Secondary Three

Whalsay School

Personalisation and Choice Booklet 2026

Name:_____

Introduction

Making Choices

S3/4 Subject Information:

- Literacy and English
- French
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- History
- Geography
- Business Management
- Administration and IT
- Design and Manufacture
- Graphic Communication
- Art and Design
- Music
- Religious and Moral Education
- Personal, Social and Health Education

Information for Parents/Carers

Introduction

Background

The move from S2 into S3 is an important stage in your education. You now have the opportunity to personalise the subjects you take to complete your Broad General Education (BGE) in S3.

In Whalsay School pupils in S3 usually study 8 subjects, alongside modules, wider achievement, PSE, RME and Core PE.

The courses you choose in S3 will provide you with the learning needed to progress into National Qualifications in the Senior Phase (S4-S6). It will also give an insight into Senior Phase subjects.

In S4 you will reduce the number of subjects you study to 7.

You will be expected to work hard in all your subjects in both S3 and in S4 so you get as much from your time at school as possible. You will be expected to work with increasing independence and to take responsibility for your work both in class and at home. A committed and focused approach is essential for success over the remainder of your time at school.

How are subjects organised in S3?
Subjects are organised into 8 curricular areas. You will find more information about each subject in this booklet.

- Languages
  - English
  - French
- Maths
  - Mathematics
- Health and Wellbeing
  - PSHE
- Sciences
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Physics
- Social Studies
  - Geography
  - History
- Technologies
  - Administration and IT
  - Business Management
  - Design and Manufacture
  - Graphic Communication
- Expressive Arts
  - Art and Design
  - Music
  - PE
- Religious and Moral Education
  - RME

The Courses on offer:
You will choose eight subjects to complete your broad general education in S3. You must take Maths, English and French and at least one from each of the other Curricular Areas. You will have 4 periods each of English, Maths and French, and 3 periods each of the other 5 subjects.

Most of the subjects you choose will lead to National Qualifications in S4. At the end of S3 your progress will be reviewed and you will reduce the number of subjects studied to seven. National Qualifications are available at National 3, National 4 and National 5 levels and you will work at the level that suits you best in each subject.

National 3 and National 4 qualifications will be awarded on a pass/fail basis while National 5 qualifications will be graded A-D.

All pupils in S3 will do one period a week of PSHE and RE, two periods of Core PE and of Modules, and 1 period of Wider Achievement. This is to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to complete a Broad General Education in line with Scottish Government recommendations.

As they move into S3 some pupils may also apply for a Skills for Work Course.

Skills for Work Courses
Information on Skills for Work courses can be found here:
https://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/schools/skills-for-work/

Skills for Work courses run on alternate Fridays. Successful applicants travel to UHI campuses at Lerwick or Scalloway, Mareel for Creative Industries or Aith School for Rural Skills.

Courses available session 2026 are:

- Aquaculture
- Computing
- Construction Craft and Technician
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Energy
- Engineering Skills
- Enterprise and Employability in the Creative Industries
- Hairdressing and Beauty
- Hospitality
- Maritime Skills
- Rural Skills

Making choices

Self-Reflection

Some of you may have a good idea of which subjects you'd like to take, others will be less sure. The choices you make now are important and are preparation for choices in the future, so it is a good idea to pause and think carefully.
People will have different reasons for choosing subjects.

Here are some reasons for choosing subjects, which ones do you agree or disagree with?

Reason for choosing a subject	Agree	Disagree
I'm interested in it		
My friends are taking it		
I like the teacher		
I'm good at it		
It will be useful for my future career		
It helps keep my options open		
All the boys/girls usually take it		
I think it will be easy		
I don't think there will be much homework		
My parents/carers want me to take it		

What am I interested in?

You're much more likely to do well in subjects you're interested in and enjoy.

Are you tempted to choose a subject just so that you can be in the same class as a friend? Fine if you are interested in the subject as well, but prepare to be bored if you aren't!

Are you basing a choice on the subject or whether you like or even don't like the teacher? Remember teachers move on, but the subject stays the same.

What am I good at?

Often the subjects you're best at are also the ones you enjoy, but that isn't always true. All subjects will get more challenging and stretch your ability further. If you already have good foundation knowledge and skills classes are likely to feel more comfortable.

What are my plans for the future?

You don't need to make any specific decisions about a future career or course. However, you should begin to think about:

- The type of career you might like
- What sort of qualifications you need to get into it
- The subjects you will need

Even if you have an idea of what you'd like to do after school it's important to take a wide group of subjects so that you have as many career options as possible. The way options are organised is to maintain the Broad General Education and help ensure you have a well-balanced timetable.

Who can help?
Subject choice is an individual process, but there are various people who can help you decide, such as Pupil Support teacher, subject teachers, SDS Advisers, parents/carers, etc.

Remember, although there are plenty of people you can speak to, it is your decision which subjects you choose!

Literacy and English

What will I learn and why?
Literacy and English offers a set of skills that allows us to engage fully in learning using different forms of language and a range of texts which society values and finds useful.

How will I learn?
We will be developing the key skills of Reading, Writing and Listening and Talking as they relate to Curriculum for Excellence levels in Literacy and English.

In Reading, texts studied will be novels, short stories, poetry, plays and film. We will ask you to complete spoken and written responses to these texts.

In Writing, we will offer you the chance to work on a variety of types – functional, personal/ creative and persuasive. We will also support your research and presentation of Writing through ICT.

In Listening and Talking, we will work individually and in groups giving solo talks, power point presentations, triangular debates, dramatic performances as well as discussions involving peers and self-assessment.

How will I be assessed?
S3 – Over the course of this year, you will produce work that forms evidence for assessment within the broad and general education of Curriculum for Excellence. We will give you guidance on key skills for each task and opportunity to improve upon earlier work. Close Reading assessments along with Writing pieces and Listening and Talk performance each term will provide evidence for profiling achievement across the levels of Curriculum for Excellence.

S4 – As you enter the Senior Phase of Literacy and English, Reading, Writing and Listening and Talk will be assessed within school for all National levels.

Project work will allow you to study an aspect of the course in greater depth, developing research, thinking skills, and reflecting your ability to report the findings. There is the possibility of a freestanding Literacy unit and an externally assessed exam at National 5 level.

What skills can I develop?
Literacy and English skills give us the ability to:

- apply our knowledge about language accurately and to good effect;
- interact and collaborate to develop our thinking and learning;
- communicate effectively, both face-to-face and in writing through an increasing range of media and by creating texts;
- read for information and work out what trust to place on the information; and
- identify when and how people are aiming to persuade or influence us.

Careers:
Most professions consider an English or Literacy qualification either desirable or essential.

