Functional Skills and Non Examination Assessments (NEAs) at Snowfields Academy

Dear Parents,

Students following the Spirit pathway will be working towards Functional Skills or coursework/portfolio based awards in the following subjects;

English Literature
Mathematics
Science
Sports
Occupational Studies
RSE (2023/24 Year 9 cohort only)

These subjects require students to build a portfolio of work that showcases their ability (Non Examination Assessment) and in some cases sit a Functional Skills Assessment up to Level 2. Functional Skills focus on using real world context to allow students to access the content of the course and therefore equip them with the practical skills and knowledge required to learn, work and live successfully. The following booklet contains information on all of these subjects and how they are structured, as well as some useful information for supporting your child through the next few years of study.

Teaching Levels in NEAs and Functional Skills Certificates

The levels for Non Examined Assessments and Functional Skills Qualifications differ from the GCSE number systems. Students taking these qualifications will usually result in a 'Pass', however some qualifications do break down into 'Pass', 'Merit' and 'Distinctions'.
Qualifications start at Entry Level 1 and go on to Level 2 which holds an equivalency to a 4 at GCSE (see table below).

Functional Skills courses are designed to use real world examples in order to teach the skills and knowledge to function well in employment and society.
For some students this route of education may be successful for them because it allows students to showcase skills in a lower pressure environment; building their confidence through portfolio work before going on to sit low stakes assessments while allowing them to gain a qualification that holds a weighting equivalent to a GCSE.

Entry Level 1 Entry Level 2 Entry Level 3	Pre GCSE
Level 1	Equivalent to GCSE 1-3
Level 2	Equivalent to GCSE 4

Example Papers

English
Example of Level 1 Speaking, Listening and Communication paper can be found here.
Example of Level 1 Reading paper can be found here
Example of Level 1 Writing paper can be found here

Maths
Example of Level 1 Non-Calculator paper can be found here
Example of Level 1 Calculator paper can be found here

What to expect from NCFE English Functional Skills

NCFE Certificate in Everyday Essential English and NCFE Functional English up to Level 2 will provide students with a thorough understanding of the role of English in everyday life. Students will complete the following courses:

NCFE Certificate in English (Up to Level 2)
This is a course work based qualification which asks students to provide evidence of their understanding of the English Language and Literature in a more real world context. Students will use letters, posters, leaflets and short stories to analyse rather than whole novels.

Alongside their Certificates, students will take **NCFE Functional Skills English (Up to Level 2)**, an exam based course that assesses the knowledge they will have learnt as part of their Certificate in English.
The purpose of the Functional Skills English qualification is to prepare them for work, study and life. Achieving this qualification will demonstrate their ability to read, write, speak, listen and communicate in English. The Level 1 and 2 qualifications are a requirement for entry into most jobs and is considered a GCSE equivalent.

Gaining a Level 1 - 2 English qualification will improve students' career options. Students will be able to apply for jobs in careers such as; nursing, teaching, policing, the fire service and many more. Students will also be able to apply for higher education courses, apprenticeships and training courses.

How are students assessed in English?

Both the Essential English in Everyday Life and Functional Skills qualifications are assessed across three keys areas of study:

- Speaking, Listening and Communicating
- Reading
- Writing

Essential English in Everyday Life: (Portfolio of work)

	Entry 1	**Entry 2**	**Entry 3**	**Level 1**	**Level 2**
SL&C	Listening to Information Listening and Responding to Information Speaking With Others	Listening and Responding Introduction to Discussing With Others Introduction to Speaking to be	Developing Listening and Responding Skills Discussing With Others Speaking to be Understood	Listening, Understanding and Responding to Others Communicating With Others	Listening, Understanding and Using Constructive Feedback Effectively Participating in and

		Understood		Participating in Discussions	Contributing to Discussions within Formal and Informal Settings
Reading	Introduction to Reading Skills Reading Words and Short Texts	Reading Skills Introduction to Reading to Understand	Developing Reading Skills Reading to Understand	Interpreting Straightforward Functional Texts Introduction to Understanding Prose Writing and Poetry	Interpreting Straight forward and Complex Functional Texts Understanding Prose Writing and Poetry
Writing	Introduction to Essential Writing Skills Writing and Spelling Words	Alphabetical Order Essential Writing Skills Writing and Spelling Words and Phrases	Developing an Understanding of Alphabetical Order Developing Essential Writing Skills Essential Spelling and Writing	Introduction to Knowledge and Application of Punctuation, Grammar and Spelling Composing Texts	Knowledge and Application of Punctuation, Grammar and Spelling Composing Texts

