



Junior Years Course Handbook

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Springside West Secondary College
70 City Vista Ct, Fraser Rise
(03) 8357 7100
<https://www.swsc.vic.edu.au/>

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a resource for students and parents/guardians, which outlines the Junior Years curriculum in line with the Victorian Curriculum Standards, offered at Springside West Secondary College across Years 7 and 8.

This handbook is designed to assist students and parents in understanding the structure of the Junior Years program and the variety of core subjects undertaken.

Part of this handbook also includes the expectations of Junior Years students here at Springside West Secondary College regarding homework and attendance.

This handbook has two sections:

- Overview of the Year 7 and 8 programs
- Homework and attendance requirements

JUNIOR YEARS COURSE OVERVIEW

The Junior Years program at Springside West Secondary College, provides students with a broad overview of the various subjects and pathways on offer, whilst also meeting the requirements of the Victorian Curriculum. All students undertake a core program for two years. Students' loads are split between year-long courses, along with semester-based subjects in the Arts, Design and Technology faculties.

The following table gives a broad overview of the course structure for students in the junior years:

TIMETABLE STRUCTURE			
YEAR 7		YEAR 8	
Subject Area	# of periods per fortnightly cycle	Subject Area	# of periods per fortnightly cycle
English	7	English	7
Mathematics	7	Mathematics	7
Science	7	Science	7
Humanities	7	Humanities	7
Health & Physical Education	6	Health & Physical Education	6
Italian	5	Italian	5
Arts Elective Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drama ● Visual Arts 	5	Arts Elective Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Music ● Visual Communication Design (VCD) 	5
Technology Elective Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Design Technologies ● Robotics 	5	Technology Elective Block <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Food Studies ● Textiles 	5
All You Can Be	1	All You Can Be	1
TOTAL	50	TOTAL	50

The following sections outline the opportunities students will have in each of the subjects as highlighted in the table above.

YEAR SEVEN PROGRAM

The Year 7 program is designed to develop a strong foundation for each student in each of the essential learning areas as outlined in the Victorian Curriculum. The bulk of the Teaching and Learning program is based around core subject areas. Students are however, provided with an opportunity to begin exploring a variety of courses in the Arts, Design and Technology faculties. These rotate throughout the year with students undertaking each subject for one semester only. Italian is a compulsory Languages course which all students undertake throughout both Year 7 and 8. Please note that there are no student-choice electives offered in Year 7.

ENGLISH

Throughout the first unit of English, students study the novel *Boy* by Roald Dahl looking at the themes and social issues explored by the author. They begin by engaging in creative autobiographical writing, consolidating their ability to draw on the themes and writing style of the author. In this unit, students develop a greater awareness of characterisation, the use of descriptive language and imagery in writing, as well as process writing. Students also engage in a media analysis unit, considering how the media is used to present facts and opinions. They look at letters to the editor, creating their own opinion piece to express a point of view on a current issue. As part of their regular homework, students explore a range of grammatical components in the English Language, including nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, and tenses. In the second semester, students develop their analytical writing skills, completing a TEEL paragraph on the text *The Rabbits* by John Marsden. Within this unit, students focus on their ability to structure an analytical response to a text, as well as introducing explicit references to how the author constructs meaning. Students also work on a unit centred around the novel *Once* by Morris Gleitzman to strengthen their ability to incorporate historical, social and cultural contexts into their analysis.

MATHEMATICS

The Junior Mathematics program at Springside West Secondary College, utilises an online platform called Maths Pathway as the basis for the teaching and learning program. Maths Pathway is a data-driven model based on a continuum approach to learning and teaching. This program is aligned with the Victorian Curriculum and has been implemented to support student learning in Year 7 Mathematics. Using the Maths Pathway program, students complete diagnostic testing in advance to identify their competencies as well as any gaps that may be present in their knowledge. Through a modular framework, students are provided with the opportunity to select content that is targeted towards their point of need. Students complete tests following each of the two-week learning cycles where their *Growth*, *Effort* and *Accuracy* are evaluated. This data is used to inform the goals that each student will develop with their teacher. Mini-lessons, rich learning tasks and week-long projects are also utilised to support students in developing a deep understanding of what they are learning.