French

Aims:

- To develop your ability to communicate in French in new situations.
- To teach you about French-speakers and the countries they live in.
- To improve your literacy and help you make links between languages.

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, you will have developed the skills of listening, reading, talking and writing in French, to communicate about a range of topics in the following broad areas:

Society – e.g. people, relationships; lifestyles, leisure; food, health

Learning – e.g. school, studying, plans for the future
Employability and citizenship – e.g. comparing jobs, work experience; money; practical situations (in shops, hotels, at work etc.); environmental issues

Culture – e.g. TV, films, books, music, people and places in French-speaking countries; travel, transport and holidays; comparing countries.

You will listen to a lot of French spoken by your teacher and from CDs (including songs), TV, and films. You will read a lot of French from books, magazines, brochures, notices, and from the Internet.

These experiences will also help you to talk and write in French, often with a partner or in a small group.

You will use computers to help you learn, through word-processing, language games, and websites from various countries.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 –

- Continuous assessment by your teacher, including regular short tests
- Self-assessment and group assessment of assignments

In S4 –

- **Internal assessment –** This applies to all three levels and comprises:
  Understanding Language (tests of listening and reading);
  Using Language (tests of talking and writing; at National 3, there is a choice of either talking or writing tests).
- **Assignment –** This applies to National 5 only. You will plan and research a chosen topic, then write a short text about your findings in French.
- **External Exam –** This applies to National 5 only, and will take place at the end of S4. At National 5, the Assignment (see above) will be marked as part of this external exam.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?

Other languages are very important for all sorts of things – holidays, making friends, employment, and further study. Learning them enables you to make connections with different people and cultures. They can also open up the possibility of living and working in other countries.

Language is at the core of thinking. Learning another language will give you insight into new ways of thinking. You will develop literacy skills that will help you to understand and use your own language better, and to learn any other language you might one day need.

France is one of our closest neighbours and a favourite holiday destination, and it has strong historical links with Scotland. French is widely spoken in at least 35 other countries too.

Careers:

A basic knowledge of French can be a big help in many sorts of work, especially jobs involving contact with people from abroad. French is still the language that is most in demand by British exporters. It can increase your opportunities in careers such as:

- Tourist and hospitality industries
- Marketing
- Technology (including IT)
- Financial services
- Media
- Government
- Teaching (especially primary teaching)

Mathematics

S3 Maths
Most pupils will work at CfE Level 4 in S3, with scope for extension work to help prepare for their chosen course in S4. This is their final year in broad general education.

S4 Maths
Most pupils work towards either Applications of Maths @ N3 and N5, or N4 and N5 Maths at Whalsay School in S4.

Course Content
In S3, pupils will study topics/concepts such as:

Algebra	Factorising and use of brackets in expressions, equations and formulae. Number patterns.
Money	Various money topics relevant to pupils' lives and their future.
Geometry	Properties of shapes and parallel lines, circles, area, volume, straight lines, Pythagoras theorem, enlargement and symmetry.
Trigonometry	Find angles and sides of right-angled triangles.
Statistics	Graphs and charts, analysing data to assess risk and make informed choices.
Number	Fractions, decimals percentages, ratio & proportion.
Application	Application of skills in a wide variety of familiar and non-familiar contexts.

In addition, those doing National 5 Maths in S4 will study concepts/topics such as:

Algebra	Equations & inequations, simultaneous equations, changing the subject of formulae, completing the square, quadratics, algebraic fractions, sequences, surds, indices.
Geometry	Arcs & sectors, converse of Pythagoras' theorem, similarity, shape properties, 2-D & 3-D co-ordinates and vectors.
Trigonometry	Trig equations, triangle formulae, graphs and relationships.
Statistics	Comparison of data sets, determine equations of best fitting straight lines.
Application	Application of skills in a variety of real life and abstract contexts.

Assessment
S3

- Assessment of homework, work in class, working with others
- Self-assessment
- Peer-assessment
- Written tests, throughout the course

S4
In S4 assessment methods are similar to S3, but also include:

- **Internal Assessment:**
  Three UASP unit assessments per course.

- **Added Value:**
  For a complete course award, pupils must also take an added-value assessment.

  N4: Internal Added Value assessment (two papers non-calculator/calculator)
  N5: At N5, the added value is an SQA external exam in May of S4.

After S4

S4 course	Possible S5 Course
N4 Maths	**N5 Maths or N5 Applications**
N5 Applications of Maths	**N5 Maths or Higher Applications of Maths**
N5 Maths	**H Maths or Higher N5 Applications of Maths**

Skills gained in this course have applications in many other subjects and help pupils progress in these subjects, along with progression to further courses in mathematics.

Careers:
Most jobs require workers to be numerate and able to apply their numeracy skills to a certain standard. People that are able to solve problems, and think in a logical, mathematical way, are sought after by employers. More specialist occupations require a higher level of mathematics, such as jobs in engineering, finance, and research.

Physical Education

Aims:
To give learners the opportunity to engage in a wide range of physical activities, and develop their performance skills.

To increase the understanding about the link between fitness and good health.

To develop and demonstrate, knowledge of the principles and factors affecting performance.

To develop the learners' ability to understand and describe factors that may affect performance, both negatively and positively.

To develop the use of a variety of methods of recording personal achievement and performance, with a view to personal progress.

To encourage a lifelong positive link between fun, fitness and good health, by participating in a wide range of activities.

Learning Experiences:
In both S3 & S4, the theoretical principles and other demands associated with the courses will be taught through practical activities where appropriate.

In S3, learners will participate in a wide range of physical activities providing in turn a solid basis for working towards National Qualifications in S4.

Senior Phase – This begins in S4 during which you will undertake National Qualifications at either National 3, National 4 or National 5 level .

By the end of S4, learners will have had the opportunity to:

- Practise and refine actions.
- Devise and create movements.
- Engage in practical investigation.
- Observe and report on skills and techniques.
- Assess self and peers.
- Meet challenges.
- Adopt different roles.
- Co-operate and compete with a partner or group.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 –

- Continuous evaluation in both practical skills and theoretical principles by the class teacher

In S4 –

- Project – this also applies for both N4 and N5 level. This project will give you the opportunity to extend and apply the skills learned throughout the course.
- External Exam – this only applies to National 5 and will take the form of an externally marked portfolio at the end of S4.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
To further develop personal performance skills within Physical Education, and, to develop an understanding of factors that affect performance.

Other skills that learners can gain from studying these courses are critical thinking skills, analysis, evaluation and co-operating with others.

Core PE
All learners will undertake two compulsory periods of PE per week. This course in many respects mirrors the S3 Course leading to Certification at N4 or N5.It is a broad based course offering a wide range of activities that satisfy CfE Experiences and Outcomes at Level4.