Functional Skills

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Entry 1</th><th>Entry 2</th><th>Entry 3</th><th>Level 1</th><th>Level 2</th></tr>
<tr><td>SL&C</td><td colspan="5">Controlled Assessment - conducted in groups in school under exam conditions with support from Teacher and Teaching Assistants.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reading</td><td colspan="3">Question Paper - 40 minutes</td><td colspan="2">Question Paper - 60 minutes</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Writing</td><td colspan="3">Spelling Test 10 mins</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="2">Question Paper - 60 minutes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Question Paper - 35 minutes</td><td>Question Paper - 40 minutes</td><td>Question Paper - 45 minutes</td></tr>
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What to expect from NCFE Maths

The Spirit pathway within Maths is a more bespoke pathway, linked to pupils' needs.

The curriculum is based on functional skills objectives used in everyday life. Qualifications that pupils will take will vary depending on their confidence and attainment in Maths. The majority of students will take two qualifications: one that is coursework based (NCFE certificate in Essential Everyday Maths at levels 1 or 2; or AQA Entry Level Maths), and another that is exam based (NCFE Functional Skills at Entry 3, Level 1 or Level 2).

Topics pupils will focus on include:

- Understanding the size and position of large and small numbers;
- Rounding & Estimating;
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing skills with and without a calculator;
- Time and money (including financial skills);
- Percentages;
- Decimals and Fractions;
- Statistics;
- Ratio & Proportion;
- Understanding and using units of measurement
- Geometry in everyday life (including area and perimeter)
- Problem solving skills (developed throughout the course).

Qualifications in Mathematics support students' entry into further study and employment. Furthermore, as well as being 'a workout for the brain', continued study in Mathematics supports students with everyday decision making as they transition into adulthood.

How are students assessed in Mathematics?

NCFE Functional Skills Maths:

	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2
Section A: Non-Calc	20 minute assessment	25 minute assessment	30 minute assessment	30 minute assessment	
Section B: Calc	60 minute assessment	75 minute assessment	75 minute assessment	90 minute assessment	

Essential Maths in Everyday Life:

Entry Level 1	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 3	Level 1	Level 2
Working With Numbers up to 20 Calculating With Numbers up to 20 Understanding Monetary Values and Reading Measures of Time Describing and Comparing Size and Dimension Describing and Comparing Weight and Capacity Identifying and Recognising Common 2D and 3D Shapes Using Simple Positional Vocabulary Extracting Information From Simple Lists Sorting Information Representing Information in Simple Charts and Diagrams	Working With Numbers up to 200 Calculating With Single and 2-Digit Numbers Estimating and Approximating by Rounding to the Nearest 10 Recognise Simple Fractions of Whole Numbers and Shapes Using Money and Decimals Using Length, Weight and Capacity Reading and Comparing Positive Temperatures and Using Simple Scales Reading and Recording Time Recognising and Naming 2D and 3D Shapes and Using Positional Vocabulary Extracting, Sorting and Comparing Information Collecting and Representing Information	Working With Numbers up to 1000 Calculating Addition and Subtraction Calculating Multiplication and Division Introduction to Working With Fractions Introduction to Working With Decimals Calculating With Money Understanding and Using Time and Temperature Measuring Length, Weight and Capacity Understanding Properties of 2D and 3D Shapes and Using Positional Vocabulary Extracting and Interpreting Information Recording and Presenting Information	Working With Whole Numbers up to 1 Million Working With Fractions Working With Decimals Working With Percentages Introduction to Converting Decimals, Fractions and Percentages Working With Measurement Working With 2D and 3D Shapes and Angles Working With Money to Calculate Interest and Discounts Introduction to Working With Statistics Introduction to Working With Probability	Working With Positive and Negative Whole Numbers Developing Working With Fractions Developing Working With Decimals Developing Working With Percentages Converting Decimals, Fractions and Percentages Working With Conversions of Units of Measurement Working With 2D and 3D Shapes and Space Working With Statistics Working With Probability

What to expect from AQA Entry Level Science

Entry Level Certificates (ELCs) are nationally recognised qualifications which give students the opportunity to achieve a certificated award. The ELC Science specification is taught alongside GCSE Combined Sciences to suit students who are studying both qualifications. The assessment is on demand so students can complete assignments when they are ready, helping to keep motivated.

Subject content
The specification comprises six components. Each component has two assessments: one externally set and one internally set. The six components meet the Programme of Study Key Stage 4 requirements.

