



Westray Junior High School

Options Book

2009



INTRODUCTION

Westray Junior High provides a unique opportunity to pupils opting for courses in S3. The school continues to attempt to widen the opportunities for all pupils, providing for their individual needs within the resources available.

All schools follow government guidance on the structure of courses pupils can follow, which means that the range of choice from the list of subjects is restricted. All pupils take English, Maths, a Science subject, a Foreign Language, a Social subject (Geography, History, Modern Studies, Contemporary Social Studies), P.E., Religious and Moral Education, and also Technological Activities (Craft and Design, Home Economics, Computing). This means that, although a wide range of subjects may be available, they must be selected according to the guidelines.

All pupils undertaking S3 and S4 at Westray will undertake the following courses to ensure they have a broad and balanced curriculum. These are:

- English
- Maths
- French
- Chemistry
- P.E
- Vocational Course
- RME
- PSD

However, other subjects are optional allowing pupils' choice to either fulfil an interest or allow them to progress towards their career aspirations. The subject departments have also worked hard to introduce Access courses to cater for the needs of all pupils.

Our S3 Course will consist of

| Subject Choice: | | | <i>or</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| English | | Standard Grade | Access 3 or 2 |
| Mathematics | | Standard Grade | Access 3 Access 2 |
| French | | Standard Grade | Access 3 |
| Chemistry | | Standard Grade | Access 3 |
| Physical Education | | Uncertificated course | - |
| Music | | Standard Grade | - |
| Art | | Intermediate II | Intermediate I |
| Vocational Course | | - | - |
| Religious and Moral Education | Religious and Moral Education | Short Course | - |
| Personal and Social Development | Personal and Social Development | Uncertificated course | - |
| Social Subjects | Geography | Standard Grade | Access 3 / Intermediate 1 |
| | History | Standard Grade | |
| Biology or Physics | | Standard Grade | Access 3 |
| Technological Activities | Craft & Design (this includes a short course on Graphic Design) | Standard Grade | - |
| | Home Economics | Standard Grade | - |
| Computer Course | | Standard Grade | - |
| Global Citizenship | | Uncertificated course | - |

The list of subjects shows that, although we are a small school, we can offer pupils a good range of subjects for S3 and S4.

Below is a table which outlines how the range of qualifications on offer compare with Standard Grades.

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Intermediate 2 | Standard Grade Credit |
| Intermediate 1 | Standard Grade General |
| Access 3 | Standard Grade Foundation |

The fact that we are small does give us advantages. Each pupil is very well known to every member of staff and, as a result, pupils' strengths can be built upon and weaknesses overcome. The relatively informal atmosphere in the school means that pupils can develop their talents in a relaxed but purposeful manner and any difficulties or problems are quickly picked up and dealt with. This is supported by the process of target setting in years S3 and S4. Individual progress can be monitored in relation to target grades which are agreed in each subject between the teacher and the pupil. Parents are informed of the targets before the October holiday. These measures result in the majority of pupils achieving very good results at Standard Grade or at an appropriate level for their ability.

Scottish Qualifications Authority data shows that the proportion of pupils achieving five or more Standard Grades is well above the national average. The number of awards at General and Credit level is also well above the national average. Both pupils and staff can feel very proud of these very high standards. We intend to continue to set high expectations for each of our pupils.

In a school of this size, there is no need to decide at which level a pupil should take the exam until well into fourth year. This means that each pupil can develop and progress at their own rate as often they mature at different rates. Here, it is relatively easy to match appropriate work to their ability and maturity, and to allow them to develop their true potential. In this school pupils in S3 and S4 quickly develop a very mature attitude to their work. This may be because of the good working relationship between staff and pupils, which is based on mutual respect.

A key to a successful S3 and S4 for your child is clear communication between the school, pupils and parents. If at any point you have any concerns then please contact us so they can be addressed as soon as possible.

Options Calendar

1. Personal and Social Development

In S1 and S2, pupils will have learned how to use relevant resources to discover the many career paths open to them. S2, during the Spring Term, have undertaken a unit which introduces them to subject choice and choice of school for S3 and S4. Parents will have an opportunity to discuss their children's options with us before the return of option forms in March. Information on Standard Grade courses is available to parents in this booklet and the S2 Options booklet from Kirkwall Grammar School. The aim is to ensure that the choices about options and schools are made in the light of accurate and useful information, readily accessible to parents and pupils.

