



Sancton Wood School
GCSE Course Information
2017



The Upper School Curriculum

Sancton Wood's aim is to develop young people who are knowledgeable, caring and successful with bright, enquiring minds. We want our students to have a positive approach to life, to broaden their horizons and to value the chance to think and study independently.

We are proud of the success we have in securing Sancton Wood students the best grades possible and the opportunity to make exceptional progress. We also take great pride in the success our students have in securing the post 16 routes of their choice.

We want to ensure that every student continues to enjoy their education but also has a clear sense of purpose as they begin the next stage of their academic life. In seeing GCSE study years as a step towards achieving future goals they will remain motivated and be determined to achieve their best. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that throughout the Upper School years, subjects offer a well-defined programme of study that encourages our students to build upon their skills and look to their future.

The next steps

The Core GCSEs prepare our students for life beyond Sancton Wood; they develop and secure the fundamental skills essential for future work and study. The range of option subjects allow students to develop their own interests and are the first step in them designing the shape of their own education.

The wider curriculum

We encourage all our students to participate in physical activity. There is an essential Core Physical Education programme and we take advantage of our excellent local facilities. In addition, to ensure students gain an understanding of the wider world, every individual continues to study PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Employment). This covers a range of topics, which are age relevant and allows for discussion and debate around essential issues.

Beyond the classroom

In order to develop as whole and interesting individuals we encourage all of our young people to embrace the opportunities available to them both at school and in their own local communities. Taking part in team work, creative productions, volunteering, sporting activities and other wider interests is valued by colleges and employers. We encourage students to build in time for these valuable activities.

This booklet is the beginning of a dialogue, please do visit our Options Evening and of course, feel free to contact any of our subject teachers to discuss your child's choices.



Most students will take 10 GCSEs including the core subjects.

All students are required to sit GCSEs in the following core subjects:

- **English Language**
- **English Literature**
- **Mathematics**
- **Either Triple Science** (Physics, Chemistry and Biology, worth three GCSEs)
Or Double Science (a dual award covering the three sciences which is worth two GCSEs)

When making their option choices, we recommend that students make a balanced choice of subjects, ideally with a language and a humanities subject as well as something creative. However, there may be some exceptions to this and it is important that students ask themselves these questions as they make their choices:

1. What do I enjoy?
2. What am I good at?
3. What do I need to get me to the next stage of study/training/work?

Another consideration with the new GCSE specification in mind is the reduction in coursework content for many subjects. Many, though not all, subjects will now be examined at the end of Year 11. The exceptions to this are the creative subjects such as Art, Music and Drama which retain a coursework element.

Students may choose any of the subjects from the list below. The number of options available to them will depend on whether they choose to follow the double or triple science award course:

Triple Scientists may choose 4 additional subjects, Double Scientists may choose 5 additional subjects

The following subjects are available as option choices:

- **Art & Design**
- **Astronomy**
- **Drama**
- **French**
- **Geography**
- **History**
- **Latin**
- **Music**
- **Physical Education**
- **Religious Studies**
- **Spanish**

All students will continue to have timetabled PE each week and a PSHE lesson delivered by Form Tutors.

Core Subjects

ENGLISH LITERATURE

In this two year course, currently following the AQA specification, students develop their analytical ability and essay writing skills through their study of set texts. The texts include a Shakespeare play, a nineteenth century novel, a modern novel or drama and a collection of poetry. Students will explore how writers use literary devices to achieve effect. They analyse literature by closely focusing on the language, the use of structure and other techniques that writers have employed.

Assessment takes the form of two exam papers at the end of Year 11. In the first paper they are required to produce essay style responses to their set Shakespeare and 19th century fiction texts. They will base their answers on extracts they are given but will also need to display a thorough knowledge of the entire text. The second paper requires students to respond to their modern prose or drama text and to the poetry collection. In this exam students are not given extracts but need to produce essay responses based on the entire texts. There is also an 'unseen' element, where students must write a response to a poem they have not studied before.

We try to bring the course alive for the students and when possible arrange trips to theatre productions, poetry readings and film showings.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

This is a two year course and we currently use the AQA exam board. Over the two years students study a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, they examine how writers create effective descriptive and narrative pieces. In addition students explore how writers convey their viewpoint persuasively. They use the knowledge gained in studying literary techniques to inform and develop their own writing skills; students create pieces of writing for different audiences and purposes. The range of writing produced will include descriptive, argumentative, persuasive and narrative. Accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar continues to be a key focus.

