



Key Stage 4 Learning Pathways

Year 9 into Year 10 Alternative Curriculum Provision 2024 - 2026

January 2024

Information for families with students in Year 9

Dear Parents/carers

Your child has reached an important stage in their school career. They started certain examination subjects in Year 9 and will follow these courses over the next two years. We believe it is in the best interests of your child that they follow the alternative curriculum. This means that they will not select option choices; rather, they will study the courses we have chosen for them, as we believe this will give them the best chances of success at the end of Y11. As part of the alternative curriculum group, they will be in a smaller, supported class to undertake their GCSE courses, which will be highly beneficial for their progress.

This booklet provides all the information for the courses your child will follow. Please view the alternative curriculum video on our website for further information.

Y9 Parents and Options Evening will be held on Thursday 1 February 2024 on SchoolCloud via video calls. This gives parents the opportunity to discuss your child's selection for the alternative curriculum programme. More information on this will be sent in a separate correspondence.

During options fortnight, your child will be provided with more information about the alternative curriculum. We look forward to continuing to work closely with you and your child during this time to ensure success at GCSE level in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Tucker
Headteacher

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The Core

The following subjects, together with the number of periods per fortnight allocated to them, are compulsory in Key Stage 4:

CORE SUBJECTS	PERIODS PER FORTNIGHT
English	8
Mathematics	8
Science	9
Physical Education	2
Equality and Diversity	4
Personal, Social and Health Education (SKL)	1
Welsh	4
Welsh Baccalaureate	4

The programmes of study for Equality and Diversity and SKL include citizenship, sex education and careers education.

GCSE English Language will focus on literacy skills and GCSE English Literature will allow for the study of texts. Two maths GCSEs are being delivered, one focusing on numeracy and the maths needed for everyday life, and the other extending to the maths required for progression to further mathematical, scientific or technical study.

A rigorous Welsh Baccalaureate will be taught as the overarching framework at 13-19, focussing on literacy, numeracy and other skills essential for learning and employment. It will be graded at all levels.

The Welsh Baccalaureate

The Welsh Baccalaureate was introduced to provide students with a more rounded educational experience. It enriches and incorporates existing general and vocational qualifications. It is designed to prepare students for higher education and employment.

The core of the revised Welsh Baccalaureate will have a clear focus on the following skills:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Digital Literacy
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Planning and Organisation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Personal Effectiveness

These skills will be developed, applied and assessed through the completion of four 'Challenges' which are:

- The Individual Project Challenge
- Global Citizenship Challenge
- Enterprise and Employability Challenge
- Community Challenge

All students will follow the Welsh Baccalaureate throughout Key Stage 4.

The subjects your child will study in addition to the core subjects

To provide a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4, your son/daughter will follow a range of courses. These courses are:-

GCSE Courses

Art (Year 10 & 11)

Vocational Courses

Business Studies (Completed in Year 9)

Sports Studies (Completed in Year 9)

Sweet (Year 10)

The Prince's Trust Award (Year 11)

Specification

The new GCSE English Language course is a linear specification. The course will assess students on the three core skills in English: Oracy, Reading and Writing. The GCSE English Language course by the WJEC is designed "to allow students to develop their ability to use English as active and informed citizens and be able to speak, listen, read and write fluently, appropriately, effectively and critically for a wide range of personal, functional and social purposes."

Assessments

Unit 1:

This Oracy unit requires students to complete two oral assessments to assess their speaking and listening skills. All students will have to complete one individual presentation in the classroom and one group discussion task. This is assessed internally and moderated by the WJEC. All tasks must be recorded.

Unit 2:

This is an external examination which is sat at the end of the course. It is a two hour examination with two sections (reading and writing), which a focus on description, narration and exposition. It is worth 40% of their overall grade.

Unit 3:

This is an external examination which is sat at the end of the course. It is a two hour examination with two sections (reading and writing), which focus on argumentation, persuasion and instructional texts. It is worth 40% of their overall grade.

