



SAFA BRITISH SCHOOL SECONDARY PARENT HANDBOOK



**SAFA
BRITISH
SCHOOL**

safabritishschool.com



Contents

1. Our Curriculum
2. Communication
3. The Use of Technology
4. Student Behaviour
5. Student Leadership
6. Home Learning
7. A Reading Focus
8. Student Equipment List
9. The School Day
10. Extra Curricular Activities and Sports
11. Uniform



Welcome

Welcome to the Secondary School of Safa British School

Dear Parents and Students,

I offer you a very warm welcome to Safa British School, where students can navigate their educational journey starting in the Foundation Stage to completing their Post-16 education within the Secondary Stage.

Our site is impressive, with specialist areas including dedicated science laboratories, design workshops, music and performance areas, an auditorium, and a range of sporting amenities including swimming pools and all-purpose outdoor pitches.

More importantly, we place a great deal of focus on our school's ethos; there is a sense of community that encapsulates the SBS journey and it is shared amongst students, parents and every member of the SBS staff.

The SAFA core values remain central to all we do:

- **Providing our young people with purposeful learning opportunities**
- **Developing respectful, independent thinkers**
- **Supporting opportunities for personalised academic success**
- **Ensuring we never lose sight of nurturing a caring family culture**

Whilst we celebrate student attainment, for us the most important feature within the school is student progress. We provide a personalised pathway for each student that recognises and develops their unique talents. This works due to our small class sizes, highly trained staff, and the strong home-school partnerships that are formed between the school and parents.

Our Key Stage 3 provides a range of subjects in which knowledge and skills are developed to ensure essential preparation for GCSE courses in Years 10 and 11. The teaching team is comprised of specialist staff, who combine research-based practice with innovation, ensuring that students are supported and challenged at every stage of their educational journey.

In addition to a solid grounding in the academics, SBS provides a wide and varied extra-curricular programme, with activities such as dance club and performing arts, opportunities to compete regionally in the F1 challenge competition, and a range of sporting options. The aim is to equip our young people with the skills and resilience to flourish in an ever-changing world.

The information included is aimed at providing a brief overview of the curriculum and the range of opportunities available as you look to progress in our secondary school.



