in Sociology will be fortnightly Seneca quizzes, to consolidate previous learning.

Assessment

There is no coursework for GCSE Sociology. Students will sit two exam papers at the end of Year 11.

Exam Board: AQA

Written Exam: Paper 1: The Sociology of Families and Education - 50% (100 marks)

Paper 2: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification - 50% (100 marks)

Course Progression

A Level Sociology, A Level Law, A Level Psychology, A Level Politics.

Possible Careers

Lawyer, Doctor, Nurse, Teacher, Social Worker, Health Worker, Childcare, Journalism.

Curriculum Leader - Ms Wharfe - anna.wharfe@swale.at

GCSE Religious Studies

Course Content

This GCSE specification focuses on a comparative study of both Christianity & Islam, where both religions are looked at in equal depth. In Year 10, student learning will focus on deepening understanding of the belief systems that underpin these two global faiths, before exploring how these ideas are put into practice in everyday life.

Towards the end of Year 10 and into Year 11 we will advance onto the study of Paper 2, where the learning is focussed on understanding how religious beliefs influence the views religious believers hold on a range of controversial topics including: euthanasia, abortion, animal testing, the treatment of criminals and the morality of war.

As we approach the end of these units, time is built in for revision, with a series of bespoke lessons designed to ensure student weaknesses are addressed before the summer examination period begins.

Course Structure

Paper 1 – Beliefs & Practices (Four units)

Christianity: Beliefs & teachings

Christianity: Practices

Islam: Beliefs & teachings

Islam: Practices



Paper 2 - Thematic Studies (Four units)

Theme B: Religion & Life

Theme C: The Existence of God & Revelation

Theme D: Religion, Peace & Conflict

Theme E: Religion, Crime & Punishment

Homework

Homework is set following the homework timetable. Each fortnight students will complete tasks focussed on practising GCSE-style questions, completing wider reading or research. Tasks will be set in a homework booklet, allowing students to see upcoming tasks and organise their own study for the term ahead.

Assessment

We follow AQA Religious Studies 8062. The GCSE examination consists of two 1hr 45min papers. These have historically been set approximately one week apart. In each paper, students will be expected to answer questions on each of the four units above. Each unit comprises four styles of question (1, 4, 6 & 12-marks), each with increasing complexity.

As mentioned above, Paper 1 focuses on student knowledge of foundational beliefs and practices in both Christianity and Islam. In Paper 2, students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of religious responses to a range of modern-day issues.

Course Progression

The study of Religious Studies at GCSE level allows students to develop and strengthen their knowledge of theology, ethics and philosophy. It enhances hard skills including religious knowledge, literacy and textual analysis and soft skills including debate, justification and evaluation of ideas and critical analysis.

These diverse skills offer a helpful platform for students considering moving forward to study A-Levels including English and Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (RPE) as well as university courses including Politics, Philosophy & Economics (PPE) and Religious Studies. More generally, the course includes a huge number of transferable skills that will allow them to stand apart from their peers, whichever post-16 pathway they choose.

Possible Careers

In an increasingly religious global community, having a confident understanding of Religious Studies positions young people well for the diversity of the job market: from opening up opportunities to work in religiously diverse teams, to working both indirectly and directly with religious communities both in the UK and abroad.

Sectors from journalism, law and medicine to travel, tourism and work within the armed forces - these all include organisations where those with an awareness of the complexities, sensitivities and diversity of religions would be well-placed to navigate and flourish in a complex world.

Curriculum Leader- Mr Cuthbertson - ian.cuthbertson@swale.at

Cambridge National in Creative iMedia Level 1/2 - with Game Design

Equivalent to GCSE

This exciting, hands-on course is perfect for students with a passion for digital creativity, design, and video games. It is equivalent to a GCSE and is assessed primarily through practical coursework, meaning less reliance on a single exam.

What will you learn?

1. The Creative Process: Master the industry standard for media creation, from initial client briefs and audience analysis to final production and review. You will learn how to create essential planning documents like storyboards and mind maps. (Mandatory unit)

2. Digital Graphics: Develop essential design skills by creating professional-quality digital graphics, including designing a complete visual identity (e.g., logos, branding) for a client or product.

3. Games Design & Development: Dive into the world of digital games. You will:
Concept: Plan an original game idea, exploring different genres, gameplay styles, and platforms.

Design: Create a comprehensive Game Design Document (GDD).

Create: Use specialist software to develop and build your own playable digital game.

Why should I choose this course?

This is the subject for you if you:

- Enjoy being creative and designing visuals.
- Are interested in computers, digital art, and coding logic.
- Prefer working on substantial practical projects (coursework) over just sitting exams.

Assessment

The course is typically assessed through a combination of:

One External Exam: Focusing on the theoretical and planning aspects of the media industry.

Practical Coursework: Two to three large projects (Non-Examined Assessments - NEA) completed under supervision, which involve designing graphics and creating your own digital game.

Possible Careers

Any creative industry such as Games Designer, Level Designer, Concept Artist, Graphic Designer, Web Designer or Animator.

Curriculum Leader - Mr Hamblin - sam.hamblin@swale.at

Which subjects do I have to study?

All Core Subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education and Religious Education.

At least one of - Geography or History or French or Spanish.

Will I continue to study Religious Education, even if I don't choose it as a GCSE?

Yes, all students will have to study Religious Education. However, students will not have to sit an examination in this subject unless they opt to take it for a GCSE.

Do all of the subjects/courses lead to a GCSE or equivalent?

All of our courses are GCSEs or equivalent vocational courses (BTECs, Cambridge Nationals and V Certs). All of these qualifications can lead to further study at A Level and Level 3 in college. Vocational qualifications tend to be more practical in nature with ongoing continuous assessment and are more closely linked to vocational (work) related pathways. However, they do have one externally assessed unit which counts for between 25 - 40% of the overall grade.