Did you know?

'TikTok' is in the dictionary.

Work Involved

- Collaborative and independent researching of topics in preparation for Oracy assessments.
- Developing reading strategies in order to read a range of different texts, including continuous and non-continuous texts, in order to answer a variety of question types.
- Practising writing a variety of texts in the classroom and in timed conditions to suit different audiences and purposes.

Your Prospects

The importance of English Language cannot be overstated. The vast majority of post 16 courses and jobs require students to achieve a minimum of a 'C' grade in English Language.

Head of Department:
Miss S Evans

Specification

The GCSE English Literature course is a unitised specification with the first entry for the new course in the summer of 2017. It is a strengthened course which requires students to read a variety of novels, plays and poems in order to help them to develop their skills with writing analytically, and produce informed personal and critical responses. It is widely recognised that the study of Literature improves students' vocabulary, grammar and reading skills to complement their study of English Language.

Assessments

Unit 1:

This is an external examination which consists of two sections: studying prose from a different cultures studying and contemporary poetry. For this examination, students study 'Of Mice and Men' and compare two unseen poems. The examination is two hours and constitutes 35% of students' overall grade.

Unit 2:

This external examination consists of two sections: studying a prose text and the analysis of a dram text. Students must answer questions on either 'Heroes' and 'An Inspector Calls', or 'Blood Brothers' and 'A Christmas Carol'. This examination is two hours and constitutes 40% of students' overall grade.

Unit 3:

This is a non-examination assessment (NEA) and consists of 25% of students' overall grade. Students must complete the study of a theme in a Shakespeare play, and compare and contrast a theme in two or more poems prescribed by the WJEC. All preparation work is complete in lesson and the assessment is completed in examination conditions.

Did you know?

Roald Dahl tested chocolates for Cadbury's while he was at school.

Work Involved

- Texts studied include 15 poem from the 'One Hundred Welsh Poets from Wales' anthology, a literary heritage text and a contemporary drama text.
- Students will examine extracts to construct analysis of writers' use of language, form and structure, and also construct responses that provide a developed and sustained interpretation of texts, whilst considering the impact of socio-historical contextual influences.

Your Prospects

GCSE English Literature is not only one of the oldest subjects studied in education but it is also highly regarded by universities. It demonstrates students' abilities to read, understand, analyse and appreciate texts, whilst also developing their knowledge of literary creativity and different cultures.

Head of Department:
Miss S Evans

Specification

The current course now begins in Year 9 and takes place over three years, resulting in a single Mathematics GCSE qualification. Students will follow a linear specification with two examinations at the end of Year 11 though exceptions may be made in certain circumstances.

Key Stage 4 Content

The four assessment objectives studied by the students are:-

1. Number
2. Algebra
3. Geometry and Measure
4. Statistics

Assessments

The course will be assessed by two examination papers at the end of the programme of study. The use of an electronic calculator is permitted on one of these papers.

There is no coursework component to this specification; certification is based solely on examination results.

Did you know?

From 0 to 1000, the only number that has the letter "a" in it is "one thousand".

Work Involved

The specification will enable students to appreciate the coherence, creativity, elegance and power of mathematics. It will prepare students to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices. It will have an emphasis on those aspects of mathematics required for progression into mathematics or mathematically related disciplines or employment routes. It will feature problems set both in real-world contexts and within mathematics itself and will encourage students to employ and evaluate different mathematical techniques.

Your Prospects

All Higher Education providers view a good maths/numeracy qualification as a valuable asset.

Head of Department:
Mr P Thompson



Mathematics

Numeracy (GCSE)

Specification

The current course begins in Year 9 and takes place over three years, resulting in a single Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE qualification. Students will follow a linear specification with two examinations at the end of Year 11 though exceptions may be made in certain circumstances.

Key Stage 4 Content

The four assessment objectives studied by the students are:-

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry and Measure
- Statistics

Assessments

The course will be assessed by two examination papers at the end of the programme of study. The use of an electronic calculator is permitted on one of these papers.