Students are assessed by sitting two written examinations at the end of year 11. The examinations cover both reading and writing; students need to analyse and respond to a range of texts, as well as compose their own writing pieces.

Students also undertake a separate endorsement for Speaking and Listening, this does not count towards their final GCSE grade but it is compulsory to sit all of the exam components.

We encourage students to read as widely as possible, it holds true that the best writers are those who read.

MATHEMATICS

We follow the Edexcel IGCSE (9 - 1) in Mathematics. There is no coursework for this specification.

We will follow a three year IGCSE course starting in Year 9. Assessment will cover the following topics: Number; Algebra; Geometry and Statistics.

The assessment will consist of two papers, each two hours long, calculators may be used in both papers. Two tiers will be available for our students: the Foundation or Higher Tier. Foundation will be graded 1 to 5 and Higher grades will be from 4 to 9 (grade 3 will be allowed). The qualification will be graded using the total mark across both papers. All papers must be at the same tier of entry and have to be completed in the same assessment series.

There may be the opportunity for a few mathematically able students to take the OCR Free Standing Mathematics Qualification. This course provides candidates with an introduction to the mathematics studied in AS and A Level GCE modules. It is designed for those students who have a thorough knowledge of the content of the Higher Tier of the National Curriculum for Mathematics.

SCIENCE

This is a two year course following the AQA specification. GCSE study begins in year 9 and in the sciences provides the foundations for understanding the world around us. Scientific understanding is changing our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity. All students will be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. They will be helped to appreciate how the complex and diverse phenomena of the natural world can be described in terms of a small number of key ideas relating to the sciences which are both inter-linked, and of universal application.

At Sancton Wood, students can choose to study either double-award science (known as Combined Science) or separate sciences, leading to three GCSEs. All students at Sancton Wood usually take the higher tier paper, in keeping with the excellent grades achieved.

There is no coursework but students are required to carry out between 8 to 10 set practical activities per science. At Sancton Wood we value practicals and experiments as an excellent learning opportunity, and students will typically carry out many more than this, aiming for a practical every week. The skills gained in their practical work will be needed to answer some of the questions in their terminal examinations.

Combined Science Topics

Physics: Energy, Forces, Forces and motion, Waves in matter, Light and Electromagnetic waves, Electricity, Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Particle model of matter and Atomic structure.

Chemistry: Atomic structure and the periodic table, structure, bonding and properties of matter, Chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, chemical analysis, chemical and allied industries, earth and atmospheric science.

Biology: Cell Biology, Transport systems, Health, disease and the development of medicines, Coordination and control, Photosynthesis, Ecosystems, Inheritance, variation and evolution.

At the end of the course, Combined Science students will sit two exams per science subject and will be awarded two GCSEs. The grade is calculated from their scores in all three sciences. The grading system will be on the new 9-1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade.

Separate Sciences Topics

Separate Sciences students will study all the same topics as Combined Science students, but also Energy flow in Ecosystems, Organic Chemistry and Space Physics. The additional lessons also allow for the study of all topics in greater depth.

At the end of the course, students will be awarded three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, resulting in three separate grades (eg Biology 8, Chemistry 9, Physics 8).

Separate sciences are strongly recommended for students with an interest in taking their science studies further. Some pupils may wish to consider separate science as a way to demonstrate their strength in one or two of the sciences, particularly if they are thinking of studying that Science at A level.

Option Choices

ART & DESIGN

The new OCR GCSE (9-1) Art and Design qualifications are still 100% non-exam assessment. This means that both the Portfolio and the Externally Set Task (question paper) are 100% internally marked and externally moderated. Recently, Sancton Wood students have submitted work for the following endorsements: Fine Art, Graphic Communication, and Photography.

The GCSE consists of 2 components. Both components are essentially made up of practical responses and practical study.

Component 1 – worth 60% of the total GCSE. This is the

portfolio where you will develop, explore and record your ideas. You will learn skills, whilst developing your knowledge and understanding. You will have the opportunity to create a personal response to starting points which can be visual or written and you will work in a range of chosen traditional and/or digital media. This is an extensive project and does not have a restricted timeframe. As a guideline, you should expect to work on the project for at least 2 - 3 terms.

Component 2 (Externally Set Task) - worth 40% of the total GCSE. This has an early release paper which will be issued at the start of the Lent Term in Year 11. The paper will offer a range of starting points and you will be able to choose one to develop a response using the skills, knowledge and understanding you have gained through your chosen course of study. You will be given a period of preparation (usually from Jan - April), then a 10 hour period under controlled conditions in which to 'realise your intentions' (ie. this is the outcome eg. painting, film, etc).