Biology
Component 1-
The human body
Component2
Environment, evolution and inheritance

Chemistry
Component 3 -
Elements, mixtures and compounds
Component 4 -
Chemistry in our world

Physics
Component 5
Energy, forces and the structure of matter
Component 6 -
Electricity, magnetism and waves

Assessments
There are two different types of assessment.
1. Externally-set assignments (ESAs) consist of a short written test.
2. Teacher-devised assignments (TDAs) consist of a short piece of practical work.

Single Award
Students studying Entry Level Science – Single Award submit evidence for three Teacher-devised assignments plus three externally-set assignments.

Externally-set assignments (ESA)	Teacher-devised assignments (TDA)
What's assessed Students submit evidence one each from Biology, Chemistry and Physics.	What's assessed Students submit evidence for three components, one each from biology, chemistry and physics. These are assessments of practical tasks set by the teacher.
How it's assessed • Externally-set assignment: 45 minutes • each test is worth 20 marks • weighting 57%	How it's assessed • Teacher-devised assignments • each piece of coursework is worth 15 marks • weighting 43%

Double Award

Students studying Entry Level Certificate Science – Double Award must submit evidence for six Teacher-devised assignments plus six Externally-set assignments.

Externally-set assignments (ESA)	Teacher-devised assignments (TDA)
What's assessed Students submit evidence from all six components	What's assessed Students submit evidence for all six components. These are assessments of practical tasks set by the teacher.
How it's assessed • Externally-set assignment: 45 minutes • each test is worth 20 marks • weighting 57%	How it's assessed • Teacher-devised assignments • each piece of coursework is worth 15 marks • weighting 43%

What next?

As an approved Entry Level qualification, the ELC Science specification provides excellent progression to GCSE studies particularly in GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy and GCSE Combined Science: Synergy. The ELC provides flexibility, but on a clear progression pathway. It equips students with skills and knowledge transferable to both educational and career settings, and provides a worthwhile course for students of various ages and from diverse backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning.

What to expect from NCFE Level 1 Sports

Qualification purpose

This qualification is designed to help support the learner's personal development through acquiring skills and knowledge in sport, exercise and fitness. The qualification also allows learners to gain personal transferable skills that can be applied to the workplace or further study.

The qualifications are designed to give learners the skills, knowledge and understanding of the sport and physical activity sector. These qualifications will act as a stepping stone to a range of occupations often through the route of further education.

This qualification will:

• focus on the study of the sport within the leisure sector • offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge

• provide opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills.

Qualification objectives

The objectives of this qualification are to:

• gain an understanding of the sport, exercise and leisure vocational sector • study areas of particular interest

• encourage learners to adopt a fitter and healthier lifestyle.

How will it be delivered?

Students will complete practical and written assessments across the 5 of the units below. We also support students in various assessment methods such as video or audio.

Unit 01 Taking part in sport

Unit 02 Sports coaching

Unit 03 Leading others

Unit 04 Personal exercise and fitness

Unit 05 Effect of exercise on human body systems

Unit 06 Strength and conditioning

Unit 07 Health and nutrition

Unit 08 Developing sports volunteering skills

Unit 09 Assist at a sports event

Unit 10 Understanding the sport and active leisure sector

Unit 11 Exploring employment in the outdoor industry

What to expect from NCFE Occupational Studies

Vocational Studies give students the opportunity to gain skills needed for successful future employment.

Students will be encouraged to develop a 'hands on' approach to their learning and gain practical skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of sectors. The skills, knowledge and understanding gained will help learners prepare for work through real or simulated work situations and will contribute to preparing them for working life beyond education.

What does the qualification cover?
The course is made up of several modules, which are collated into a portfolio of work which is internally assessed and then externally varied by the exam board.

The qualification will be delivered on a carousel of learning, with all modules being accessed twice over the course of two years.

Carousel 1: Business and Employability	Carousel 2: Food Tech	Carousel 3: Horticulture (Bearsted)
• Communication skills for business • Using Email • Business organisation structures • Word processing software • Preparation for work	• Developing cooking skills • Cooking with fish, meat and vegetables • Developing good practice skills for the kitchen • Working in a team • Problem solving in the workplace	• Garden horticulture skills • Understanding how to cultivate herbs • Understanding how to grow fruit and vegetables

What will students gain?
The skills and knowledge learned in this subject, are ones that set students up for entering the world of work. Students will have the opportunity to gain a qualification up to Level 2, as appropriate to their ability. A level 2 qualification is equivalent to a Grade 4 at GCSE - many employers look for a Level 2 as a benchmark for gaining employment in that field. Students will have a broad understanding of employability skills and will have an understanding of three key vocational areas.
Students will be able to put this qualification on their CVs.