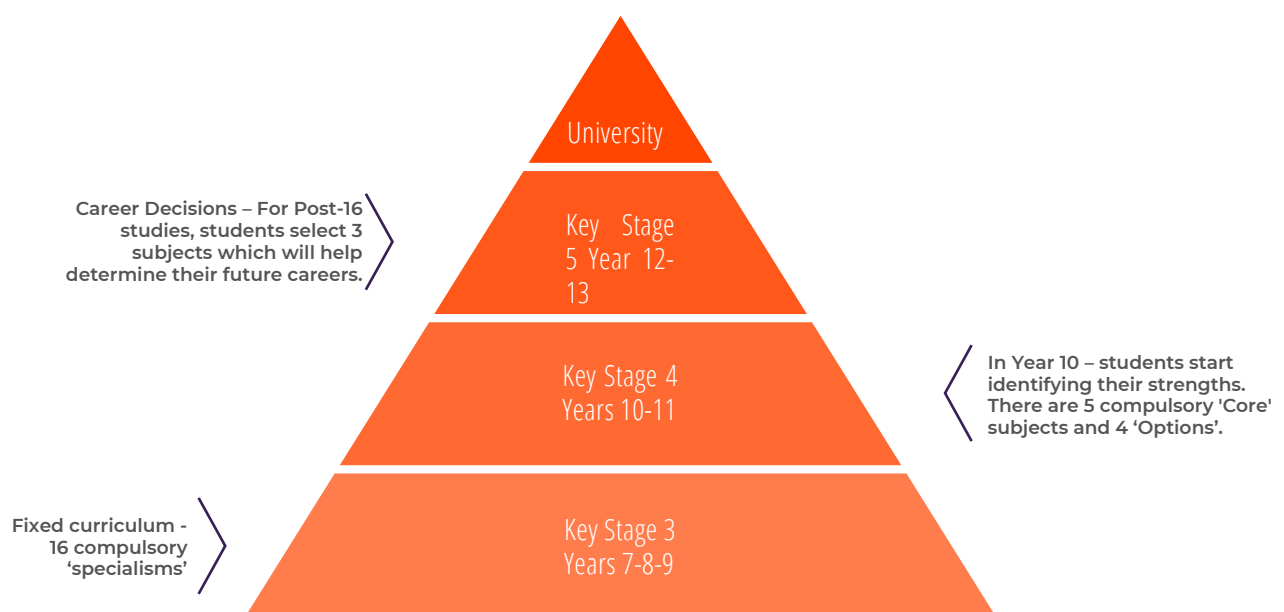
Brian Horwell
Head of Secondary

1. Our Curriculum

The SBS curriculum is based upon the National Curriculum for England, but content delivery is specific to our locality and reflects the multi-national demographic of our students. With respect to this, students in Key Stage 3 follow a timetable that covers a broad range of subjects, before making option choices for GCSE during Year 9, for study through Years 10 and 11.

The British Curriculum Overview

Below are the steps of the British curriculum system within the secondary phase. There are three key stages that allow for students to refine their subject choices over time. Our leavers will have the opportunity to study a range of GCSE, BTEC, ASDAN, and A-Level qualifications which will provide them with an 'educational passport' to further their studies anywhere in the world.



Years 7-9 Curriculum

The Core Curriculum

ENGLISH
MATHEMATICS
SCIENCE
ARABIC

EACH SUBJECT IS TAUGHT FOR
4 LESSONS PER WEEK

ISLAMIC STUDIES IS TAUGHT
FOR 2 LESSONS PER WEEK

The Humanities

GEOGRAPHY
HISTORY
MSC STUDIES

EACH SUBJECT IS TAUGHT
FOR 2 LESSONS A WEEK

The Creative Arts

ART
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY
MUSIC
DRAMA

EACH SUBJECT IS TAUGHT FOR
1 LESSON PER WEEK

The Languages

FRENCH
SPANISH

EACH SUBJECT IS TAUGHT FOR
1 LESSON PER WEEK

The Sports

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

TAUGHT FOR 2 LESSONS
PER WEEK

(STUDENTS HAVE 2 HALF
TERMS OF SWIMMING A YEAR)