Both components will be marked internally by your teacher and moderated externally by OCR.

For both components, you should carefully select, organise and present work to demonstrate that you have addressed all assessment objectives. You must show that you have:

1. developed ideas through investigations and demonstrated critical understanding of sources from a given starting point
2. produced material informed by context that is relevant to the development of your ideas
3. refined work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with media appropriate to your chosen specification title and area(s) of study
4. recorded ideas, observations and insights relevant to your intentions as work progresses
5. presented a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions.

Full details of the specification can be found at <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016/>

ASTRONOMY

Astronomy is an optional scientific subject, covering everything from our own planet and nearby neighbours, through to our galaxy, the Milky Way, all the way out to the size and history of the entire Universe.

You will learn about our position in the Universe, the movements of planets and stars, the cycles in the night and daytime sky and the way in which we use technology to observe and interact with space. You will follow an incredible story of how scientists, from ancient civilisations to the modern day, have used their imagination and carefully recorded visual measurements to explore the Universe in which we live.

The new Edexcel Astronomy GCSE (9-1) is split into two papers which examine naked-eye astronomy and telescopic astronomy in equal depth, including:

Paper 1: Naked-eye astronomy: Planet Earth, the lunar disc, the Earth-Moon-Sun system, time and the Earth-Moon-Sun cycles, Solar System observations, celestial observations, early models of the Solar System, planetary motion and gravity.

Paper 2: Telescopic astronomy: Exploring the Moon, solar astronomy, exploring the Solar System, formation of planetary systems, exploring starlight, stellar evolution, our place in the Galaxy, cosmology.

Of course no astronomy course would be complete without going outside and observing the stars. From observing and drawing the constellations and the Moon, to personally using telescopes and cameras, to operating your own account with remote robotic telescopes in exotic locations, you will obtain remarkable images of the Universe which nobody else has ever seen before!

Full details of the specification can be found at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/astronomy-2017.html>

DRAMA

You will be studying the CIE IGCSE Drama course, which is a great choice for anyone who enjoys an imaginative and collaborative way of working. You will complete three pieces of practical coursework over the two years: a monologue, a scripted group extract and a devised group performance. Each of these elements is worth 20% of the overall grade. You will be required to use your own time for research, line learning and rehearsals.

Around December time in Year 11 the exam board send the school pre-released material to prepare you for the written exam. This will include a variety of stimuli, from which you must devise a 15 minute performance that you will then write about in the summer exam, and a scripted extract, which you must read and practically explore to ensure that you fully understand it and can answer questions on it in the written exam.

40% of the course is a final written exam. You will be required to answer three sections in a 2.5 hour exam. Section A requires short answers and will combine questions on your piece of devised theatre and the pre-released script. Section B requires one long answer on a question about your devised piece and Section C requires one long answer about the scripted extract.

You will be required to develop a whole range of dramatic performance skills: voice work including tone/pitch/pace; movement skills including gestures, body language and proxemics. Group work is a key element of the practical work as you will need to be committed to learning lines

and attending rehearsals. You must be self motivated and committed in order to make a success of this course. Please be prepared to have a lot of fun!

Brief Overview:

Coursework 60%

Monologue 20%

Scripted Performance 20%

Devised Performance 20%

Written Exam 40%

Section A: Short answers on Devised work and pre-released script

Section B: Long essay style answer on devised drama

Section C: Long essay style answer on pre-released script

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a very broad-ranging subject that spans both the sciences and the humanities and is ideally suited for those who are interested in current affairs, political decision-making, globalisation and the natural environment. Considered a well-balanced and all-round discipline, geography is definitely for the curious and for those who want to find out about the world around them: its peoples and its landscapes, its beauty and its fragility, its politics and its power and how they came to be. The ultimate blend between the natural and the social sciences, Geography GCSE imparts ‘knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the earth’s key physical and human processes’ (National Curriculum, 2015).

The CIE IGCSE syllabus that we study at Sancton Wood explores human geography topics such as population, migration, settlement, industry, development, globalisation and employment, as well as physical geography topics such as rivers, coasts, weather, ecosystems and plate tectonics. It also includes socio- environmental topics such as energy and water consumption, food shortage, global warming, pollution and extreme weather hazards, making it the ideal platform from which to engage with contemporary social, political and environmental issues and see how they interconnect, but also begin to explore potential solutions.

Also unique to geography are the skills in data collection, data analysis and fieldwork that accompany our course and that give our students an excellent base for a career in business, science or politics.