All of the course is practical and encourages participation and personal performance progression.

Any/all assessments are informal in nature and would be used by the learner to improve their own performance level.

Activities included are Lacrosse, Badminton, Team Games, Creative/Ethnic Dance, Basketball, Volleyball, Fitness, Athletics, Trampolining, and, Racquet Sports.

Careers:
Physical Education Teaching, Coaching, Sport and Recreation, Sport Science, Leisure Industry, Physiotherapy

Biology

Aims:

- Develop scientific and analytical thinking skills in a biological context.
- Develop an understanding of biological issues.
- Acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of biological concepts.
- Develop understanding of relevant applications of biology in society.

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, learners will develop knowledge and skills, and carry out practical and other learning activities related to the following broad areas:-

Cell Biology
Learners will explore the wonderful world of cells.

Content includes - cell structure, cell transport, chemical energy in cells, producing new cells, DNA and protein synthesis and genetic engineering.

Multicellular Organisms
Learners will explore the workings of whole organisms, including humans.

Content includes - cells, tissues and organs, control of biological processes, reproduction and inheritance, health and disease.

Life on Earth
Learners will explore many aspects of life on earth.

Content includes: biodiversity and distribution of organisms, techniques used to sample organisms and their environment, adaptation, natural selection, evolution, photosynthesis, food security and ethical issues.

Learning and teaching experiences will include biological Investigations, individual work, group work, whole class discussion and debates, written tasks, reading tasks, practical techniques, model making, individual and group research and presentations.

How will you be assessed?
During S3 and S4, different types of assessment are used, including:

- Self-assessment
- Peer-assessment
- Group assessment of presentations
- End-of- topic tests

In S4 –

- **Internal Assessment N3 & N4 only**
  Each of the three areas of the course will be assessed through end-of-unit tests. The Scottish Qualifications Authority will moderate these. Pupils must also pass the Value Added Unit in S4 to achieve a N4 award.

- **External Exam –** this only applies to National 5 and will take the form of an external exam at the end of S4.

- **Assignment (Externally marked) –** this applies to National 5 only and is worth 20% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
Biology is the study of all living things. Studying Biology helps you to understand how your own body works and enables you to make informed lifestyle choices. You also learn about how different types of organisms behave, interact with each other and adapt to the environment they live in.

You will gain valuable transferable skills for learning, life and work, including those of literacy, numeracy and communication.

You learn to think logically and solve problems.

By completing this course, learners will develop important and relevant skills, attitudes and attributes related to Biology, including:

- scientific and analytical thinking in a biological context
- an understanding of the role of biological issues
- the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of biological concepts
- develop investigative and experimental skills in a physics context
- develop skills in making informed decisions
- an understanding of relevant applications of biology in society

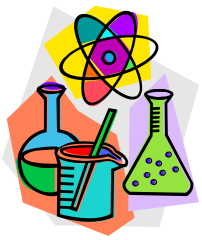
Careers:
Biology is required in all types of health related courses at College and University and careers e.g. Medicine, Nursing, Veterinary Medicine, Physiotherapy, Sports Science, Radiography, Pharmacy, Alternative Medicine, and Hairdressing.

Biology is required in Environmental related courses and careers e.g. Agricultural Engineering, Environmental Protection, Waste Management, Conservation, and Health & Safety.

Biology is required in the Food and Technology industries e.g. Brewing, Catering, Pest Control.

Many pupils choose to study Biology as they enjoy the subject. It could be that they do not require any Science subject for their future career. However studying the subject can help make informed decisions on sustainable lifestyles and healthy life choices.

Chemistry



Aims:

- To acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of chemistry concepts.
- To develop scientific and analytical thinking skills in a chemistry context.
- To develop applied problem solving skills in a chemistry context.
- To develop an understanding of chemistry's role in scientific issues.
- To develop understanding of how chemical products are formed and why they are formed.
- To develop understanding of relevant applications of chemistry in society.

Learning Experiences:
Chemistry is the study of matter at the level of atoms, molecules, ions and compounds. These substances are the building blocks of life and all of the materials that surround us. Chemists play a vital role in the production of everyday commodities.

By the end of S4, pupils will gain an understanding of chemistry and develop this through a variety of approaches, including practical activities, investigations and problem solving. Learners research topics, apply scientific skills and communicate information related to their findings, which develops skills of scientific literacy.

The course content includes the following areas of chemistry:

Chemical changes and structure
Topics covered are: rates of reaction; atomic structure and bonding related to properties of materials; formulae and reacting quantities; acids and bases.

Nature's chemistry
Topics covered are: homologous series; everyday consumer products; energy from fuels.

Chemistry in society
Topics covered are: metals; plastics; fertilisers; nuclear chemistry; chemical analysis.

How will you be assessed?
During S3 and S4, different types of assessment are used, including:

- Self-assessment
- Peer-assessment
- Group assessment of presentations
- Quick quizzes
- End-of-topic tests

In S4:

- **Internal Assessment**
  Each of the three areas of the course will be assessed through end-of-unit tests. The Scottish Qualifications Authority will moderate these. Pupils must also pass the Value Added Unit in S4 to achieve a N4 award.

- **External Exam & Assignment -** National 5 only
  This will take the form of an external exam at the end of S4 and an assignment completed during the course, which is externally marked.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
Chemistry is all around us, in our food, clothing, footwear, cosmetics, phones, cars, fuels, and in fact in every aspect of our lives. This course covers a variety of relevant contexts including the chemistry of the Earth's resources, the chemistry of everyday products and chemical analysis.

Studying Chemistry will give pupils a greater understanding of materials, where they come from, how they are made and how they react. This course aims to develop the ability to think analytically and to make reasoned evaluations.

Pupils will also gain valuable transferable skills for learning, life and work, including those of literacy, numeracy and communication. This course develops a broad, versatile and adaptable skill set which is valued in the workplace, forms the basis for progression to the study of chemistry at a higher level, and provides knowledge useful in the study of all of the sciences.

By completing this Course, pupils will develop important and relevant skills, attitudes and attributes related to chemistry, including:

- scientific and analytical thinking in a chemical context
- an understanding of the role of chemistry in scientific issues
- the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of concepts in chemistry
- develop investigative and experimental skills in a chemical context
- develop skills in making informed decisions
- an understanding of relevant applications of chemistry in society

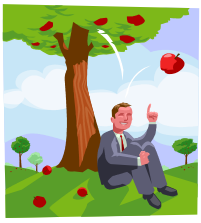
Careers:
Chemistry is useful in some types of engineering courses at College and University and for many types of Science degrees. The study of chemistry is of benefit not only to those intending to pursue a career in science, but also to those intending to work in areas such as the food, health, textile or manufacturing industries.