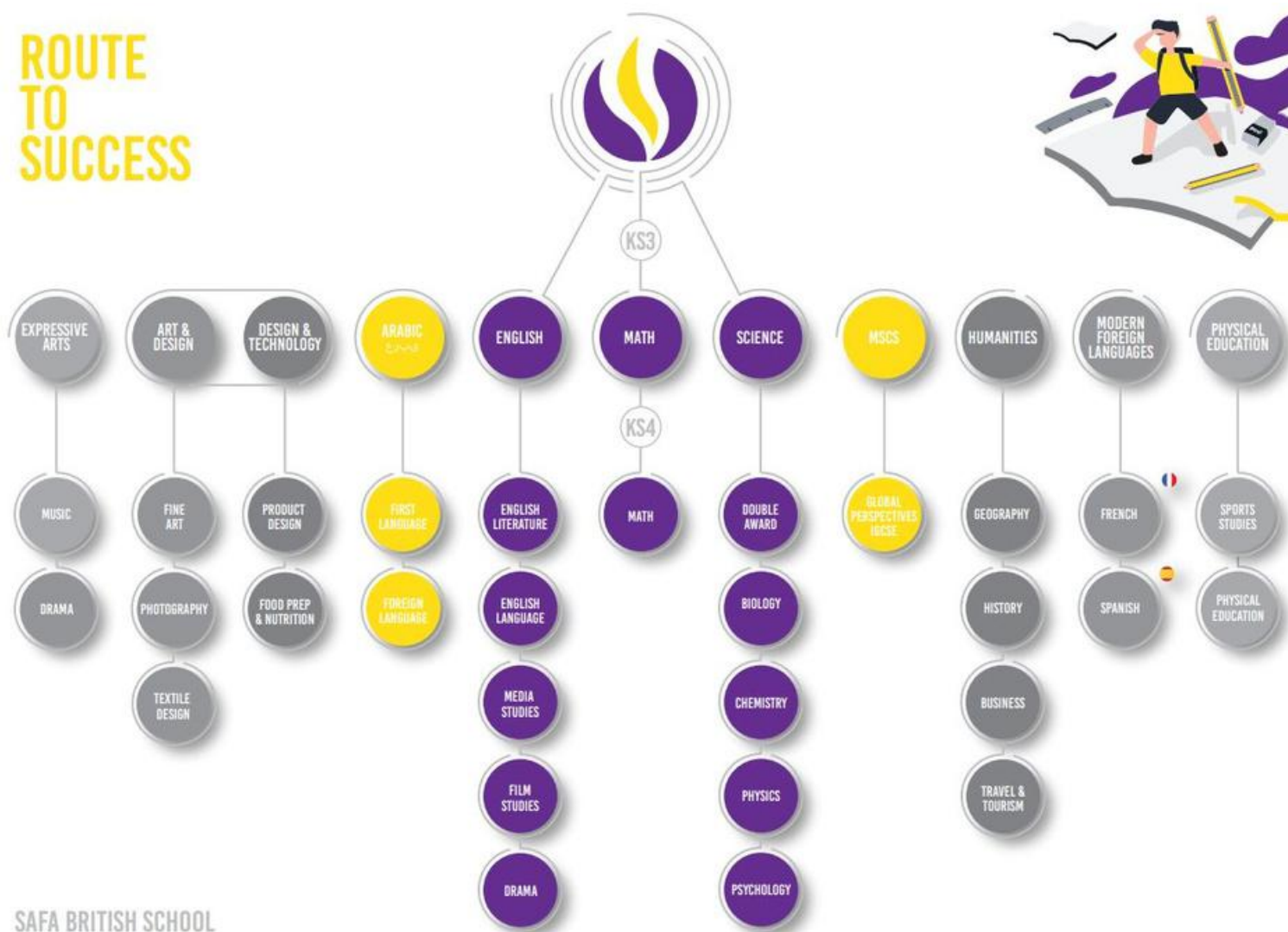
Curriculum +

ASSEMBLY
CURRICULUM +

STUDENTS HAVE 1 YEAR
GROUP ASSEMBLY A WEEK,
AND THEN 3 SESSIONS
SUPPORTING HOUSE/YEAR
ACTIVITIES

The Key Stage 3 curriculum feeds into the Key Stage 4 curriculum in the following ways:

ROUTE TO SUCCESS



SAFA BRITISH SCHOOL

The Key Stage 4 curriculum is made up of 'Core' and 'Option' subjects.

The GCSE core curriculum is made up of:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science - Double Award

In addition to these, students can select 4 courses that they will study in Years 10 and 11. The range of IGCSE and BTEC courses on offer is shown below:

Humanities	Languages	Sciences
Geography History	French Spanish Arabic - First Language Arabic -Second Language	Triple Science Psychology
Creative Arts	Individual Specialisms	BTEC
Art: Fine Art Design Technology Drama Food Technology Music* Textiles*	Media Studies Business GCSE IT*	Sports Studies Travel and Tourism Business*

*these courses will be introduced in September 2023.

Students will also study

- Core PE
- Core Arabic
- Moral, Social and Cultural Studies
- Islamic Education (only for Muslim students)