IGCSE Geography is assessed by exam at the end of the course:

Paper 1 (45%) Geographical themes, including:

- Population & settlement
- Energy & Water
- Industry & Farming
- Environmental risks & sustainability

- Earthquakes & volcanoes
- Coasts & rivers
- Weather & climate

Paper 2: (27.5%) Map skills and data interpretation

Paper 3: (27.5%) Data collection & analysis (coursework paper) for both human and physical geography

Please note that there will be an essential residential field studies trip to Norfolk during Year 10 at an approximate cost of £200 per student.

HISTORY

Who shot Malcolm X? Who caused the attack of the Spanish Armada? What caused the Stono Rebellion? How did the Normans punish their criminals? All these questions and many more will be explored and answered if you study GCSE History. History is for the inquisitive. It encapsulates a wide breadth of subjects from sociology and psychology, to religion and geography, with the opportunity to be a critical thinker – an invaluable skill for further study at A level.

History GCSE at Sancton Wood follows the newly revised Edexcel (9-1) Specification and covers four key areas of study:

Paper 1 – 30% - Thematic study and Historic Environment
Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000-present, and Whitechapel, c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city.

This unit explores all areas of crime and punishment from c1000 to the present under the following investigative headings:

- Nature and changing definitions of criminal activity
- The nature of law enforcement and punishment
- Case studies

Together with an historical environment study of Whitechapel c1870-c1900; crime, policing and the inner city which will include a visit to the Tower of London and Jack the Ripper tour in Whitechapel.

Paper 2 – 40% - Period Study and British Depth Study

Early Elizabethan England 1558-88 – Period Study

- Queen, government and religion, 1558-69
- Challenges to Elizabeth at home and abroad, 1569-88
- Elizabethan society in the Age of Exploration, 1558-88

British America 1713-83: empire and revolution – British Depth Study

- British settlement in North America, 1713-41 – The Impact of immigration; Slave trade and Slave revolts.
- A disrupted society, 1742-64 - Religious rivals; Relations with the French and with Native Americans
- The loss of an empire, 1765-83

Paper 3 - 30% – Modern Depth Study

The USA, 1954-76: conflict at home and abroad

- The development of the civil rights movement, 1954-60
- Protest, progress ad radicalism, 1950-75
- US involvement in the Vietnam War, 1954-75
- Reactions to, and the end of, US involvement in Vietnam, 1964-75

LATIN

Latin is a firm backbone for all other subjects as it fosters the knowledge and practice of deduction, analysis, logic, imagination, vocabulary, structure, correct grammar, history and literature. It is a widely respected GCSE which opens doors to sixth-form college and supplies the linguistic and cultural tools required by a large range of professions such as forensics, medicine, the law, horticulture.

Pupils in year 9 are well placed, having already covered much of the grammar required and having already tasted some of the original Latin texts, to progress quickly through the new OCR specification. All students who regularly score 7-9 in their homework, tests and examinations will flourish at this option.

The key features of the course are:

- the opportunity to develop linguistic skills which will help both in the study and application of English and other languages
- the study of ancient literature and sources which helps give learners an insight into the life and culture of the ancient world
- the encouragement to help develop and apply critical analytical skills which will help learners in all current and future study
- it provides solid preparation for those wishing to progress to our AS and A Level Latin qualifications.

The two year course is assessed via three examinations

Language: One written paper worth 50% of the total GCSE

• Learners study texts and stories in Latin to build knowledge and understanding of Latin vocabulary, accidence and syntax. There is also the opportunity to translate very simple English sentences into Latin, if desired.

Prose and Verse Literature: Two written papers worth 25% each of the total GCSE

• Learners study Latin set texts and answer questions in English on aspects of content and analyse, evaluate and respond to the ancient literature they have studied.

Set texts include: Prose Literature (B) studying extracts from the Cambridge Latin Anthology treating the Roman invasion of Britain and the indigenous Druid religion, and Verse Literature (B) - extracts from the Oxford Classical Text of Virgil, Aeneid books 4 and 6, which tell the famous story of Dido and Aeneas, and their final encounter in the underworld.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French and Spanish

At Sancton Wood you have a choice of Modern Foreign languages to study for AQA GCSE - Spanish or French, or both. You could also gain a GCSE level qualification in a language other than English that is your mother tongue, or in a language that you know particularly well, from having lived in that country.

Why continue with a Language?

It's a multilingual world: a modern foreign language helps you to join in.

Knowing a language can help you to connect better with other cultures.

It allows you to give yourself the edge you need in the global jobs' market of the 21st century.