SCIENCE

As part of the *Introduction to Year 7 Science* topic, students familiarise themselves with the laboratory through a range of activities relating to safety. Students also develop skills in utilising the Bunsen burner. In *Biology*, students investigate how living things are classified, including the design and use of classification keys. Trophic groups are explored in *Ecosystems*, including how to illustrate ecological relationships using a food web. In the *Physics* unit on Forces and simple machines, students explore the range of forces acting on objects and the effects that they have. Within this unit, students begin to apply their understanding and skills of scientific report writing. In the *Chemistry* unit on mixtures and separation, students investigate different types of separation techniques. States of matter and the particle model theory are also introduced. In the *Earth's Resources* unit, students investigate the different types of resources including natural and man made, classifying them into renewable and non-renewable categories. Students also identify the advantages and disadvantages of using each type of resource. Predictable phenomena observed on the Earth, such as seasons, tides and eclipses are explained using the relationships between the Earth, Moon and Sun in the unit on *Earth and Space Science*.

HUMANITIES

Students will complete one Civics and Citizenship unit and two Geography units in Semester 1. In the 'Place and Liveability' (Geography) unit, students will explore the factors that influence the liveability of places and compare the liveability of different locations. They will develop their mapping and graphing skills and learn to identify and explain data using simple map and graph types. In the 'Making a Change' (Civics and Citizenship) unit, students will explore features of Australia's democracy, Australian values and identity, as well as secularism and multiculturalism in Australia. As part of the 'Water in the World' (Geography) unit, students will explain the variety of uses and value of water for people and assess the impact of water scarcity and the effectiveness of water management strategies used in Australia and Africa.

Throughout the second semester, students will complete one Economics and Business unit and three History units. In the 'Economics Choices' (Economics and Business) unit, students will examine the ways in which consumers and producers respond to and influence each other in the market. They will explain the price mechanism and justify their economic choices as consumers. In the three History units, students will develop their skills in chronology, source analysis and significance. In the 'Ancient Australia' unit, they will start to consult primary and secondary sources to develop theories and explanations about Ancient Australia and the practices of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. During the 'Ancient Greek' (History) unit, students will explore the beliefs, values and practices of ancient Greece and the impact that these had on daily life and customs. As part of the 'Ancient China' (History) unit, students will use evidence to develop historical arguments and assess the significance of key individuals and events.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Year 7 Health and Physical Education subject focuses on students enhancing their own and others' health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity participation in varied and changing contexts. In the first semester, students focus on the aspects of *Respectful Relationships* and the complications for individuals suffering from the side effects of smoking cigarettes and consuming excessive amounts of alcohol. Students develop skills and tactics by participating in the following sports: Basketball, Netball, AFL and Soccer. With the inclusion of Rhythmic Movement and Fitness Testing. Throughout the second semester, students continue focusing on enhancing their own and others' health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity participation in varied and changing contexts. They also study aspects such as their own nutrition, the health status of Australians and puberty. Students develop practical skills and decision making by participating in the following sports: Volleyball, Softball, Cricket and Alternative Net and Wall Sports.

ITALIAN

Throughout the first semester of Italian, students are introduced to Italian language and culture. They begin by studying greetings and introductions, school life in Italy, and being able to express likes and dislikes. Students learn a range of verbs in order to be able to ask how someone is, give dates and talk about likes and dislikes. They also explore cultural and intercultural awareness by exploring soccer and school life in Italy. As part of their regular course work, students participate in various listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks. They participate in role-plays, listening tasks, and unit tests. Throughout the second semester of Italian, students continue being exposed to the Italian language and its culture. They study topics such as family and animals where they learn how to describe people, use colours and tell the time. Students continue to work on verb conjugation, adjectives, possessive adjectives and the indefinite article. They also explore cultural and intercultural awareness by discovering family celebrations in Italy and learn about the history of Ancient Rome. Students continue to take part in role-plays, write a blog in Italian, participate in listening tasks, and unit tests.

DRAMA [Semester-long subject]

Students undertake units on *Physical Theatre* and *Comedy*. The focus of the *Physical Theatre* unit is to investigate and demonstrate how performers use movement to communicate a story to an audience. Students demonstrate knowledge of non-verbal communication methods through the study of physical theatre as a distinct art form, beginning with the history of the theatrical style through to the devising performance process as a whole. Students develop skills in numerous acting techniques, devising controlled movement rehearsal processes to incorporate particular physical theatre exercises and body language into their own Dreamtime story performances. The focus of the *Comedy* unit is the conventions of different styles of comedy and how they relate to the theatre. Students demonstrate their knowledge of the history and elements of *Slapstick*, *Farce* and *Satire*, and develop the writing and performance skills associated with sketch comedy.