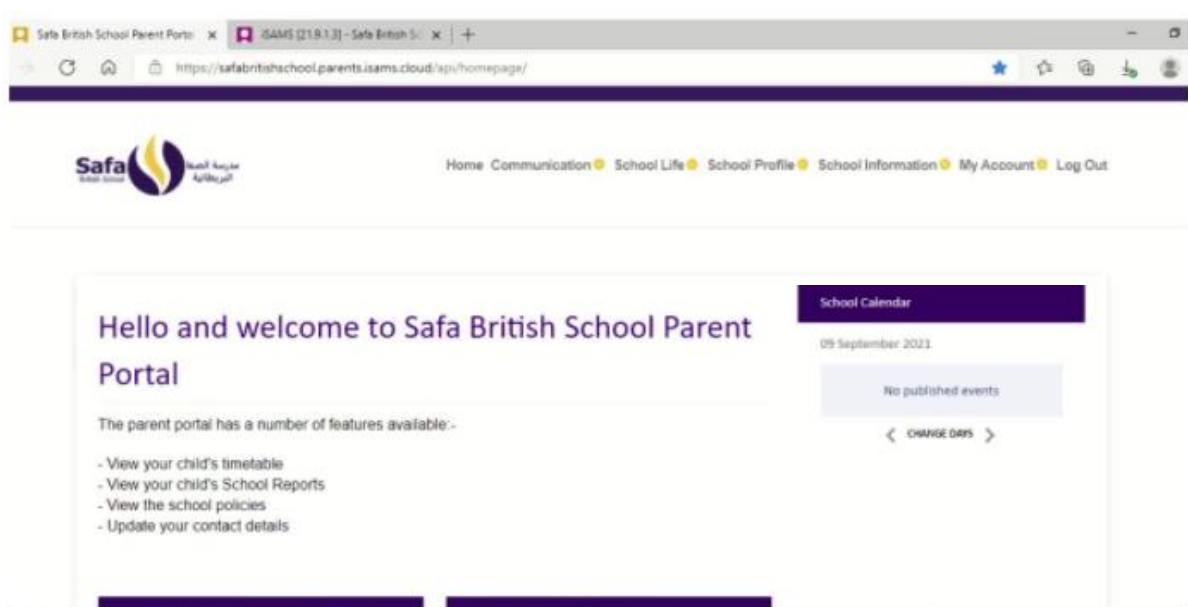
Students do not take examinations in these subjects.

2. Communication

At Safa British School, we use the the iSams Parent Application to ensure that all parents are up-to-date and have full access to the information that affects their child.

The app is a 'one-stop' source for all the information that you will need to know for the secondary school. Through the app (accessible on both laptops or tablets) you can easily and quickly locate information about:

- Timetables
- Reports
- The school calendar
- Contact information updates



The development of an effective school-home partnership is essential in supporting our young people. A key part of this is ensuring there is transparency so that parents are aware of the school's systems and processes and they have the opportunity to ask questions.

Secondary Matters

At SBS we are proud of our internal newsletter - which is a collaboration between staff and students.

This weekly communication is an online magazine which showcases weekly activities and also provides a valuable archive of information about our school systems.



Secondary Matters



CONTENTS

The Great Outdoors!
English
Humanities
Art

Parental 'Drop in' Sessions

During the course of the year, there will be a range of sessions for parents to attend. Currently these sessions are running as fortnightly Zoom sessions on a Tuesday evening. These sessions blend a range of topics linked to the school calendar and are also driven by parental input. These informal sessions are an excellent opportunity for parents to ask any questions they may have, and for introducing student-related topics. Examples of topics from this year include:

- Digital literacy - the safe and effective use of digital learning tools
- GCSE options and futures
- Effective revision for assessments
- Developing student resilience

It is expected that these sessions will be hosted on site as we progress during the year. However, due to the increased access evening sessions provide for parents, they will remain a feature of our communication plan.

3. The Use of Technology

Digital Literacy is a vital skill for the 21st century. At SBS we operate a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) programme that allows students to seamlessly move their work from the school environment to their homes in order to support their learning. It is expected that all students bring their own devices to school as an essential part of their 'tool kit'.

All students are provided with an education copy of Microsoft Office, and the school's Virtual Learning Platform is built around the Microsoft Teams application.

Students have the choice of using a laptop or a tablet. The key features of the device chosen should be a long battery life and robustness.



	MINIMUM	IDEAL
RAM	4GB	8GB
Processor	i3	i5
Touch Screen		Yes
Stylus		Yes
Battery Life	8 hours	10 hours
Keyboard		Laptop Device

The use of technology and social media has huge potential in today's society, but with this potential comes a certain degree of risk. At Safa British School, we deliver safe ICT usage around the 7 pillars of our Digital Literacy Framework.



Mobile Devices

We are a phone-free school:

- Phones are not permitted to be used by students on the school site until the end of the academic day.
- We do not view mobiles as an appropriate learning device within the classroom.

We appreciate that students may need a mobile phone to coordinate travel arrangements at the end of the day; however, it is expected that students keep their devices on silent and within their bags or lockers until 15:20. If parents need to contact their child during the school day, we require them to contact reception for any messages that need to be passed on.

