



Junior Years Course Handbook

2027

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

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
SECTION A: Junior Years Course Overview	
• Timetable Structure	4
• Year Seven Program	5
• Year Eight Program	8
• All You Can Be	10
SECTION B: Homework, Attendance, Grading	
• Homework Requirements	11
• Attendance Requirements	11
• Work Redemption	11
• Grading Scale	11

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a resource for students and parents/guardians, which outlines the Junior Years curriculum in line with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 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 & 8 Programs
- Homework & 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 2.0. 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	6	Science	7
Humanities	7	Humanities	6
Health & Physical Education	6	Health & Physical Education	6
Italian OR Hindi	5	Italian OR Hindi	5
Arts Elective Block • Drama • Visual Arts	5	Arts Elective Block • Music • Visual Communication Design (VCD)	5
Technology Elective Block • Digital Technology • Coding	5	Technology Elective Block • Food Studies • Textiles	5
All You Can Be	2	All You Can Be	2
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 2.0. 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. Languages is a compulsory course which all students undertake throughout both Year 7 and 8 with Italian and Hindi offered. Please note that aside from Languages, 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 the process of 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 Year 7 Mathematics program at Springside West Secondary College is aligned to the Victorian Curriculum version 2.0. Students extend their understanding of *Number* through their study of the integer and rational number systems; strengthen their fluency with mental calculations, written algorithms and digital tools; and use all 4 operations in calculations involving positive fractions and decimals. Students build their understanding of *Algebra* by using algebraic expressions to represent situations, describing the relationships between variables and substituting values into formulas to determine unknown values. They recognise, develop and use algebraic expressions and formulas using conventions, notations, symbols and pronumerals; and interpret algebraic expressions and formulas, use substitution to evaluate and determine unknown terms where other values are given, and solve simple equations using a variety of methods. Throughout *Measurement*, students extend their knowledge of angles to establish further relationships and apply these when solving measurement and spatial problems. Complementing this, in *Space*, students use algorithms to classify shapes in the plane and use tools to construct shapes, including two-dimensional representations of prisms and other objects. In their study of *Statistics*, students will apply the statistical investigation process to obtain numerical data relating to questions of interest, choose displays for the distributions of data and interpret summary statistics for determining the centre and spread of the data in context. As part of their study of *Probability*, students will conduct probability simulations and experiments involving chance events, and construct corresponding sample spaces and observe related frequencies, comparing expected, simulated and experimental results.

SCIENCE

Semester 1 begins with the Introduction to Year 7 Science topic, where students familiarise themselves with the laboratory through a range of safety-focused activities and develop skills in using a Bunsen burner. The Physics unit on Forces and Simple Machines then explores the range of forces acting on objects and the effects they have, with students beginning to apply their understanding and skills in scientific report writing. This is followed by Biology, where students investigate how living things are classified, including the design and use of classification keys, before extending their understanding through the study of ecosystems, including trophic groups and food webs. Semester 2 continues with the Chemistry unit, where students develop an understanding of states of matter and the particle model theory before moving into mixtures and a range of separation techniques. Attention then shifts to the Earth's Resources unit, where students investigate different types of resources, including natural and manmade, and classify them as renewable or non-renewable, while evaluating their advantages and disadvantages. The course concludes with Earth and Space Science, where students explain predictable phenomena observed on Earth, such as seasons, tides and eclipses, using the relationships between the Earth, Moon and Sun.

HUMANITIES

In Humanities, students study four key sub disciplines - Geography, Civics, History and Business & Economics. In Geography, students explore 'Place and Liveability' and 'Water in the World'. As part of these units' students are introduced to concepts such as what makes a place suitable to live in and the uses and value of water to the global community. In Civics & Citizenship, students unpack the key principles of democracy and how they as an individual can actively participate in civic matters. Through their study of History, students investigate Ancient Australia and the practices and impact of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They continue their study of the ancient world by focusing on Egypt and their beliefs, values and customs. Finally, in Business & Economics, students examine the ways in which consumers and producers respond to and influence each other in the economic market. They will apply this knowledge in justifying their choices as consumers on a daily basis.

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. Students will explore changes, influences and identity, learning how personal development, peers and media shape who they are. They will also study food and nutrition, building an understanding of healthy eating and the factors that influence food choices. Students will also examine respectful relationships and the role of digital media in shaping behaviour, communication and safety. Students will develop skills and tactics in a range of invasion games including basketball, netball and handball, as well as a range of striking and fielding sports, rhythmic dance and athletics. Students will develop their teamwork and decision-making skills through participation in a variety of physical activities across different environments.