Chemistry is required for various Medical studies such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Optician, Radiography, Physiotherapy, Veterinary Medicine, Nursing, etc.

Chemistry is useful for training as a hairdresser or beautician and in careers involving alternative health therapies. Chemistry research and development is essential for the introduction of new products in the Chemical Industry.

Many pupils choose to study Chemistry as they enjoy the subject. The relevance of chemistry is highlighted by the study of the applications of chemistry in everyday contexts. This enables candidates to become scientifically literate citizens, able to review the science-based claims they will meet.

Physics



Aims:

- develop scientific and analytical thinking skills in a physics context
- develop an understanding of the role of physics in scientific issues
- acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of concepts in physics
- develop understanding of relevant applications of physics in society

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, learners will gain an understanding of physics and develop this through a variety of approaches, including practical activities, investigations and problem solving. Learners research topics, apply scientific skills and communicate information related to their findings, which develops skills of scientific literacy.

The course content includes the following areas of physics:

Dynamics
Topics covered are: vectors and scalars; velocity–time graphs; acceleration; Newton's laws; energy; projectile motion.

Space
Topics covered are: space exploration; cosmology.

Electricity
Topics covered are: electrical charge carriers; potential difference (voltage); Ohm's law; practical electrical and electronic circuits; electrical power.

Properties of matter
Topics covered are: specific heat capacity; specific latent heat; gas laws and the kinetic model.

Waves
Topics covered are: wave parameters and behaviours; electromagnetic spectrum; refraction of light.

Radiation
The topic covered is nuclear radiation

How will you be assessed?
During S3 and S4, different types of assessment are used, including:

- Self-assessment
- Peer-assessment
- Group assessment of presentations
- Quick quizzes
- End-of-topic tests

In S4:

- **Internal Assessment - National 3 & National 4 only**
  Each of the three areas of the course will be assessed through end-of-unit tests. The Scottish Qualifications Authority will moderate these. Pupils must also pass the Value Added Unit in S4 to achieve a N4 award.

- **External Exam & Assignment - National 5 only**
  This will take the form of an external exam at the end of S4 and an assignment completed during the course, which is externally marked.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
Physics is an exciting field. From the sources of the energy we use, to the exploration of space, it covers a range of applications of the relationships that have been discovered through experiment and calculation, including those used in modern technology. The speed of innovation and the impact of new technology can lead to dramatic changes in our lives.

Physics enables you to gain an insight into the underlying nature of our world and its place in the universe. An experimental and investigative approach is used to develop knowledge and understanding of physics concepts.

You will develop the ability to describe and interpret physical phenomena using mathematical skills and develop scientific methods of research where issues in physics are explored and conclusions drawn. You will gain valuable transferable skills for learning, life and work, which includes literacy and numeracy skills, and how to logically solve problems.

- By completing this Course, learners will develop important and relevant skills, attitudes and attributes related to physics, including:
- scientific and analytical thinking in a physics context
- an understanding of the role of physics in scientific issues
- the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of concepts in physics
- develop investigative and experimental skills in a physics context
- develop skills in making informed decisions
- an understanding of relevant applications of physics in society

Careers:
Physics is required in all types of engineering courses at College and University and for many types of Science degrees.

Physics useful for various Medical studies such as Medicine, Dentistry, Optician, Radiography, Physiotherapy, Veterinary Medicine, or Nursing. Physics is useful for the Building Trade such as training as an electrician, plumber or joiner.

Physics is useful to work in Electronics, as an Electrician or Mechanic, or a career in Installation, Electrotechnical Industries or Instrumentation.

Many pupils choose to study Physics as they enjoy the subject. It could be that they do not require any Science subject for their future career. However, studying the subject can help to develop analytical skills in communicating ideas and issues to make scientifically informed choices.

History

Why study History?
History is fun, challenging and interesting. It also helps us make sense of the world around us.

During the course, you will have to investigate issues, communicate your ideas to others, evaluate and organise information/evidence, think for yourself, challenge different ideas, and form your own opinions. You will be able to use these skills in your other subjects, and when you leave school too. For instance, every time you pick up a newspaper or magazine or research something on the internet you will be evaluating how accurate the information is...think about it!

Course Aims:

- To expand pupils' knowledge and understanding of people and society in the past and the issues that have helped to shape the world in which they live today.
- To develop pupils' imagination and empathy with people living in other time periods.
- To encourage pupils to debate the issues they study, to form their own views and respect those of others.
- To further develop pupils' skills, including investigating, analysing and evaluating historical evidence.
- To encourage and nurture an interest in history.

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, pupils will have completed a wide range of outcomes in the following broad historical study areas:

- **Scottish:** Pupils will study an important period of Scottish history. In Whalsay School, we will study The Era of the Great War: 1900-1928. By exploring significant issues during this period, pupils will develop the skills to interpret and evaluate a range of historical evidence. The S3 course will focus on this unit.

- **British:** Pupils will study a key episode of British history. In Whalsay School, we will study Changing Britain 1760-1914. Through studying a critical event of British history, pupils will develop techniques to describe, explain and present information – as well as draw conclusions on its significance and impact for future generations.

- **European and World:** Pupils will study a significant era of European and World History. At Whalsay School, we will study Hitler & Nazi Germany 1919-1939. In doing so pupils will develop techniques to

compare differing historical viewpoints on the events under study, taking into account their content and the circumstances of the time.

The course will be taught using a variety of learning experiences, including individual written tasks, group and class discussions, analysing and evaluating historical sources, internet research, investigations and group presentations. Where appropriate, examples of local history and visits to museums will be included.

Given the nature of the course, there will be a focus on the development of a range of literacy skills, but aspects of health and well-being as well as numeracy will be incorporated where appropriate.

How will you be assessed? :
In S3 –

- Assessment of class / homework activities by teacher
- End-of- topic tests/assessment tasks
- Self-assessment and Peer Assessment

In S4 –

- **Internal Assessment –** this applies for all three levels, Access 3, National 4 and National 5. Each of the three areas of the course will be assessed through end-of-unit tests and/or set assessment tasks. The Scottish Qualifications Authority will moderate these.
- **N4/5 Assignment –** this also applies for all three levels as above. The project/assignment will allow you to study a topic from any of three units in greater depth, developing your research skills and your ability to report on your findings. At N5 level, the assignment will be worth 20% of your final mark.
- **External Exam –** this only applies to National 5 and will take the form of an external exam at the end of S4.

Careers:
Careers directly related to the study of history include those in archaeology, architecture, archives, conservation, galleries, heritage industry, museums and teaching. However, the skills developed through studying history are relevant to a wide variety of other careers including journalism, law, local government, media, research and tourism.