4. Student Behaviour

At Safa British School we believe that good behaviour is essential for an effective learning environment in which all students are given the opportunity to achieve. We seek to create a caring and inclusive environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour. Our standards of behaviour are underpinned by values such as honesty, respect, consideration and responsibility.

We expect our students to behave appropriately at all times within the school grounds and the wider community. Staff members aim to recognise, praise and reinforce positive traits of behaviour rather than focus on negative ones or previous failings.

Students are able to earn merits for

1. Subject Awards
2. Community Awards
3. Peer Awards

The aims of our policy:

- Allow all students to make the best academic progress in a safe and well-ordered learning environment.
- Allow staff to effectively facilitate personalised and innovative learning experiences for students.
- Embed values that are carried through beyond school.
- Enhance self-esteem and a feeling of safety within the learning environment.

We do acknowledge that students (and adults) can make mistakes, and it is key to us as a school to have a transparent and simple approach to sharing our expectations and the consequences of making certain choices.

The consequence grid for behaviour is shared below. We recognise that as students go through adolescence, they may occasionally test the boundaries. It is an essential part of our system that we are clear and firm with our community expectations - and that these are applied fairly and consistently to all.

Level	Reasons Why		Possible Outcomes
Level 1	Late to lesson Incorrect uniform including jewellery, inappropriate hair Lack of equipment Chewing gum/eating in class Missed deadline Incomplete homework Going to Nurse without slip	Failure to follow instructions Disrupting lesson Lack of work in lesson Anti-social behaviour/rudeness to others Inappropriate language Loitering outside Smart watches used in class	Level 1 warning on E-Praise
Level 2	Failure to improve following a Level 1 3 x Level 1 warnings in a week Using mobile phone Misuse of technology		Level 2 warning on E-Praise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor or Departmental Report • Departmental lunchtime detention • Contact home • Parental meeting
Level 3	6 x Level 1 warnings in a half term Not turning up for Level 2 detention Foul language	Persistent defiance First incident of bullying/intimidating behaviour	Level 3 warning on E-Praise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday detention with SLT • Parental meeting • Tutor report/Departmental report
Level 4	9+ warnings in a half term (monitored weekly by tutor and class teacher if there are consistent issues with particular students) Failure to adhere to sanctions in Level 3, e.g. missing a Level 3 detention	Persistent bullying/intimidating behaviour Truancy from lesson Truancy from school	Level 4 warning on E-Praise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday detention • Parental meeting • Pastoral/Academic report • Internal exclusion
Level 5	Any discrimination based on race, sex or disability Persistent bullying/intimidating behaviour despite Level 4 intervention	Possession and use of prohibited items/ substances Possession/sharing of illegal material online Smoking or possession of vaping materials on school premises	Level 5 warning on E-Praise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental meeting • External suspension • Permanent exclusion

As a school, we adopt a restorative justice approach to behaviour management. When the case arises that we need to apply the behaviour grid above, time is taken to work with students to identify the reasons behind the negative behaviours and to find a way to reduce the risk of similar behaviours happening again.

5. Student Leadership

At SBS we believe that our students should influence their learning environment and help shape the systems that affect their daily experiences. Every year, students are able to run campaigns for election to our Student Council.

The council is made up of a range of positions, including

- President
- Prefect
- House Captain
- Heritage Leader
- Well-being Ambassador

The Student Council is a key link between the staff and the student body, and they are responsible for running school events, communicating with their peers, as well as being a 'critical friend' to help improve the systems in the school.

Our Behaviour for Learning Policy and E-Praise system are a product of a blended approach where both students and staff worked together to design a framework that benefits the whole school community.

An exciting development for 2021-2022 is our student leadership team leading our careers program: they will be creating an archive of a range of jobs and the paths that people have taken to get there. This will be done in collaboration with our parent body, and is an example of our community-based approach to education and support.

6. Home Learning

Research clearly shows the importance of home learning and extension within the secondary phase of education. For SBS, home learning is an opportunity to build upon class learning, support skill development, and nurture independence as well as student ownership. Home learning is set as an appropriate sequence of learning, and is communicated through Microsoft Teams, allowing students to manage their time and meet deadlines.