2. Parents' Meetings

There will be formal parents' evenings to discuss pupil progress on Thursday 12 March 2009. Reports and appointments will be sent home prior to this meeting.

3. Return of Options Leaflet for Westray Junior High School

These are to be returned to the Head Teacher, Westray Junior High, by 17 March 2009.

ENGLISH

Standard Grade English builds on work done in S1 and S2, and is a coursework and exam course.

Pupils will read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, and will be given a wide range of written and oral tasks arising from these.

At the end of the Spring term S4 pupils will select 5 pieces of the coursework they have done across the two years to be sent off for marking. This will form an important element of their final grade.

The balance of their grade will come from the final exam, which assesses reading and writing skills, and a mark for talking and listening that is awarded by the school.

Access II English comprises 3 x 40 hour units and involves a variety of reading and writing activities. All assessment is done in-school, and there is no final exam.

MATHEMATICS

Pupils follow the Standard Grade course using the "Maths in Action" textbooks. There is an emphasis on class teaching and regular mental arithmetic. Pupils become competent in the use of scientific calculators, without being dependent on them for simple tasks. Mathematics as a subject develops logical thinking which is vitally important to us all long after we stop doing maths exams.

FRENCH

By learning other languages pupils not only develop a valuable skill but also develop and understand of others and their cultures. French is the first or second language for over 220 million people (making it the 9th most spoken language).

Speaking to other people in their own languages is fun and when you manage to make yourself understood it will increase your confidence. If you know another language you can take opportunities to study, do work experience or even get a job abroad. It can also help you get a job in this country.

Language skills are widely appreciated and it is considered a great advantage to speak a foreign language for a number of uses, not just work.

CHEMISTRY

All pupils do Chemistry at Standard Grade (General/Credit Level) or Access III and then have a choice of either Physics or Biology.

Chemistry Standard Grade comprises 3 parts:-

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Knowledge & Understanding | } | assessed by |
| 2. | Problem Solving | } | external examination |
| 3. | Practical Abilities | - | assessed at school |

The practical abilities are made up of a number of practical techniques and two assessed practical investigations where pupils plan, carry out, record and evaluate their own experiments.

Problem solving work includes drawing graphs, analysing experiments and data, fair testing and other scientific skills.

The Chemistry Standard Grade topics covered are the periodic table, chemical reactions, bonding, fuels, acids and alkalis, metals, plastics, fertilizers and sugars.

The Access 3 Chemistry course comprises 3 x 40 hour units. Practical and written assessments are carried out in school. There are no external examinations for this course.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In Westray, all pupils have 1 session of P.E. a week which aims to provide pupils with a broad balanced curriculum working within the following 5-14 contexts;

- Gymnastics
- Dance
- Games
- Water based activities
- Active Health
- Athletics

The course aims to develop pupils attitudes towards exercise and a healthy lifestyle whilst promoting good personal and social skills.

Pupils are encouraged to bring own kit in order to participate fully, and work to the best of their ability in all activities.

From S1-S4 pupils continue to follow a broad curriculum which concentrates more on games specific skills. The activities which are covered are in line with KGS in order to encourage continuity when moving on.

MUSIC

STANDARD GRADE MUSIC

Standard Grade Music offers pupils with an interest in music the opportunity to develop their performing skills on two instruments and learn about different styles of music through listening activities and creating music.

The course comprises of 4 elements: 1st instrument, 2nd instrument, composing and listening. Each element is worth 25% of the final grade.

The first instrument is marked by a visiting examiner in March of S4. The second instrument and composing are recorded and marked internally. Listening is assessed by an exam paper in May of S4, where pupils are asked to identify a range of concepts which they have studied in the course.

Performing is offered at 3 levels – Foundation, General and Credit. As a guide for pupils who have entered or are working towards ABRSM Music Exams, Foundation is the equivalent of Grade 1, General is Grade 2 and Credit is Grade 3.

ART

Pupils can choose to take Intermediate I Art in S3 with the possibility of progressing to Intermediate II in S4. This is a 2 year supported study course i.e. the teacher is only available for 2 periods per week, the other 1 period the pupil has to work independently on the work set by the teacher. Due to the restricted time and high standard expected at Intermediate II there will be regular homework and an expectation that pupils are highly motivated and are able to work independently. The course is unit based, an Expressive Activity i.e. Drawings & Painting, Design Activity – Graphic Design and Packaging plus Art and Design studies which has a related exam paper at Intermediate II level.