Geography

Why study Geography?
If you choose Geography, the S3-4 course will help you understand what is going on in the world around you, both at a local and worldwide level.

By studying geography, you will also develop a wide range of skills, in particular the ability to research and critically analyse information, to organise and present ideas, orally and in written form, and the ability to work with others. You will be helped to think independently about the issues studied and should be able to discuss them with confidence.

Course Aims:

- To develop students research, data analysis and presentation skills.
- To develop students understanding of the formation and characteristic features of different physical environments.
- To develop students understanding of how people and the environments in which they live interact with each other through study of a variety of locations around the world.

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, pupils will have completed a wide range of outcomes in the following broad areas:

- **developing their geographical skills** including research methods, the collection of data through the use of fieldwork etc., the analysis, interpretation and presentation of data (e.g. compiling graphs)

- **knowledge and understanding of human environments in developed and developing countries by examining;**
  - similarities and differences in levels of human development
  - the factors influencing population distribution and change
  - the nature of land use in both rural and urban areas

- **knowledge and understanding of physical environments and weather in the United Kingdom by studying;**
  - the formation and characteristic features of two physical environments
  - the ways in which these landscapes are used by people, considering conflicts which can arise from the uses
  - local weather conditions and weather systems

- **knowledge and understanding of a significant global geographical issue by:**
  - Studying the causes of a significant global geographical issue such as the Natural Hazards unit (which look at earthquakes, volcanic activity and tropical storms and the impact they have on people and the environment) and Climate Change. We will study these two units in S3.

Students will work individually and in groups. The nature of the work will include investigations; fieldwork; discussion / debates; completion of written tasks of varying lengths; preparing individual and group presentations.

Course work will also encourage the development of a range of numeracy and literacy skills and various aspects of Health & Well-being.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 –

- Assessment of class work / homework tasks by teacher
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- End-of- topic tests/assessment tasks

In S4 –

- **Internal Assessment –** this applies for all three levels, Access 3, National 4 and National 5. Course work will be assessed using the variety of methods detailed above. The Scottish Qualifications Authority will moderate these.
- **N4/5 assignment –**This project about a geographical topic will be based around fieldwork and/ or secondary research; where students will collect, process, analyse and present information. At N5 level, the assignment is worth 20% of your final mark.
- **External Exam –** this only applies to National 5 and will take place at the end of S4.

Careers:
Geography helps you to develop skills that are needed in lots of different careers and, therefore, helps make you of potential interest to a wide range of employers. Statistics show that geographers are among the most employable of school leavers.

The close link between Geography and the world around us makes for a long and varied list of related careers. For example, Geography is a good subject for those who want to go to sea or to work in an oil or mining company, in market research, advertising, travel, recreation, tourism, journalism, meteorology, town and country planning, transport, development or aid agencies, environmental work, using Geographical Information Systems, working for the census office…and many more.

Administration and IT

Aims:

- To develop an understanding of administration in the workplace
- To develop IT skills and use them to perform administrative tasks
- To acquire organisational skills in the context of organising and supporting events
- To develop an understanding of key legislation affecting both organisations and employees
- To develop an understanding of good customer care and its' benefits to organisations

The Course makes an important contribution to general education through developing a range of essential skills which will stand learners in good stead regardless of the career path they ultimately choose. It also supports the wider curriculum through it's' emphasis on IT.

Learning Experiences:
By the end of S4, pupils will have completed a wide range of outcomes in the following broad areas:

Administrative Practices – the aim of this unit is to give learners an appreciation of administration in the workplace and to enable them to carry out a range of straightforward administrative tasks in the context of organising and supporting small-scale events. Areas of study include: Tasks, Skills and Qualities of an Administration Assistant; Health and Safety; Customer Care; Security of People, Property and Information.

IT Solutions for Administrators – completion of this unit will develop learners' skills in the use of IT and, organising and processing simple information in administration-related contexts. Learners will use the basic functions of IT applications to create, edit and update business documents. Learners will use Microsoft Office to build on their existing skills in word processing, spreadsheets, databases and presentations.

Communication in Administration – this unit enables learners to use IT for gathering and sharing information with others in familiar administration-related contexts. Learners will develop a basic understanding of what constitutes a reliable source of information and an ability to use appropriate methods for gathering information. They will also be able to communicate information in ways showing a basic awareness of its' context, audience and purpose.

Learners will develop the skills, qualities and attributes required of a junior administrator, demonstrating their ability to organise, process and communicate information and to organise and support small-scale events.

How will you be assessed?

In S3: in a range of different ways including: continuous assessment; end-of-topic tests; self-assessment; group assessment of presentations.

In S4:

- At **National 3** level, pupils will complete individual unit assessments. These are completed in class throughout the year.

- At **National 4** level, pupils will complete an Added Value Unit in addition to individual unit assessments. The Added Value Unit will allow learners to apply a range of practical and cognitive skills. It is completed in class, within a specified period of time.

- **National 5** Course – the course assessment is in 2 parts. The first is an assignment completed in March during class time. Pupils are given 3 hours to complete this, any element of the course, except spreadsheets and databases, can be assessed. The assignment is worth 70 marks and is externally marked by the SQA. The second part of the assessment, worth 50 marks, is a final exam that pupils sit during the exam diet. This covers only spreadsheets, databases and theory.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?

Administration and IT will develop:

- successful learners who achieve through participating in engaging, motivating and relevant learning experiences in real-life administration contexts
- confident individuals who derive satisfaction from engaging in practical activities relevant to the world of work and from having their achievements and skills recognised
- responsible citizens who actively participate in the work of the class, become aware of technological issues within the workplace, such as business use of the internet and the impacts of IT, and take on organisational tasks
- effective contributors who share their views with others, effectively contributing to group tasks and supporting their peers whenever appropriate
- skills for learning, life and work including IT, Employability, Literacy, Numeracy, Organisational, Enterprise, Citizenship and Thinking skills.

Careers:

The Course develops a range of essential skills that will be useful regardless of the career path learners ultimately choose. Successful completion of the course will open up progression to a range of careers in Administration and IT.

Possible progression in other SQA qualifications in Administration and IT or related areas e.g. Higher Administration and IT. Also progression to further study, employment or training.

Business Management

Aims:
The course acts as an introduction to the world of business. Business plays an important role in society. We all rely on businesses and entrepreneurs to create wealth, prosperity, jobs and choices. The purpose of the course is to develop learners' understanding of the way in which businesses operate in the current dynamic, changing, competitive and economic environments, and to encourage enterprising attitudes.