The aim of the AQA GCSE course is the development of real-life language skills based on authentic-style tasks and situations. It will enable you to develop your ability and your ambition to communicate with native speakers, wherever you may meet them, in speech and in writing.

The subject content of the course is organised into themes or topic areas, including:

- Identity and culture, sport and entertainment
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest and concern
- Current and future study and employment.

All four main language skills of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing are equally weighted (worth 25% each) and you will spend time throughout the course working on these separately and in combination with each other. Listening, Reading and Writing are assessed by exam at the end of the course. The Speaking, which is not specifically prepared in advance but covers known themes from the syllabus, takes place in school in April/May, but is assessed externally. So there will be no coursework, but the Speaking should continue to be treated as a component for which students can prepare in some detail, and combine spontaneity with saying what they know about themes studied.

There are a range of opportunities for you to put your language into practice, during the course and when revising for it. You will be encouraged to join intensive revision courses, where you work with native speakers on the skills and content of the GCSE syllabus. Visits may be in-country, or in the UK, at the UK's only indoor mock European town, for example.

Follow this link to see the new AQA specifications and why taking the study of languages further is recommended:

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/spanish/specifications/AQA-8698-SP-2016.PDF> - Spanish

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/french/specifications/AQA-8658-SP-2016.PDF> - French

MUSIC

GCSE Music is a good choice for anyone who is having regular tuition in an instrument/voice, enjoys playing or singing with others and would like it to count towards a formal qualification. Students will follow the new AQA specification.

Music is one of the few GCSEs which has retained a coursework element, in fact 60% of it is coursework. Not only do you perform a solo on your chosen instrument/voice, you also perform in a small group. In addition, you have the opportunity to experiment with musical ideas and put these together into two compositions. For one of these you are free to do whatever inspires you. The other will follow one of a choice of briefs released by AQA at the start of Year 11.

The third part of the course involves getting to grips with how a piece of music works. We will be listening to a wide range of music including pop, fusion, jazz and film music. We will also dig down deep into some specific pieces of music set by the exam board and this will give you plenty of ideas for your own compositions. This is the only part of the course assessed by exam, in which extracts of music (some from the set works you have studied) will be played and there will be questions to answer about them.

In summary, the two year course comprises three components:

1. Understanding music 40% - assessed by exam at the end of the course
2. Performing music 30% - a solo and an ensemble performance which are both teacher assessed and then externally moderated by AQA
3. Composing music 30% - two compositions, each lasting 3-4 minutes, one to a brief set by the exam board, both teacher assessed and externally moderated by AQA

The course will enable you to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music and musical contexts as well as reflect on how music is used to express personal and collective identities. It will foster creativity, broaden your knowledge and understanding of a whole range of music, help you to develop the understanding and skills needed to communicate as a musician and encourage your development as an independent, reflective learner.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will follow the IGCSE specification for this course which has a large practical component

Assessment: 40% theory, 60% practical

Your health is one of the most valuable commodities that you will ever own! In PE you will learn about how your body responds to exercise, diet, disease prevention, the media in sport, and how to improve your athletic and sporting abilities.

How are you assessed?

As part of your grading criteria you will undertake practical assessments in 4 chosen sports and sit an exam paper at the end of the course.

The breakdown:

Examination (40%)

One exam paper assessing the syllabus content which is 1 hour 45 minutes

The exam is divided into two sections:

- Section A involves short answer questions on each of the 3 units
- Section B has three structured and questions, one on each unit

Coursework (60%)

Assessment is carried out with the use of video evidence and assessed by a Cambridge IGCSE appointed moderator. In this component you will be able to offer four practical activities from at least two of the seven activity categories.

The seven practical activity categories:

1. Games
2. Gymnastics
3. Dance
4. Athletics
5. Outdoor and Adventurous
6. Swimming
7. Combat

This is a very practical course and anyone wishing to take PE IGCSE as an option will need to fully commit to the whole course as well as getting fitter and having fun!

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies AQA GCSE encourages students to engage in debate and discussion about life in a modern, pluralistic society. It is a good GCSE for students who are interested in pursuing the social sciences, such as sociology, philosophy or politics.

Students must take assessments in the following two components in the same series:

- Component 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices
- Component 2: Thematic studies

Component 1 is the study of religious beliefs, teachings and practices from two of the following religions.

- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Catholic Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

Component 2 is made up of thematic studies. Students must follow 4 of the following:

- Relationships and families.
- Religion and life.
- The existence of God and revelation.
- Religion, Peace and Conflict.
- Religion, Crime and Punishment.
- Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice.

This qualification is linear which means that assessment is in 2 written exams at the end of Year 11.



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