There is no coursework component to this specification; certification is based solely on examination results.

Did you know?

In a room of 23 people there's a 50% chance that two people have the same birthday

Work Involved

This specification places emphasis on those aspects of mathematics which are of most relevance to students functioning as informed twenty-first century citizens. It will prepare students to make decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices. Solving problems in the real world and the problem-solving cycle will feature within the specification as well as the more numerical aspects of mathematics. There will also be opportunities for students to make informed decisions about the use of technology, the management of money and the use of statistics.

Your Prospects

All Higher Education providers view a good maths/numeracy qualification as a valuable asset.

Head of Department:
Mr P Thompson





Science

Single Applied (GCSE)



Specification

The WJEC GCSE Applied Science (Single Award) specification utilises a context led approach to science learning and assessment. It provides students with a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.

Studying the GCSE Applied Science (Single Award) provides insight into, and experience of how science works, whilst stimulating students' curiosity and encouraging them to develop an understanding of science, its applications and its relationship to the individual and society.

Your acceptance onto this course will be based on your KS3 result.

Assessments

External Examinations

2 x 1 hour 30 minute examinations to be sat one at the end of year 10 and one at the end of year 11

Controlled Assessment

Task based assessment to be carried out in Autumn of year 11 worth 20 %
Practical assessment carried out in school but externally marked worth 10%.

Did you know?

Humans have 206 bones

Work Involved

Lessons will contain a mixture of practical, research based and theoretical activities. Students will work in groups, pairs or independently and will use experiments, modelling and ICT to understand, practise and reinforce the scientific concepts that they learn within the course.

Unit 1: Science in the modern world

Unit 2: Science to support our lifestyles

Unit 3: Task based assessment

Unit 4: Practical assessment

Your Prospects

Single Applied Science GCSE provides a pathway onto further Applied Science qualifications.

Head of Department:
Mrs K Morris

PE & Games Core (non-examination)

Specification

Take a well-earned break from the pressure of exam subjects and enjoy a variety of physical activities.

All students at Key Stage 4 will have one PE/Games lesson a week.

Did you know?

A baby's body has 300 bones at birth. These eventually fuse to form 206 bones in adults.

Work Involved

The aim of Games/PE at Key Stage 4 is to ensure students remain physically active and promote a healthy lifestyle. There will be a variety of activities offered during the Key Stage including:

- Team Games
- Fitness training - aerobics, circuit training
- Gymnastics activities
- Athletics
- Swimming
- Striking Games
- Outdoor and Adventurous Activities, including mountain biking
- Dance



**Head of Department:
Mr L Morgan**





Equality and Diversity

Level 2 Certificate



Specification

Students are already studying this course and will continue to do so in Ys 10 and 11.

This qualification aims to:

- introduce the concepts of equality and diversity in a variety of environments including society, the community and the workplace highlight how stereotyping and labelling affect individuals
- outline the effects of prejudice and discrimination
- allow the learning to examine rights and responsibilities
- stress the importance of taking individual responsibility and action to help and support others
- provide a basis for further study and/or career development

The objectives of this qualification is to help learners to:

- raise their awareness of the issues surrounding equality and diversity
- apply this awareness through their actions in society, community and the workplace

Assessments

Each candidate must create a portfolio of evidence which demonstrates achievement of all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria associated with each unit.

Did you know?

Buddhism is the fourth largest religion in the world but most Buddhists don't believe in God.

Work Involved

Students will consider issues of equality and diversity in society, the community and the workplace.

Students will have opportunities to share ideas in discussions and will develop their ability to explain key ideas. They will research their local community and provide relevant examples to support their work.

Your Prospects

An Equality and Diversity qualification has practical use in a wide variety of careers, particularly those dealing with the public such as youth work, community development work, health and social care, customer service/business subjects, as well as early years care and education.