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 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.

HINDI

Students will undertake this course to build basic written, spoken and reading comprehension competence in the Hindi language. The Year 7 Hindi program will encompass an introduction to the learning of the language of Hindi. The early focus of the course will be about identifying levels of existing competence in the language and seeking ways to differentiate for students. The year seven Hindi program will also have a focus on learning cultural elements of the language of Hindi. This will draw on the origins of the language and its links to the broader culture of Indian society and traditions.

DRAMA [Semester-long subject]

Students undertake units that introduce Elements of Drama and Role Play performance. Students are introduced to the foundations of how Drama is created and how dramatic meaning can be communicated to audiences. Students experiment with expressive and performance skills to communicate a narrative story structure. They will learn how to use a variety of verbal and non-verbal communication methods to convey dramatic meaning in their stories. Students will also learn how to interpret and present scripted drama to audiences. Throughout the unit, students will develop skills in numerous acting techniques through devising, rehearsing and refining drama performances.

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 a variety of resolved artworks and also study the Art of the First Nations People, analysing a variety of artworks in writing. In the second term, students investigate and learn ceramic techniques and skills as they create a piece of art in response to an artist.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY [Semester-long subject]

Within Digital Technology students have the opportunity to learn about different software and understand the basic workings of their laptop. Students will use Microsoft programs such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Adobe Illustrator. They will build their confidence and skills to select appropriate software for the task that is required to be completed. This course will increase in complexity as students complete the 4 units. Adobe Illustrator will also have a component of designing a spinning top that will be laser cut. The software used will only work on a Windows or Macintosh laptop.

CODING [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 Micro: Bit device (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.

ALL YOU CAN BE

The *All You Can Be* program is a core subject that assists students in assimilating to life in secondary school, as well as increasing their organisation and preparedness to learn. In Year 7 and Year 8, the students consider our school values, reflecting on desirable behaviours and their impact on themselves and the school community. Throughout the junior years, students also look at issues around bullying, cyber-safety, stress, and career aspirations.

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. Languages continue 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 memoir *I am Malala*, by Malala Yousafzai. Students are introduced to the historical context of the rise of the Taliban in Pakistan 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* and a collection of graphic novels to create a graphic novel. They also produce a reflective commentary on their creative choices. Students then 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.

MATHEMATICS

The Year 8 Mathematics program at Springside West Secondary College is aligned to the Victorian Curriculum Version 2.0. Students develop their computation skills with combinations of the 4 operations with integers and positive rational numbers in *Number*. In addition to this, students recognise the relationship between fractions and their terminating or recurring decimal representations, as well as convert between fraction and decimal forms of rational numbers and locate them on the real number line. Students continue to develop their algebraic skill set in *Algebra*, by manipulating and solving linear equations, as well as recognising and modelling situations using linear relations. Throughout *Measurement*, students apply knowledge of the relationships between and the features of circles to solve problems involving circumference and area. Further to this, in *Space*, students establish sets of congruency and similarity conditions for common shapes in the plane, and construct and locate objects with reference to three-dimensional coordinates using digital tools. In their study of *Statistics*, students examine experimental and observational data and identify populations and samples with respect to context; investigate variation in summary statistics across samples of varying size; and discuss their findings. As part of their study of *Probability*, students will consider a variety of situations involving complementary and mutually exclusive events, and combinations of 2 events; and represent these using tables and diagrams.

SCIENCE

In Year 8 Science, students work through six units across two semesters aligned to the Victorian Curriculum V2.0. Semester 1 begins with Biological Science, where students investigate the structure and function of cells and organelles before examining how organ systems work together to enable survival. Students then move into Chemical Science, distinguishing between elements, compounds and mixtures before exploring the differences between physical and chemical change with reference to the rearrangement of atoms. Semester 1 concludes with an introduction to Earth and Space Science, where students begin applying the theory of plate tectonics to explain geological phenomena such as volcanoes and earthquakes. In Semester 2, students continue and complete their Earth and Space Science studies by investigating the rock cycle and the properties of different rock types. The year concludes with Physics, where students classify different forms of energy transfer and transformation before designing and constructing series and parallel circuits and analysing their components in terms of voltage and current.