There is no set homework diary for the academic week – the tasks set are not a 'bolt on' but a key part of the learning sequence. The following guidelines apply to homework:

- Homework activities are set to take 20-30 minutes.
- In the event of larger project-based work being set, this is communicated to parents and students.
- Homework is set with a minimum of 2 days to complete the task.

As a rough guide, students are assigned homework between Sundays and Wednesdays according to the table below:

	Number of subjects per day	Time to be spent
Year	2	Approx. 30 minutes
7	2	Approx. 50 minutes
Year	3	Up to 60 minutes
8	4	60+ minutes

7. A Reading Focus

We are proud to promote a love of reading at Safa British School.

It is our belief that everyone should have access to a wide range of literature and opportunities to explore a range of texts and reading styles. We work across the curriculum to support all of our students in becoming confident readers.

While research highlights the strong correlation between regular reading and increased academic success, we also promote a love of reading for its holistic qualities.

Reading is known to:

- increase confidence and self esteem.
- develop empathy.
- help with the ability to understand complex situations.
- be a relaxing pastime when you are a fluent reader.

At Safa British School, we use a range of methods to support all our students, whatever their ability, to develop and extend their reading skills:

- Reading Plus, an online program, develops students' individual reading fluency and comprehension skills.
- Regular reading time is built into lessons across the curriculum.
- Quiet reading spaces are available, with a wide selection of books for students to borrow and enjoy.
- Reading time is built into our Form Time activities.
- Bedrock Vocabulary, an online program, develops students' language acquisition and development.
- Throughout the school year, we celebrate reading with competitions and whole school reading days.

8. Student Equipment List

Students need a rucksack to carry their required equipment for secondary school. All students are provided with class notebooks during the year, and textbooks (physical and digital) are provided where appropriate. Students are required to bring the following every day:

- Pencil case
- Black, blue, red/pink, purple pens
- Multi-coloured pencils
- A mathematics set including protractor, compass, set square and ruler
- A rubber
- Pencil sharpener
- A calculator – we advise a Casio fx-991EX or Casio fx-991ES

Lunch: Students to have access to the canteen, although there is also the option for students to bring in a packed lunch.

Water: We strongly advise students use a thermos water bottle to keep their drinks cool during the day.

Every student has their own secure locker, in which they can store their books or devices during the school day or overnight.

9. The School Day

The SBS Secondary School week is comprised of 34 lessons:

Monday to Thursday	
Lesson 1	07:40 – 08:40
Lesson 2	08:40 – 09:40
Tutor Session	09:40 – 10:00
Break	10:00 – 10:20
Lesson 3	10:20 – 11:20
Lesson 4	11:20 – 12:20
Lunch	12:20 – 13:00
Curriculum +	13:00 – 13:40
Lesson 5	13:40 – 14:30
Lesson 6	14:30 – 15:20

Friday	
Lesson 1	07:40 – 08:20
Lesson 2	08:20 – 09:00
Lesson 3	09:00 – 09:40
Break	09:40 – 10:00
Lesson 4	10:00 – 10:40
Lesson 5	10:40 – 11:20
Lesson 6	11:20 – 12:00

Students should be on site from 07:30 in the morning to ensure a prompt start to the school day.

10. Extra Curricular Activities and Sports



With our outstanding new facilities, we offer an extensive range of extra curricular clubs. Our sports offering includes basketball, netball, cross country, football, cricket, rounders, dance, gymnastics, athletics and swimming. SBS prides itself on being a long-standing member of DASSA (Dubai Athletics and School Sports Association) and BSME (British Schools Middle East). Through these networks, we field teams to allow students the opportunity to represent our school in a healthy, competitive environment, striving to improve their individual and collaborative performance.