Head of Department:
Mrs S Hawke-Williams



Welsh (Core) (GCSE)



Specification

Students will study three broad themes:-

- Employment
- Wales and the World
- Youth

Did you know?

Mount Everest is named after Welshman,
Sir George Everest

Work Involved

The focus will be on teaching language and grammar that can be applied within these themes. Typical examples of activities include:-

- Presenting information orally and in written form
- Conversing with others
- Listening and responding to others
- Letter writing
- Creative writing
- Form filling exercises
- Reading stories
- Using IT

Assessments

Students will sit the Unit 1 oral exam in Year 10.

Units 2, 3 and 4 exams will assess all skills at the end of Year 11.

Your Prospects

Welsh is increasingly used as a business language, especially within the public sector, due to the requirement for customer orientated services to be provided bilingually. To be bilingual in any two languages would be a desirable quality in the eyes of future employers but especially considering the current climate in Wales where companies are re-training adults in this area. The advantage of full course Welsh is that students will be able to converse at a basic level in Welsh on a number of topics related to business and so would be looked upon favourably for employment in Wales.

Head of Department:
Miss K Sexton



Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate



Specification

The Skills Challenge Certificate provides students with the opportunity to develop the individual and team skills, attributes and behaviours that are desired by employers. The learning and development of these skills will support students in their other subjects and prepare them for their future after school. At Key Stage 4 students complete four challenges; Enterprise and Employability (20%), Community (15%), Global (15%) and the Individual Project (50%) which are judged through a series of controlled assessments, group tasks and individual assignments. All work is submitted through coursework format.

Work Involved

The Skills Challenge Certificate consists of four components, which are followed by all students:

- ♦ Individual Project - 50%
- ♦ Enterprise and Employability Challenge - 20%
- ♦ Global Citizenship Challenge - 15%
- ♦ Community Challenge - 15%

The combined outcomes of the four components will determine whether the Skills Challenge Certificate is awarded at National or Foundation level.

Assessments

The Skills Challenge Certificate components are internally assessed and externally moderated.

The National Skills Challenge Certificate is graded A* - C. For a National award, the learner must achieve all of the components, the Individual Project and the three Challenges, with a minimum of 80% at level 2 and the further 20% at level 1.

The Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate is graded Foundation Pass or Foundation Pass*. For a Foundation award, the learner must achieve all of the components, the Individual Project and the three Challenges, with a minimum of all at level 1.

Your Prospects

The Welsh Baccalaureate will encourage the learner to value skills development as a key aspect of education and life-long learning. Offering a learning experience relevant to the needs and demands of the workplace will develop students' confidence, drive and initiative, preparing them to enter, succeed and progress in the world of work.

Students will continue their Welsh Baccalaureate studies at Post 16. They can study National or Advanced, which can be worth up to an A grade at A Level standard.

Head of Department:
Mrs D Rees

Specification

GCSE Fine Art is a two year course where the students will achieve a GCSE qualification at the end of Year 11. The GCSE course is ideal for students who wish to undertake a structured, enjoyable course and one that could lead perfectly into the 'A' Level Art and Design course in Year 12 or stand as a recognised subject at the end of Year 11. The Fine Art course delivers all the necessary skills and opportunities for students to enable them to continue in the many different areas of Art in the future. The subject is also for students that may not fully know what they want to do as a career but are interested in the subject and enjoy the practical nature of the Art. This GCSE is highly recognised and sought after by many colleges and employers as it demonstrates the candidate's ability to work skilfully and independently.

Did you know?

The Mona Lisa has her own mailbox in The Louvre because of all the love letters she receives

Work Involved

- Drawing, painting, printing, sculpture, photography, ceramics and Photoshop.
- The research and study of different artists' and designers work from the past and today and their techniques and processes linking to student's own work.
- Independent work leading to final pieces on canvas, board, mixed media or three dimensionally.

Assessments

The course is split into coursework, which is 60% of the overall mark, and a set task, which is 40%.