When do I have to make my choices by?

The final deadline for your options to be completed is **Friday 6 March 2026**.

Am I guaranteed to get my top preferences?

In many cases, we will be able to give you most of the courses that you have put at the top of your list but this is not always possible. You must consider all choices wisely. In some cases, we ask students to make further choices if the initial choices cannot be fulfilled.

Are there any restrictions on what I can choose?

For some subjects, it is essential that you have studied them before. It is also recommended that you have a broad and balanced curriculum.

What if I can already speak another language, does it count instead of an option?

A number of other languages could count but you must check with Ms Hayhurst in the languages department. If you decide to take this language as an extra GCSE, this will not count as an option choice and we cannot guarantee we will be able to support you with the preparation.

Is it crucial for me to talk to my parents and carers' for support and guidance?

It is also important as well as the points above that you continue to talk and discuss your options with your parents/carers. They are there to offer support and guidance, and they will need to sign off your options form to say that you have had a conversation with them and that they agree with your option choices.

When will I receive my final options?

Letters will be sent out to all students after the Easter holidays, in term 5, to confirm the KS4 courses you will be taking in September 2026.

Can I change my mind once I have been allocated my options?

It is very difficult to change an option once you have made it. All classes are made by the combination of choices from all students. If you change your mind, we may not be able to change your choice at all. It is better to do as much research as possible, make a decision and then stick with it.

Where can I find further information to help me with my choices?

The school website has useful information about post-16 and career choices to help you decide.

Speak to your teacher	They know you really well and can help to see whether the subject or course will be suitable for you. Don't forget your mentor. They can help to look at your combination of choices to see if they go well together.
Attend options evening / parents/carers evening	Every option subject will be represented. You will be free to discuss the courses with your parents/carers and speak to staff about the different courses available and that you are interested in. Options Evening is on Monday 12 January 2026.
Taster sessions	You will have the opportunity to try GCSE / vocational lessons during your normal timetable from Monday 20th January 2025. This will help you to find out more about the subject and how it is structured.

ACCESS TO CAREERS INFORMATION & ADVICE

Students can use the school's library to research their options and the qualifications that they may need. The library contains a lot of useful careers-based resources.

While a small number of students go on to apprenticeships or other employment (with training) after Year 11, most PCS students go on to one of the following colleges on leaving school: BHASVIC, Varndean College, Sussex Downs, MET College or Plumpton College.

Courses are available in academic and vocational subjects at each of the following levels:

- Pre-Foundation/Entry Level
- Foundation (Level 1, equivalent to levels 3-1 on the GCSE grade scale)
- Higher (Level 2, equivalent to levels 9-4 on the GCSE grade scale)
- Advanced (Level 3, equivalent to components of A Level courses)

Students can move from one level to the next if they are successful and progress to higher levels at University.

On leaving school students can choose to gain a variety of further qualifications, including:

- A Levels and Applied A Levels
- International Baccalaureate
- City and Guilds
- NVQ Levels 2 and 3
- BTECs (a range of qualification sizes is available) at Level 2 or 3
- GCSE courses

Please be aware that any student who fails to achieve a grade 4 in English and/or Mathematics in Year 11 will have to study for and retake the subject(s), until this grade is achieved, as part of a further education programme of study.

Some opportunities in education and in employment are open to applicants with any combination of subjects while others are much more specific about which subjects they will accept; entry requirements to University vary enormously.

Students should make sure that they will hold suitable qualifications to allow them to move on to the courses of their choice. Entry requirements for apprenticeships also vary. Some opportunities do require specific subjects and grades, while others are more flexible.

If you are in any doubt, about anything, please do ask a member of staff for help.

Good luck with your planning!

LEVELS

All educational qualifications in England and Wales are grouped into levels as follows:

- Entry Level = Below GCSE Grade 1
- Level 1 = GCSE Grade 3 – 1
- Level 2 = GCSE Grade 9 – 4
- Level 3 = AS / A Level
- Level 4 = Certificate of Higher Education (University Year 1)
- Level 5 = Diploma of Higher Education (University Year 2)
- Level 6 = Bachelor's Degree (University Year 3)
- Level 7 = Master's Degree
- Level 8 = Doctorate

Peacehaven Community School offers its students the opportunity to achieve qualifications at Level 1 and preferably Level 2, so that they can progress to study on Level 3 courses post-16.

Qualifications that are not GCSEs (ASDAN, BTEC, Cambridge National, VCert, VRQs) can be achieved at each level with a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Starred Distinction.

The 0.5 figures are included for indicative purposes only, i.e. to show the equivalence to the GCSE grades system. For example, a student earning a Merit in Health and Fitness would earn the equivalent of 5.5 GCSE points.

Level 2 Distinction* (L2D*)	8
Level 2 Distinction (L2D)	7
Level 2 Merit (L2M)	6
Level 2 Pass (L2P)	4
Level 1 Distinction (L1D)	3
Level 1 Merit (L1M)	2
Level 1 Pass (L1P)	1

GCSEs

Virtually all GCSEs are assessed through exams at the end of the course (May/June of Year 11), although some (e.g. Health and Fitness) do still have a non-examination assessment component.

HOMEWORK

It is vital that homework is completed appropriately during Key Stage 4. Many tasks set will cover several homework sessions and will help to secure knowledge and understanding, thus the quality of work completed at home will often directly affect the overall grade achieved in a subject. Homework details will of course be accessible via Google Classroom on the school's website.

MORE INFORMATION

Further details on the most of the courses listed in this booklet can be found on the websites of the main examining boards:



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