VISUAL ARTS [Semester-long subject]

Students explore a variety of artforms in both realistic and abstract styles to gain an understanding of different visual languages. They develop skills using a variety of different materials and techniques, whilst maintaining a visual diary to record ideas and develop artworks based on a theme. Students will create and present resolved artworks. Students also study the Art of the First Nations People, analysing a variety of artworks in writing.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGIES [Semester-long subject]

Within Design Technologies students have the opportunity to design and make a product that responds to a specific problem. Students use Microsoft programs such as Word, PowerPoint and Excel to develop and demonstrate an understanding of the Investigation stage of the design process. Manipulating these design skills in Design Technologies, specifically focusing on problem solving and evaluation skills, to plan and design a laser printed product.

ROBOTICS [Semester-long subject]

Students learn the text-based computer programming language of python and its fundamental features, such as, printing statements, accepting user input, creating decisions and looping. Using this information they will create a simple python text adventure game. Following this, students will expand their python coding skills using a Micro:bit computer and learning how bluetooth connection works and how to flash a device. In this intermediate level course students will use their computer (input) to control the robots (output). The skills learnt include: displaying text on the LEDs, using micro:bit buttons, listen() and say() functions, telling ambient temperature, bearings and acceleration of the device, difference between strings and integer variables, 'if, elif, else' statements, the 'in' and 'or' operators, while loops, comparison operators

and conditional statements. These new skills will be used to solve real world problems from a given case study.

YEAR EIGHT PROGRAM

The Year 8 program continues building upon the essential learning undertaken by students in Year 7. Once again, students study a core program, which includes two new semester-long courses in the Arts, as well as in the Design and Technology faculties. Italian continues to be a compulsory subject for students in Year 8.

ENGLISH

Throughout the first unit of English in year 8, students engage in a Media Analysis unit, where they investigate current issues in the media. They develop their interpretation of a point-of-view and their ability to identify arguments within an opinion piece. Students review the persuasive language used when presenting an argument and utilise this when creating an opinion piece of their own. They complete the unit with an oral presentation designed to present their point-of-view on a chosen issue. Students then continue to refine their analytical writing skills and the TEEL essay structure, completing a text response on the novel *Parvana*, by Deborah Ellis. Students are introduced to the historical context of the war in Afghanistan and analyse the themes in relation to the social and economic issues that occur as a result. Throughout the second semester, students participate in the comprehensive study of the novel *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry. Students continue to refine the TEEL essay structure and their ability to embed quotes and examples from the text in order to support their interpretations and analysis. Students then apply their knowledge and understanding of the plot and characters within *The Giver*, along with the literary devices utilised by the author, to a piece of creative writing. Students begin to contemplate the audience and purpose of their writing so they can utilise appropriate language and content to meet their target group and aims. Students complete the semester with a film analysis of the movie, *Paper Planes*. Students are introduced to film techniques such as; camera angles, lighting and soundtrack, as well as mise en scene.

MATHEMATICS

The Junior Mathematics program at Springside West Secondary College, utilises an online platform called Maths Pathway as the basis for the teaching and learning program. Throughout Year 8, students continue to engage with the Maths Pathway program, working from a data-driven model based on a continuum approach to learning and teaching. This program is aligned with the Victorian Curriculum. Using the Maths Pathway program, students complete diagnostic testing in advance to identify their competencies as well as any gaps that may be present in their knowledge. Through a modular framework, students are provided with the opportunity to select content that is targeted towards their point of need. Students complete tests following each of the two-week learning cycles where their *Growth*, *Effort* and *Accuracy* are evaluated. This data is used to inform the goals that each student will develop with their teacher. Mini-lessons, rich learning tasks and week-long projects are also utilised to support students in developing a deep understanding of what they are learning.

