Overview of the A-Level qualification in Languages

**Qualification:** Edexcel A-Level German/French/Spanish

**Year 12/13**
- **Paper 1:** Listening, reading and translation.
- **Paper 2:** Written response to works (film/book) and translation.
- **Paper 3:** Speaking

**Topic Areas**
The course aims to give you a deeper understanding of the people, politics, culture and language of the countries you choose to study. Each language has slightly different topics in order to reflect issues and themes that may be of specific interest to that country (particularly in Year 13).

**Year 12 Topics:**
- **French**
  - Family, education, work, music, media & festivals
- **Spanish**
  - Family, tourism, work, music, media & festivals
- **German**
  - Natural living, education, work, music, media & festivals

In Year 12 you will also study a French/Spanish/German film.

**Year 13 topics:**
- **French:**
  - Immigration, France in WW2 - the Occupation, the Vichy regime and the Resistance
- **Spanish:**
  - Immigration, Franco and the Civil War, the transition from dictatorship to democracy
- **German:**
  - Immigration, life in the DDR, the fall of the Berlin wall, Germany after Reunification

In Year 13 you will also study a literary text and undertake an independent research project on a topic of your choice for your speaking exam.

**Skills**
The aim is to build listening, reading, speaking and writing skills as well as study history, film, literature and contemporary cultural issues for each language. Research skills are also developed through completing the independent research project in the final speaking exam.
Teaching staff
Generally, there are two teachers per group. In addition, students have a compulsory timetabled session with a Language Assistant. Initially these are in groups, then on an individual basis in preparation for your speaking exam.

Independent Study

Vocabulary and Grammar
It is vitally important that you keep a well-organised record of all new vocabulary and grammar, and that this is regularly up-dated. There will be regular tests.

Reading and Listening
There is a wealth of material available on the internet and podcasts to help you practise reading and listening skills.

Materials:
Coursebooks: Hodder Education A-Level German/French/Spanish - this book provides material for both Year 12 and Year 13.

We also recommend that students purchase a grammar workbook and a good bi-lingual dictionary.

Visits Abroad

French Study Trip or Exchange
This year we are offering a combined trip to Normandy and then Paris. Students visit both destinations. They will also be able to spend a day at a French school.

Spanish Study Trip
In 2020 we are offering a study trip to Madrid. Students will attend language classes in the morning and go on cultural visits in the afternoon/evening, which are relevant to the course.

German Study Trip
Students have the chance to travel to Berlin in either Year 12 or 13. We run this trip to support the historical units, which examine life before and after reunification, as well as giving context to the film and novel students will study at A-Level.

Subject Combinations
Languages complement other subjects at A-Level and certainly broaden a student’s skills base. Many undergraduate university courses can be combined with a modern language, such as economics, politics, history or law. Furthermore, many university courses offer placements in Europe, and an ability to use a language at a high level is extremely beneficial.
Reasons to do A-Level Languages

- Languages combine well with virtually any subject
- Studying Languages at A-Level gives you greater opportunities at university
- Language courses prepare you for situations you will meet at work
- Language graduates find it easier to get jobs
- There is a wide choice of jobs for graduates with languages
- Languages teach you adaptability and communications skills
- Being able to speak other languages is a skill that gets you ahead
- Languages are exciting and people-centered
- You get to travel abroad!
- 60% of British trade is with non-English speaking countries
- The economic importance of languages is growing
- 75% of businesses want languages
- There is a shortage of multilingual speakers in the UK

“*You live a new life for every new language you speak. If you know only one language, you live only once. *” (Czech proverb)

For further information please contact: Mr Snaith (Head of Languages)
msnaith@swchs.net
Sixth Formers say:

“A language allows entry to the European marketplace. It gives you a competitive edge over an opponent.”

“Being successful at another language shows good communication skills and shows employers you are willing to learn new skills and welcome a challenge.”

“A language is a USP (unique selling point).”

“It’s a qualification that employers respect.”

University students say:

“A language degree is almost like a gift. It’s an amazing advantage over other graduates. They’re going to be working in English-speaking countries whereas you have the flexibility to go and work in a foreign-speaking country.”

“In today’s world companies do a lot of business with foreign companies. They need to be able to communicate with them. They need people with languages.”

Businesses say:

“Multi-linguals are needed in the UK.”

“Communication barriers lead to missed business opportunities.”

Above: Spanish trip