Who is Business Management for?
This course is suitable for all learners with an interest in business, whether that be in developing an understanding of the modern business environment or finding out how and why people set up in business. The combination of practical aspects and ICT-based learning will enable learners to apply their skills and knowledge to real-life business contexts. By developing many transferable skills, the course prepares learners for everyday life, the world of work, or further study of business and other business-related subjects. This course aims to support learners to make an effective contribution to society as consumers, employees, and as future employers or self-employed people.

Learning Experiences:
The course consists of whole class teaching, group work and independent tasks. There will be practical case studies and ICT tasks which will compliment the course theory notes and discussions. In S3 learners will have the opportunity to practice their entrepreneurial skills in a real-world context by planning, preparing for and carrying out an enterprise activity.

Business Environment and Influences
This explains the role of business, different types of organisation and business sectors.

Business Decision Areas
This focuses on the four main departments found in large UK organisations: Marketing, Operations, Finance and Human Resources.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
The course enables learners to develop:

- knowledge and understanding of the ways in which society relies on business to satisfy needs and wants
- an insight into the systems organisations use to ensure customers' needs are met
- enterprising skills and attributes
- financial awareness, in a business context
- an insight into how organisations organise their resources for maximum efficiency and to improve their overall performance
- an awareness of how external influences impact on organisations

How will you be assessed?
In S3 and in preparation for course assessments in S4:

- self- and peer-assessment, short assignments, unit tests

In S4:
N4 (SCQF Level 4)
To pass the N4 qualification learners must pass two coursework units and an assignment.

- Business in Action
- Influences on Business
- Business Assignment

N5 (SCQF Level 5)
The N5 course is assessed externally in two parts:

- 2 hour Question Paper - 90 marks, represents 75% of the overall grade for the course
- 5 hour Assignment - 30 marks, completed in class with supervision from class teacher. This represents 25% of the overall grade for the course.

Careers:
Progression in this course would be to Higher Business Management or other related Qualification Scotland courses such as Accounting, Economics, and Admin and IT.

Business qualification can lead to a wide range of careers in all sectors of business, finance and ICT.

Design and Manufacture

Aims:
The aims of Design and Manufacture courses are to enable learners to develop:

- skills in designing and manufacturing models, prototypes and products
- knowledge and understanding of manufacturing processes and materials
- an understanding of the impact of design and manufacturing technologies on our environment and society

Who is Design and Manufacture for?
This course is suitable for learners interested in design and practical activities. It provides a foundation for those considering further study or a career in design, manufacturing, engineering, science, marketing, and related disciplines. The course complements and adds workshop experience to other subjects in the technologies and expressive arts.

Learning Experiences:
Design and Manufacture provides progression in and from experiences and outcomes in expressive arts, mathematics, science and ICT, as well as in craft, design, engineering and graphics. Learners will develop knowledge and skills to appreciate, contribute and adapt to opportunities offered in manufacturing industries. Learners will gain skills in designing and manufacturing products using various materials. This will include developing knowledge of design considerations, design techniques, materials and manufacturing processes. Sketching, drawing and modelling skills will be used along with literacy and presentation skills to communicate ideas and information. Critical thinking and evaluation skills will be continually developed throughout the course.
The course develops skills in Design and Materials and Manufacture.

Design
Learners study the design process from brief to design proposal. This helps them develop skills in research, idea generation, idea development and planning. Sketching, drawing, modelling and notes are used to communicate design proposals and record design thinking. They gain an understanding of the design/make/test process and the importance of evaluating and resolving design proposals on an ongoing basis. Learners also develop an understanding of the factors that influence the design of products and knowledge of materials and manufacturing processes.

Materials and Manufacture
Learners study the manufacture of prototypes and products. This helps them develop practical skills including marking out, use of tools, assembly and finishing. They gain an appreciation of the properties and uses of materials, as well as a range of manufacturing processes and techniques, allowing them to evaluate and refine design and manufacturing solutions. Learners also gain an understanding of commercial manufacture.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
Learners will develop creative and practical skills by designing and making solutions to real problems. In addition, they gain an understanding of the impact of design and manufacture on everyday life.
The course encourages candidates to take a broad view of design and manufacture, through making decisions and taking responsibility for their own actions, generating and developing ideas, applying knowledge, and justifying decisions. These transferrable skills place candidates in a strong position regardless of the career path they choose.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 and in preparation for course assessments in S4:

- self- and peer-assessment, short design and manufacture assignments, tests.

In S4:
N4 (SCQF Level 4)
To pass the N4 qualification pupils must pass two coursework units and an assignment.

- Design (9 SCQF points)
- Materials and Manufacturing (9 SCQF points)
- Design and Manufacture Assignment (6 SCQF points).

Freestanding Units (SCQF level 5)
Two free standing units, which do not contribute to achievement of a National Course, are available.

- Design (9 SCQF points)
- Materials and Manufacturing (9 SCQF points)

N5 (SCQF Level 5)
The N5 course consists of 24 SCQF points including time for preparation for course assessment. The N5 course is graded A-D. The course assessment has three components:

- 1 hour 45 minute Question Paper – 80 marks
- Design Assignment – 55 marks
- Practical Assignment – 45 marks

Careers:
Progression in this course would be to Higher Design and Manufacture (not currently offered at AHS) or other related SQA Qualifications. It would be useful for employment or training courses in a related discipline, for example: product design, construction, engineering, manufacturing, planning or surveying.

Graphic Communication

Aims:
The aims of Graphic Communication are to enable learners to develop:

- skills in preliminary, production and promotional graphic communication techniques
- knowledge and understanding of graphic communication standards, protocols and conventions
- an understanding of the impact of graphic communication technologies on our environment and society

Who is Graphic Communication for?
This course is a broad-based qualification, suitable for learners with an interest in digital and manual graphic communication. It is learner-centred and includes sketching, technical drawing, computer modelling and drawing, use of design elements and principles and desktop publishing. It is suitable for those wanting to progress onto higher levels of study or a related career.

Learning Experiences:
Graphic Communication provides progression mainly in and from the craft, design, engineering and graphics Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes.
Courses are practical, exploratory and experiential in nature. Learners will be encouraged to use imagination, creativity and logical thinking to develop awareness of graphic communication as an international language. They will develop understanding of how graphic communication technologies impact on society and the environment.
Learners will initiate, develop and communicate ideas graphically, and develop spatial awareness and visual literacy through graphic experiences. They will interpret the graphic communications of others, and produce preliminary, production and promotional work of their own.

The course develops skills in 2D and 3D pictorial graphic communication. Learners will develop ability to use these skills to produce graphics that transmit information and that provide relevant visual impact.