Coursework: (60%) Students will work in a variety of media on a given theme, which includes Identity, Urban Art and the Landscape. They will produce drawings, paintings, ceramics and mixed media work and will study a variety of artists' work. The course work is continuously updated to engage the students and fit in with the evolving nature of Art today and will involve visits to local and National Art Galleries.

Set Task: (40%) This will take place in the third year of the course. Students will choose from a list of titles then complete a body of artwork leading to a final piece. The set task is the examination for the award, which will take place in the classroom. The students will be guided throughout the course and exam by their teacher and will be given personal advice and support in the classroom and within extra lunchtime sessions that are available.

Your Prospects

- To continue artistic studies on an 'A' Level Course within the Art Department.
- To continue to a higher level course in college.
- A sought after GCSE by many outside agencies and colleges as it requires independence and skill.

Head of Department:
Ms J Lockwood





Specification

Sweet's Personal Growth and Wellbeing (PGW) is a learning and skills development programme offering a specialist BTEC Level 1 or 2 qualification.

- ♦ Level 2 (GCSE Equivalent)
- ♦ Supports Welsh Baccalaureate

Assessments

Each unit has specified learning outcomes and assessment criteria. To pass an internally assessed unit, learners must meet all the assessment criteria.

The assessment approach of the course allows for learners to receive feedback on their progress throughout the course as they provide evidence towards the grading criteria.

Evidence for assessment may be generated through a range of diverse activities including workplace assessment, role play and oral presentation.

Work Involved

Sweet's Personal Growth and Wellbeing (PGW) units are specifically structured to provide the Welsh Baccalaureate teaching and learning support for schools. The content helps learners to develop the same skills required across the Skills Challenges and prepares them for their controlled assessments.

Students will cover a range of different topics which will include:

- Personal Identity
- Global Citizenship
- Money Matters

Your Prospects

The qualification allows pupils to develop the skills they may need to go on to study a variety of qualifications at Post 16 level, as well as skills that are needed for a variety of roles within the workplace.

For further information contact:
Mr D Thomas:



The Prince's Trust Award



Specification

The Prince's Trust Award, Certificate and Diploma in Personal Development and Employability Skills (PDE) recognises a breadth of personal skills, qualities and attitudes required by employers across a range of sectors. They have been developed with the aim of progressing learners into further education and/or employment and are available for use with pre and post 16 learners. They give learners the opportunity to:

- Develop their own personal growth and engagement in, and through, learning.
- Engage in learning that is relevant to them and support their development of personal skills and attributes that are essential for working life and employment.
- Prepare themselves for progression into further education programmes, apprenticeships or other work-based learning.
- Develop their English and mathematics skills.

Assessments

The Personal Development and Employability Skills qualifications are 100% centre assessed using portfolios of evidence and are graded as pass or fail. The portfolios are internally assessed and externally moderated. The assessment process is as follows:

- Activities are internally set by the centre to meet the requirements detailed in the unit assessment criteria
- The learners are assessed internally at the centre by an Assessor whilst they engage in activities
- The learner's evidence is collated into a portfolio, which is referenced using a unit Tracking Sheet
- The centre undertakes internal quality assurance activities which includes sampling portfolios assessed by each Assessor
- A further sample of portfolios is then externally moderated by Prince's Trust Qualifications.

Did you know?

It all began in 1976, when HRH The Prince of Wales had a bold idea. Having completed his duty in the Royal Navy, His Royal Highness became dedicated to improving the lives of disadvantaged young people in the UK. He founded His Trust to deliver on that commitment.

Work Involved

The Personal Development and Employability Skills qualifications cover a range of skills. An overview of the units available:

- Career Planning
- Digital Skills
- Interpersonal and Self-Management Skills
- Managing Money
- Personal Project
- Presentation Skills
- Teamwork Skills

Your Prospects

These qualifications provide a platform for learners to progress onto further education opportunities and/or employment, as they develop personal development and employability skills.

**For further information
contact: Mr R Gauregui**