The other option is to take the Access III / Intermediate I course over 2 years and be presented to the appropriate level at the end of S4.

VOCATIONAL COURSE

All S3 and S4 pupils take part in a Vocational Studies course. This is a very practical course where pupils learn many skills. The main focus is planting, growing, maintaining and harvesting fruit, vegetables and flowers from the school polytunnel, greenhouse and garden.

Pupils also learn various DIY activities including painting, plumbing, engine maintenance. Courses are also arranged with outside agencies to provide for instance, first aid, food hygiene and baby sitting qualifications.

Visits to local employers and careers advice can also be included.

The emphasis is on pupils to find useful activities to do to enable them to learn useful life skills for the future.

SHORT COURSES IN RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION

The RMPS course in S3 will be a continuation of the Intermediate I course begun in S2, when the World Religions Unit was studied. The unit in S3 will be "The Existence of God". There are 3 areas of study:-

1. The Universe as Evidence of God's Existence.
2. The Apparent Design in the Universe as Evidence of God's Existence.
3. Suffering and Evil in the World as Evidence that God does not exist.

Following on in S4, the final unit is "Morality in the Modern World". One of four areas of study will be selected and from it two issues will be studied. The areas of study are:-

1. Gender.
2. International Issues.
3. Medical Ethics.
4. War and Peace.

Assessment will be by end of unit assessments and a final examination.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In this subject, we examine the skills and knowledge pupils will need to help them make difficult choices in future. In their personal lives, they will need to learn about how to cope with the pressures of drugs (legal and illegal), and sexual and personal relationships. They also need to know how to make wise career and course choices. Most pupils now go on to further or higher education courses at Kirkwall Grammar School, colleges and universities, and we make sure that all pupils have access to the right information to help them make choices about these options. We also help them plan study and revision time for their exams, know how to apply for jobs and look up careers information.

GEOGRAPHY

Geography in Orkney Schools is now moving into a new era. With advances in technology, and the purchase of new resources and equipment, Geography lessons will be gradually taking on a new format which will capture the interest and hopefully stir the imagination. By studying Geography you will learn about other places, peoples and cultures. You will study areas in Scotland and the UK as well as in other countries. Environmental and global issues such as alternative energy, conservation of the rainforests, pollution and global warming form an integral part of the course. You will also learn how to improve your map interpretation, reading and writing skills.

The course can be divided into three sections which include the following topics:

1. Human Geography

Urban studies, industrial landscapes, agriculture, tourism, economic issues and the effects of government and EU policies on all of these.

2. Physical Geography

Glacial and river landscapes, weather forecasting, world climate zones – Mediterranean lands, hot deserts, tropical rainforests and tundra lands (e.g. Greenland) conservation issues and UK National Parks (e.g. Cairngorms)

3. International Issues

World population issues, controlling population growth, international migration, refugees and asylum seekers, global trade, international aid, fair trade campaign, sustainable development and the work of organisations such as the United Nations.

A variety of resources including digital photos, digital and 3D mapping, videos, maps, atlases, magazines, CDs and the internet are used, although modern text books provide the basis of the course.

Geography is a popular subject for study in S5/6 as well as in higher education. A Geography qualification is also readily accepted as one of the entry requirements for a wide variety of other courses and careers and may be recognised as either an arts or as a science based subject by university admissions officers.

HISTORY

The Standard Grade History course covers three very important periods of History:

- Changing Scotland and Britain 1830-1930
- Russia 1914-1941
- International relations 1930s-1960s

The Changing Scotland and Britain theme covers the many different ways in which the country developed in this period. It focuses a great deal on the experiences of everyday life, and deals with matters such as transport, housing and health, the growth of democracy in Britain and employment.

Russia 1914-1941 deals with one of the biggest events in 20th Century history, the Russian Revolution and its aftermath. The topic tells the story of how a small group of determined individuals managed to seize control of one of the largest countries in the world, and goes into detail about two of the strongest personalities in all history, Lenin and Stalin.

International Relations 1930s-1960s concerns the build up to World War II, the War itself and the Cold War that developed after the end of the War, as the world divided between East and West.

Standard Grade History is a demanding but rewarding course. As well as learning a great deal about the periods in question, you will also learn to analyse different sources, from photographs to government documents, letters to cartoons, in a way that will help you examine the world around you in a more critical way.