2D graphic communication
Learners develop creativity and skills within a 2D graphic communication context. They initiate, develop and communicate ideas using graphic techniques in straightforward and familiar contexts, as well as in some less familiar or new contexts. Candidates also develop 2D graphic spatial awareness.

3D and pictorial graphic communication
Candidates develop creativity and skills within a 3D and pictorial graphic communication context. They initiate, develop and communicate ideas using graphic techniques in straightforward and familiar contexts, as well as in some less familiar or new contexts. Candidates also develop 3D graphic spatial awareness.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
Graphic Communication courses provide opportunities for learners to gain skills in reading, interpreting and creating graphic communications. This will include using knowledge of sketching, drawing, colour and presentation techniques, making choices, using equipment, software and materials to create graphics, evaluating, and improving work where appropriate. Knowledge and skills in Computer Aided Graphics and Drawing will be developed and skills for interpreting graphic information will be practiced. The course also provides opportunities to build self-confidence and enhance skills in numeracy, ICT, planning and organising work tasks, and in working independently and in collaboration with others. Learners develop skills in critical thinking, decision making and communication.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 and in preparation for course assessments in S4:
- self- and peer-assessment, short assignments, tests

In S4:
N4 (SCQF Level 4)
To pass the N4 qualification pupils must pass two coursework units and an assignment.
- 2D Graphic Communication (9 SCQF points)
- 3D and Pictorial Graphic Communication (9 SCQF 9 points)
- Graphic Communication Assignment (6 SCQF points).

Freestanding Units (SCQF level 5)
Two free standing units, which do not contribute to achievement of a National Course, are available.
- 2D Graphic Communication (9 SCQF points)
- 3D and Pictorial Graphic Communication (9 SCQF points)

N5 (SCQF Level 5)
The N5 course consists of 24 SCQF points including time for preparation for course assessment. The N5 course is graded A-D. The course assessment has two components:
- 2 hour Question Paper - 80 marks
- 8 hour Assignment - 40 marks

Careers:
Progression in this course would be to Higher Graphic Communication or other related SQA Qualifications. It would be useful for employment or training courses in a related discipline, for example design, manufacturing, engineering, marketing, architecture, surveying and creative industries.

Art and Design

Aims

- To develop your ability in drawing and painting from observation
- To develop your ability to work through the design process
- To develop your understanding and use of the visual elements
- To investigate the work of artists and designers
- To use critical vocabulary with understanding

By the end of S4, students will have completed two folios of practical work:

Expressive unit: painting & drawing from observation, developing theme-based compositions and the study of art work by artists who work/worked within a similar theme.

Design unit: researching a brief, developing concepts, exploring materials and studying work of designers who design/designed similar items.

The type of work covered in each unit varies each year. Expressive work will usually centre on Still Life or Portraiture. Design work usually centres on 2D/3D Applied Design (surface pattern, jewellery and/or body adornment). The practical units are developed in three stages:
Research into the topic
Development of Ideas
Produce **Final** outcome
Evaluation

In S3 you will:

- Develop and improve your expressive and design skills through work in a variety of 2D and 3D media.
- Research and comment on the work of other artists and designers.

In S4 you will:

- Complete two units of work at National 3, National 4 or National 5. The coursework for each level is the same, so all students work on the same topics through the year. Each unit is combined with a written art or design study that informs the written exam.

All students work individually on a choice of discipline with an individually chosen theme, following strict deadlines. The Practical Activity will be open and flexible to allow for personalisation and choice and will focus on both the process and products of learning.
How will you be assessed?
In S3, different types of assessment are used:

- Continuous assessment
- Self-assessment

In S4, assessments will be based on a series of Learning Outcomes for each unit and the Practical Activity at the end of the course:

- **Internal Assessment –** this applies for all three levels, National 3, National 4 and National 5. Each of the two units will be assessed internally through end of unit assessments. These will be moderated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
- **Practical Activity –** this also applies for all three levels as above. The activity requires you to use your research and development work to create Final Outcomes for each unit.
- **Written Exam paper –** this only applies to National 5 and will take the form of an externally marked written exam at the end of S4.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?

- develop your overall art and design skills
- develop new and challenging ways of working to a deadline
- learn new skills and techniques in art, craft and design
- enhance your research and investigation skills
- Anyone can be taught how to improve and develop their artistic skills. Art & design is obviously a "skills based" subject, and your talent and abilities in drawing, painting, design and craft work will show a lot of improvement – no matter the level you are starting from.
- Art & Design is a core subject for "Problem Solving" and helps to develop your imagination and creativity. It teaches you to think creatively, to develop your observational skills and improve your understanding of the visual elements.
- If you want to study for a degree in Art & Design, you will need a portfolio of your artwork. This is usually produced in S6, and this course at National 4 or National 5 is a good way to start this.

Music

Aims:

- Develop your ability to perform on two different instruments of your choice (including instruments you may already receive lessons on).
- Develop your ability to compose and/or improvise music.
- Build your understanding of musical theory and terminology, and your ability to use this knowledge to discuss different styles of music.

Learning Experiences:

In S3 pupils will:

- **Develop** their technique on the two instruments they have chosen by performing music from a range of styles and periods. All pupils will be encouraged to reach the highest standard of performance possible.
- **Compose** and/or improvise music and learn how to use music software to realise their compositions. They will compose and/or improvise in various styles and using a variety of approaches and technologies.
- **Listen** to a wide range of music, often related to the music they are playing or composing. They will develop a knowledge and understanding of musical terms and musical theory. They will apply this knowledge and understanding by describing music and assessing both their own and the performances of others.

Senior Phase - In S4, pupils will work towards a National Qualification at National 3, National 4 or National 5. (these roughly correspond to the current Access, Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 courses)

By the end of S4, you will have:

- **Prepared** a programme of at least two or more pieces at the level specified for the qualification you are doing on each instrument, equalling 8 minutes total.
- **Performed** these pieces for an assessment. At National 5, an external visiting examiner appointed by SQA will do the assessment.
- **Composed** and/or improvised music to the required standard for the qualification you are doing.
- **Developed** a knowledge and understanding of musical concepts, musical theory and a range of musical styles and periods.

How will you be assessed?
In S3 –

- Teacher and self-assessment of performance based on a set of criteria for performance
- Tests and Quizzes on musical knowledge and understanding
- Presentations on musical knowledge and musical styles
- Teacher and self-assessment of composition and/or improvising
- Short written commentaries on musical features and/or a musical performance which uses musical language and concepts

In S4 –

- At National 4:
  - All parts of the course will be assessed internally.

- At National 5:
  - An external examiner appointed by SQA will assess your performance
  - Your knowledge and understanding will be assessed by an external exam set by SQA.
  - The assessment of composition and/or improvising is completed in school and
  - Marked externally by SQA.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?