SCIENCE

In Year 8, students study a range of units across the various fields of Science. In the *Chemistry* unit, students are introduced to the Periodic table. They explore the structure of atoms and learn about elements, compounds and molecules. Students study the differences between physical and chemical change. Students will also conduct various experiments to investigate factors that affect the rates of chemical reactions. Furthermore, students will learn how to write worded chemical equations. In the *Physics* topic, students learn about the concept of energy through light, sound and heat. These concepts are further explored in practical tasks using plane and curved mirrors, light-refraction/reflection and eye anatomy. In

the *Biology* unit, students investigate the structure and roles of cellular systems, cells and organelles. Students study the body systems including the circulatory, digestive, respiratory and reproductive systems. In the *Earth Science* unit, students investigate the different types of rocks: metamorphic, igneous and sedimentary. Chemical weathering and erosion of rocks is also covered.

HUMANITIES

Students will complete one Business and Economics unit and two Geography units in Semester 1. In the 'Landforms and Landscapes' (Geography) Unit, students will explore the processes that shape coastal landscapes and explain management strategies used to address various impacts. They will develop skills in collecting and analysing primary data through participation in fieldwork at the Bayside Coastline. In the 'Entrepreneurship' (Business and Economics) Unit, students will explain enterprising behaviours that lead to successful businesses. As part of the 'Changing Nations' Unit, students will explore the causes and consequences of urbanisation and compare these issues between Australia and the United States of America. They will also explain the challenges associated with the planning of Australia's urban features.

Students will complete one Civics and Citizenship unit and three History units in Semester 2. In each of the History units, students will develop their skills in chronology, source analysis, and historical significance. In the 'Medieval Europe' Unit, they will examine various changes that took place in society, as well as the role of different social groups. Students will also explain the causes and effects of the Black Death. As part of the 'Shogunate Japan' Unit, students will explore the Feudal System and analyse the impacts of civil conflicts that occurred. In the 'Spanish Conquest of the Americas' Unit, students will describe the society and culture of different groups within America before Spanish colonisation. They will use evidence to develop historical arguments to assess the significance of key individuals and events. During the 'Values, Parties and Elections' (Civics and Citizenship) Unit, students will explain the different values and identities that shape political parties.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Year 8 Health and Physical Education focuses on developing respectful relationships, mental health, wellbeing and drug education. These topics allow students to develop their own knowledge as well as identify the impact they have on the wider community. Students develop their teamwork, practical skills and leadership by participating in Athletics, Ultimate Frisbee, Basketball, AFL and Soccer. Throughout the second semester, students learn about how puberty affects individuals differently and what to expect during this time. Students delve also into concepts of conception and contraception. Students will also learn about coping strategies and sources of where to seek help. In addition to this, students develop an in-depth knowledge about the benefits of Physical Activity and the potential consequences of inactivity. Students will get to further refine and develop their sport specific and interpersonal skills in Badminton, Table tennis and Netball through a Sport Education Physical Education Program (SEPEP).

ITALIAN

Throughout this year of Italian, students continue being exposed to the Italian language and its culture. They study topics such as hobbies, the weather, and talking about where they live. Students continue to work on verb conjugation of regular and irregular verbs and learn to use prepositions. They also explore cultural and intercultural awareness by learning about cultural aspects of Sicily and Emilia-Romagna, and finding out about what Italians do in their spare time. As part of their regular course work, students participate in various listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks. Throughout the second half of the year, students study topics such as modes of transport and types of food. Students study idiomatic expressions around going places and which method of transport they are using. They also learn to talk about food preferences and asking how much something costs on a menu. Students continue to work on verb conjugations of regular and irregular verbs with an introduction to *-ire* verbs. They also explore cultural and

intercultural awareness by learning about the modes of transport that are unique to Italy, such as *gondole*, *api* and *vespe*. Students also learn about Italian cuisine and discover the different types of *gelato* and *pasta*. As part of their regular course work, students participate in various listening, speaking, reading and writing tasks. They participate in writing and presenting role-plays, complete listening tasks and unit tests.

MUSIC [Semester-long subject]

Throughout this semester students develop performance skills and study the fundamentals of music language. Students learn to identify the six elements of music: Pitch, Articulation, Timbre, Structure, Texture and Dynamics. They explore a range of popular music styles, and analyse songs using the elements as a basis. In the *Performance* unit, students develop basic vocal, guitar, keyboard, bass guitar and drumming skills in order to perform a range of songs. In the *Song Writing* unit, students begin to explore and develop songwriting skills. They create and perform music, developing compositional and expressive performance skills.

VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN (VCD) [Semester-long subject]

In VCD, students explore their creativity and imagination through the creation of 2D designs using a range of tools, materials and techniques. Over the course of the semester, students develop visual language and concepts by exploring different visual communication methods. Students maintain a visual diary to record ideas and develop works based on a theme. VCD theory sees students learning how to identify, analyse and evaluate how designers from different times and cultures use processes and visual conventions to express ideas and meanings, presenting their research to the class through an oral presentation.

FOOD STUDIES [Semester-long subject]

In Year 8 students learn about the importance of eating a balanced diet, food allergies, food intolerances, nutritional value of foods and nutritional loss. Students also learn how to implement the design process to create a product for a specific customers' needs and how to use it in both commercial and domestic kitchens. During the practical classes, students develop basic cooking knowledge and skills which they will take with them long after they finish school.

TEXTILES [Semester-long subject]

In Year 8 Textiles the students learn a variety of skills for both hand-sewing and machine-sewing, they learn how a sewing machine functions and how to machine sew a product. Students experiment with a variety of textiles techniques, processes and materials. The students research issues relating to the materials and fibres used in class with a focus on sustainability.

ALL YOU CAN BE

The *All You Can Be* program is a core subject that is facilitated by the Homegroup teacher of each class. The purpose of the program is to assist students in assimilating to life in secondary school, as well as increasing their preparedness to learn. Students learn how to use their planner, as well as accessing the online systems used by teachers as part of the every-day learning program. Throughout the junior years, students also look at issues around bullying, cyber-safety, stress, and career aspirations.

HOMWORK REQUIREMENTS

Each subject has 2-4 assessment tasks per semester. Students are provided with the assessment task in class and given appropriate class time to complete parts of the task. If a task also has components which are completed at home, students may be given 1-2 weeks to complete the task. Other assessments will be completed in class under test conditions. During an assessment task period, other homework requirements will be reduced for that subject.

All assessment tasks, including the conditions for the task and required materials, are available for parents and students to view on the "Learning Tasks" tab on Compass.

In Mathematics, students are expected to complete at least 6 x Maths Pathways modules a fortnight to prepare for their tests. They will be provided with time in class to complete these but should be working on this at home and also preparing their bound reference book for their test.

In Year 7 English, students have spelling words and definitions to complete in preparation for their fortnightly spelling test. It is expected that students in Years 7 and 8 should also be reading a fiction or non-fiction text for leisure, each day for at least 20-30 minutes. This is one of the best ways for students to expand their vocabulary and improve their control of the English language.

All junior English students also have grammar and punctuation activities that are completed in class and set for homework each fortnight. This aligns with the Victorian Curriculum expectations around English Language and greatly assists students in the writing components within all areas of learning at the school.

In other subjects, common homework tasks are set in accordance with the unit being studied. Generally 2-3 major homework tasks per unit will be set. These tasks are used to inform teachers on students' understanding and to prepare them with the relevant knowledge and skills required for their assessment tasks. These will be provided and explained in class.

Students may also be required to complete minor activities for homework if they have not finished their classwork or are required to review a topic to develop further understanding.

Students should be regularly revising and reviewing content taught in class so that they are prepared for assessment tasks and tests.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to attend school every day. If a student is absent from school, parents should approve the absence using the Compass online portal, or by contacting the school reception. If a student is away for medical reasons, the school requests that a medical certificate be provided, substantiating the absence. Please note that only absences with a medical certificate are considered as "approved absences" by the school.

WORK REDEMPTION

If a student does not submit a homework task the classroom teacher will set a time for the student to complete or redeem this task.

If the student does not attend the detention, or complete the work, this will be followed by a referral to Homework Club after school.

Parents will be notified of the overdue work and Homework Club requirement via Compass email. This email will outline the date and the work that the student is to complete.

GRADING SCALE

Grade	Percentage
A+	100 - 90%
A	89 - 80%
B+	79 - 75%
B	74 - 70%
C+	69 - 65%
C	64 - 60%
D+	59 - 55%
D	54 - 50%
E+	49 - 45%
E	44 - 40%
UG	Below 40% on original assessment task but re-submitted to a satisfactory standard.
NS	Below 40% on original assessment task, have not shown satisfactory understanding in resit or alternative task