BIOLOGY

Biology Standard Grade comprises 3 parts:-

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Knowledge & Understanding | } | assessed by |
| 2. | Problem Solving | } | external examination |
| 3. | Practical Abilities | - | assessed at school |

The practical abilities are made up of a number of practical techniques and two assessed practical investigations where pupils plan, carry out, record and evaluate their own experiments.

Problem solving work includes drawing graphs, analysing experiments and data, fair testing and other scientific skills.

The Biology Standard Grade topics covered are the biosphere, cells, animal functions, plants, the human body, inheritance and biotechnology.

The Access III Biology course comprises 3 x 40 hour units. Practical and written assessments are carried out in school. There are no external examinations for this course.

PHYSICS

Physics Standard Grades comprise 3 parts:-

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Knowledge & Understanding | } | assessed by |
| 2. | Problem Solving | } | external examination |
| 3. | Practical Abilities | - | assessed at school |

The practical abilities are made up of a number of practical techniques and two assessed practical investigations where pupils plan, carry out, record and evaluate their own experiments.

Problem solving work includes drawing graphs, analysing experiments and data, fair testing and other scientific skills.

The Physics Standard Grade topics covered are telecommunications, electricity, electronics, health physics, transport, energy and space.

The Access III Physics course comprises 6 x 20 hour units. Practical and written assessments are carried out in school. There are no external examinations for this course.

CRAFT & DESIGN

The Standard Grade Craft and Design course involves designing items, making them and evaluating the results. The aim is to make pupils capable of working independently.

The course involves thinking, writing, drawing and sketching; it requires knowledge of materials, tools and processes as well as craft skills. At the end of the course, each pupil designs and manufactures a major item.

Pupils identify what is to be made, investigate exactly what the intended product should be able to do, decide on suitable materials, develop ideas for the design, and plan how to produce the item. Finally, they make the item and judge how successful it is. Pupils are expected to keep a design folio containing notes and sketches of what they have done and what they intend to do.

As a design-based subject, Craft and Design provides pupils with the opportunity to develop awareness of how people can and do influence the design of all kinds of things in the man-made environment. Pupils' practical application of designing and planning requires organisational skills which can be usefully employed in later life.

Graphic Communication short course should be regarded as an integral part of the Standard Grade in Craft & Design. As well as conventional Technical Drawing, the course covers isometrics, planometrics, two point perspectives and some sketching.

HOME ECONOMICS

The aim of the Home Economics Course is to develop in pupils the skills necessary to cope with changing trends in living standards and life styles, and developments in technology. These skills are concerned with making reasoned and informed decisions and selecting and using equipment and materials.

Work is assessed on performance in the following elements:

Knowledge and Understanding
Handling Information
Practical and Organisational Skills

Knowledge and Understanding and Handling Information are assessed by written papers, set and marked by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Question papers are offered at three levels - Foundation, General and Credit.

Practical and Organisational Skills are assessed by the teacher, with assessment standards checked by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

In addition to Standard Grades, a number of Intermediate modules could be offered. These are mainly practically based and last for 40 hours. There is a small amount of written assessment included which must be passed before a module is granted. Assessment is mostly carried out by the teacher although a moderator may occasionally be present.

ART

Intermediate courses are available at 2 levels.

Pupils can choose to take Intermediate I in S3, progressing to Intermediate II in S4. This is a 2 year supported study course i.e. the teacher is only available for 1 period per week, the other 2 periods the pupil has to work independently on work set by the teacher. This means that this option is only available to pupils who are highly motivated and are able to work independently. The course is unit based, an Expressive Activity i.e. Drawing and Painting, Design Activity – Graphic Design and Packaging plus at Intermediate II, Art and Design Studies with a related exam paper in S4.

The other option is to take Intermediate I over 2 years which does not include the Design Studies element.

COMPUTING COURSE

A new computer training course is to be developed through 2008/09.

This year we will offer Standard Grade Computing. This will enable pupils to develop their computing skills and enable those with ability in this subject to access computing at Higher level at Kirkwall Grammar School.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

As our young people become citizens of the 21st century this course offers pupils the opportunity to explore, reflect on and learn about a range of Global Issues. Topics covered are negotiated with pupils according to their interests. This year we have looked at the issue of conflict and the arms trade and have just started a project on mobile phones. Research, reflection, discussion and debate are all skills which can be developed through this course and the focus is clearly on helping pupils become responsible citizens of, and effective contributors to, the Global 21st Community.