- Studying music gives you the chance to develop your musical skills. You will develop confidence, self-awareness, self-discipline, determination, and commitment by performing on your instruments. You will develop the ability to work co-operatively and collaboratively by working with others to perform music. You will develop your insight and appreciation of other cultures and societies through listening and understanding a broad range of music from across the world. You will develop your creativity through composing and/or improvising.
- Studying music greatly enhances physical co-ordination and shows future employers that you not only have creative ability, but also mental and physical focus and agility.
- The music industry is expanding and developing and there are many opportunities to be involved in this exciting area. By studying music further, you may be preparing yourself for a career in the music industry.
- If you play an instrument and especially if you are receiving instrumental instruction,
- then you can gain academic credit for your study by taking a music course.

Possible Progression
National 5 will lead to Higher and Advanced Higher courses and University entrance.

RME: Religious & Moral Education

Aims:

- For pupils to understand and reflect on the values that underpin their thinking and behaviour.
- For pupils to examine and reflect on religious and non-religious views on moral and philosophical issues like peace and justice, medical ethics, the origins of life, the purpose of life, etc.
- For pupils to identify social issues in their local community and research a charity that works to address them.

Learning Experiences:

- Topics are taught through – investigations; group work; individual work; discussion & debate.
- Pupils will also take part in the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, which involves advocating for a £3000 grant to be made to a social charity they have researched and engaged with.
- Topics are taught for one period each week in S3 and S4. Pupils will have the opportunity to complete the Level 4 SQA RME award.

What can you gain from this subject?

- This course offers additional content in terms of the pupils' broad general education.
- Skills that pupils can gain from taking part in the activities are critical thinking skills, where their beliefs as well as opposing beliefs to theirs are critically challenged and evaluated; social skills from engaging with each other and external agencies; presentation skills from participating in the YPI final.
- Experience gained in these activities will allow pupils to make an informed decision about continuing with RMPS at N5 or Higher certificate level.

Careers:

Environment, Politics, Economics, Education, Social Care, Media and Journalism.

Personal, Social & Health Education

Aims:
PSHE stands for Personal, Social and Health Education. You will do one period of PSHE a week in S3 and S4. The aim of PSHE is to encourage you to express your opinions and consider your thoughts on a variety of issues, which affect yourself and your community. Some of the PSHE topics will cover a range of the Curriculum for Excellence Health and Wellbeing outcomes, particularly to do with relationships, sexual and emotional health. From S1 onwards, the Health and Wellbeing outcomes have also been covered in other curricular areas, particularly PE, Home Economics and Science.

Learning Experiences

In S3
Self-Awareness
Personal Finance
Anti-bullying
Children's Rights
Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood
Work Experience preparation
Mental and Emotional Health

In S4
Mental and Physical Health
Road Safety
Study Skills
Planning for the future

Pupils are encouraged to discuss and debate issues with their class and their Pupil Support teacher. There is also investigative-based work throughout S3 and S4. Pupils will also watch a number of up to date film clips on a variety of different issues.

Many outside agencies such as the Police, Drugs Dogs, School Nurse, Compass Centre, The Samaritans, Shetland Women's Aid, OPEN Peer Support and Skills Development Scotland, come in and speak to PSE classes.

How will you be assessed?
There is no final exam in PSHE.
However, pupils will gather evidence of meeting the experiences and outcomes for HWB.

What can you gain from choosing this subject?
PSHE is a compulsory subject for all pupils. It is hoped that pupils will develop their social and communication skills in PSE and gain a stronger understanding of the issues and topics that we look at in S3 and S4.

Careers:
The communication, discussion and self-awareness skills developed in PSE will be useful in all careers.

For Parents/Carers

A wider range of opportunities after school, changes in the job market and competition for jobs, training places and courses means that making a good choice of subjects in S2 is more important than ever.

It can be a worrying time for you as well as for your son or daughter. Naturally, you want to do what you can to help, but this is not always easy!

Even if they want your help, and most do, teenagers often find it hard to ask for or take advice. They want to make up their own minds. However, they also know that everyone finds it easier to make major decisions if they can talk them over with someone they trust. The good news is that most teenagers say that their parents are the most important influence on their career and learning choices.

They want to choose subjects they will enjoy and do well in and which will help them in their future career. You want the same things. So what can you do to help?

Things you can do to help

- Find out as much as you can about the subjects on offer and the options that are available in Whalsay School. You can do this by going along to parents' evenings and reading any information on subject choice that the school sends home.
- Contact the school if you have any concerns or need more information. Ask to speak to the Pupil Support Teacher – Eyvor Irvine.
- Encourage them to think things through carefully and to ask for help if they need it.
- Discuss their options with them at home.
- Listen to their views on their choices and how they see their future after school.
- Encourage them to think ahead and keep an open mind about future careers (it's too early for most students to make a definite career choice at this stage).
- Encourage them to consider all subjects and future careers equally. Thinking of girls' jobs or boys' jobs is not in their best interests.

You can get more help and information from various sources.

- The Careers service -Skills Development Scotland- is based in Solarhus, 3 North Ness, Lerwick, ZE1 0LZ. They give advice and information on career choice and entry requirements. They can be contacted on 01595 695791. Our Adviser is Katie Clubb: katie.clubb@sds.co.uk.

- Your child's S2 report and subject teachers at Parents' Evenings.

- The Pupil Support Teacher can also give advice on which subjects might suit your son or daughter best.

- Skills Development Scotland website – www.myworldofwork.co.uk and https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/parents-and-carers

- The PlanIT Plus database, which has lots of information on careers and courses – www.planitplus.com

National Qualifications

National Qualifications include National Courses and units at National 1 – 5 Levels.

Pupils will choose 8 subjects to study in S3 and up to 7 subjects in S4.

- Broad General Education - In S3 pupils will study a range of units which are designed to ensure progression and to provide students with the skills necessary as they work towards National Qualifications in S4.

- Senior Phase - this begins in S4. During this year, pupils will work towards National Qualifications at National Level 1-5.

Courses will continue to contain work that is assessed and marked throughout the year by teachers, as it is at present.

National Qualifications at N1-N4 include Units which are assessed as pass or fail. National 1-4 course qualifications are assessed overall as pass or fail.

Subjects at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher will be graded A to D.

National 1- 3:

These are starter courses for young people and adults. There will be no exams at the end of National 1, 2 or 3 Courses. The Class Teacher will assess work.

National 4:

National 4 courses are made up of a number of Units which must be passed along with an Added Value Unit.

National 5:

Units are available at National 5 level, but these are not a requirement for passing N5 courses. National 5 courses include an externally marked exam and/or assignments set by the SQA.