HUMANITIES

In Humanities, students study four key sub disciplines - Geography, Civics, History and Business & Economics. In Geography students explore landscapes and landforms, geomorphic hazards (earthquakes and tsunamis), and the development of urban environments. Students apply their learning to case studies and make judgements about interventions put in place to make cities sustainable and respond to natural disasters. In Civics & Citizenship, students investigate the role of the courts and parliament and how political actors exercise their power and rights. Through their study of History, students unpack the changes that took place across the medieval period in Europe and the role of different social groups in that change. They continue their study of societal change by investigating the impact of outside influences on Shogunate Japan. Finally, in Business & Economics, students examine the concept of entrepreneurship and the world of work.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Year 8 Health and Physical Education subject focuses on students strengthening their understanding of health, safety, wellbeing and physical activity participation in a range of changing contexts. Students will explore mental health, help-seeking and resilience where they will learn strategies to manage challenges and support themselves and others. Students will also complete a party safe unit where they will develop awareness surrounding drugs, alcohol, vaping and risk-taking behaviours to make informed and responsible decisions. They will enhance their understanding of respectful relationships and community health, exploring how communities influence health outcomes and how young people can contribute positively.

Students will participate in a variety of physical activities including net/wall sports such as tennis and table tennis and striking/fielding sports such as softball and rounders. They will participate in a football codes unit where they will complete a Sport Education Physical Education Program (SEPEP) to further refine and develop sport specific and interpersonal skills. They will also participate in other various sports including ultimate frisbee, fitness for performance, athletics and Indigenous games. These experiences will help students build teamwork, skill development, confidence and tactical awareness through participation in diverse activities across different environments.

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.

HINDI

Year 8 Hindi focuses on expanding students' vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills. They develop their ability to form sentences, use different tenses, and understand active/passive voice. Students engage with a variety of texts, recognising idiomatic expressions and textual conventions. They use Hindi for classroom interactions and structured tasks, while English supports discussion and reflection. The course encourages cultural awareness and engagement with Hindi-speaking communities.

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. Students use music technology (BandLab) to create their own music. They explore a range of popular music styles and analyse songs. In the *Performance* unit, students develop vocal, guitar, keyboard, bass guitar and drumming skills in order to perform a range of songs in student-led bands. In the *Song Writing* unit, students investigate and develop songwriting skills. They create and perform music, applying songwriting 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. Further tasks see 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, they will present their findings in a digital design project with Adobe Creative Suite.

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. Students trial a variety of hand-sewing techniques, how a sewing machine functions, and design processes in the context of Textiles. They design and create two finished products using various materials. The students research issues relating to the materials and fibres used in class with a focus on sustainability, as well as how fabrics are made. Throughout the lessons, they acquire a range of new terms and language referring to the skills and processes approached.

ALL YOU CAN BE

The *All You Can Be* program is a core subject that assists students in assimilating to life in secondary school, as well as increasing their organisation and preparedness to learn. In Year 7 and Year 8, the students consider our school values, reflecting on desirable behaviours and their impact on themselves and the school community. Throughout the junior years, students also look at issues around bullying, cyber-safety, stress, and career aspirations.

HOMEWORK REQUIREMENTS

Each subject has 2 or 3 assessment tasks per semester. Students are provided with the assessment task in class and given ample class time to complete the task. If a task also has components which can be completed at home, students are able to do so, provided they meet the due date and any authenticity requirements. Other assessments will be completed in class under exam style conditions. During an assessment task period, other homework requirements will be reduced for that subject and based around preparation. 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 no later than five days prior to the task taking place.

Students will receive consistent fortnightly homework tasks to complete for each of their subjects. These homework tasks are visible to students and families via the ‘Learning Tasks’ tab on Compass where task instructions and due dates can be found. Homework tasks can be submitted via Compass or directly to the teacher as a hard copy. Students who do not submit their homework by the due date will have this recorded on their interim report and if required due to repeated non-submissions a referral will be made to Homework Club.

Students may also be required to complete additional 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 consistently does not submit tasks, the classroom teacher will set a time for the student to complete or redeem this task. If the student does not attend the session, 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%
NYC	An assessment task that hasn’t been completed and submitted.
UG	Below 40% on the original assessment task but re-submitted to a satisfactory standard.
NS	Below 40% on the original assessment task, have not shown satisfactory understanding in resit or alternative task.