What to expect from NCFE RSHE

All schools in England will have an obligation to teach Relationships and Sex and Health Education from September 2020.
This award will be assessed for the cohort who will be Year 11 in 2025/26 onwards.

Young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world that can present positive opportunities, but also challenges. Students need to know how to stay safe and healthy both on and off-line. The content of this curriculum helps foster their wellbeing to enable them to be happy, successful and productive members of the community.

What will the RSHE curriculum cover?
• Different types of families and family relationships.
• Respectful relationships including friendships and how to stay safe in all types of relationships.
• How to stay safe on-line and make sense of the digital world.
• Intimate sexual relationships and sexual health.
• Mental wellbeing and how to stay well emotionally.
• How the internet and online world can impact a person's emotional health, both positively and negatively.
• To know how to stay physically healthy including; balanced diet, physical activity, sleep, personal hygiene.
• The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks.
• Ways young people can prevent ill-health.
• Basic first aid, including how to manage emergency situations.
• Key facts about puberty and the emotional and physical changes that take place during the teenage years.

How will students be assessed?
Students will create a portfolio of work toward an award from NCFE - this certificate can lead on to further RSHE study in KS5 and give a base for any students wishing to study childcare, Teaching Assistance or Education in the future.

Support at home
We appreciate that young people may find it difficult to have conversations about relationships, sex and growing up difficult.
We have many resources at school to support students in understanding these complex matters. If you are having conversations at home that you feel you would like support with or would like to be sign posted to resources that are age/cognitive level appropriate, please contact the school's Student Support Managers.

What can you do to support your child?

Personal Study lunchtime support
While we do not give homework at Snowfields, it may be that students in Key Stage 4 need to spend some time completing Personal Study and revision. We encourage all students to be practising in the lead up to any assessment. Support will be available in school for the core subjects at lunchtime.

Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Science	English	Maths

Timers
We highly recommend purchasing an electronic timer that can be used to count down the time for a task. Personal study should only last 45 minutes if a written task and students should stop when that time is finished. This allows us to judge what they are able to complete within a set time and then structure exam practice accordingly.
There is no need to add pressure to completely finish a piece of work if a student has made a dedicated effort to do as well as they can within 45 minutes.

Study guides
There are a variety of study companions available for all subjects. We recommend having a look at the different types and finding ones that suit your student. Each is laid out differently and some may seem more overwhelming than others.

Names that we recommend are:
BBC Bitesize
Collins
CGP
Copies of this book are available from school - students are encouraged to borrow but must return this book.

Free Science lessons
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqbOeHaAUXw9Il7sBVG3_bw

Primrose Kitten
https://www.youtube.com/c/PrimroseKittenScience

Revision
When it comes to revision students will take all their work home with them to revise from. Your child is welcome to borrow copies of the Functional Skills knowledge books from the library.

To revise:
- Practice answering questions using a timer
- CGP 10 minute tests - copies of these books are available from school.
- CGP revision cards

- Create mind maps for questions - instead of answering in full you could plan an answer using a mindmap
- Practice spellings - use the list of key spellings for each topic and have little spelling tests.

Multiplication and Division
It is not essential for pupils to 'know' their multiplication and division facts (times tables) in order to do well in Functional Skills assessments, but it helps. Practising using multiplication and division without a calculator in real life situations can help pupils develop mental strategies. It is ok if it takes time to work out the answer.

Knowing the square numbers between 1 (1x1) and 225 (15x15) and cube numbers between 1 (1x1x1) and 125 (5x5x5) saves time in the exam room. Regular opportunities to recall one or two of these (e.g. 'tell me a square number that is larger than 40'; 'what is the square root of 81?"; 'tell me the largest cube number that is less than 70 (64, because 4x4x4 is 64)') can help pupils build their confidence at recalling and using these facts.

Discussion
Opportunities to discuss 'real-life Maths' can help pupils understand the context behind problem solving style exam questions. For example:
- Making predictions about how long a journey will take;
- Discussing graphs that are shown in the news;
- Budgeting for a shopping trip;
- Planning a DIY or renovation project;
- Thinking about the probability of events occurring when playing games;
- Budgeting, planning and purchasing the ingredients for a meal;
- Measuring and using metric and imperial units of measure.