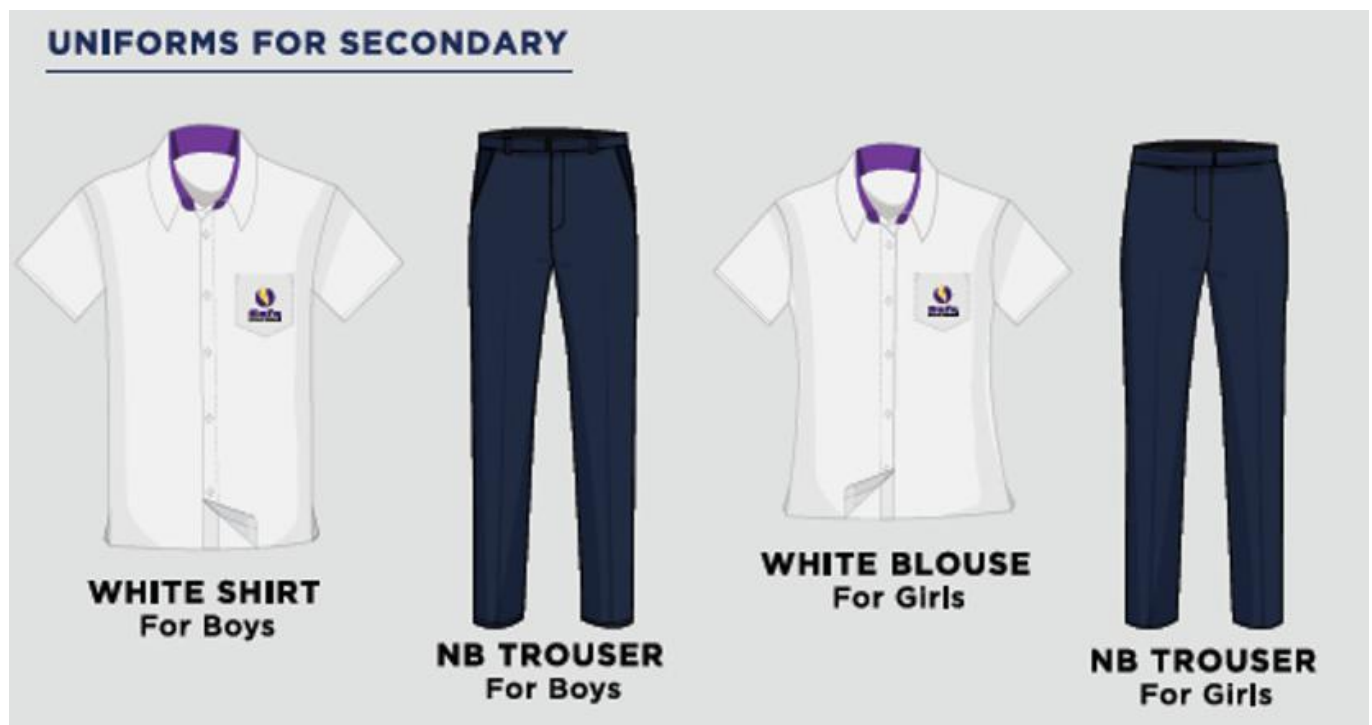
SBS offers a wide range of additional ECAs in order to ensure a full breadth of opportunity for students. The ECA programme is fed by student voice to ensure it is relevant and supportive to their unique needs. It is staffed by both SBS staff and external providers. Where there is a cost element to an ECA, this is shared with parents before its commencement.

The school's ECA programme offers opportunities before school, after school and within the Curriculum + slots in the middle of the day.

11. Uniform

Stitches is the official uniform provider for the secondary school. Uniforms should be purchased ONLY from Stitches in order to ensure uniformity of style and fabric.

We expect our students to come to school neatly groomed and smartly dressed, in the correct and appropriate clothing. This sets a professional work ethic. Students need to be aware that our expectations are the same when they are wearing the Safa uniform outside of school. Parents are asked to support their child in meeting these expectations.



Uniforms can be purchased online or in the Stitches shop.



	Standard	Allowed	Not Allowed
Shirt	White short-sleeved shirt with the Safa logo purchased from Stitches	Female Muslim students who wish to cover their arms may wear a thin long-sleeved white top under their school shirt.	
Trousers	Blue tailored trousers purchased from Stitches	No other variations allowed	
Jumper	Blue Safa jumper with the school logo		
Shoes & Socks	Sensible, black, polished leather shoes worn with plain black socks.		Trainers, canvas shoes, patterned shoes, heels, open-toed shoes, coloured socks, black socks with patterns/logos
Make up	No visible signs of make up or nail varnish	Foundation or other face make up that is flesh-coloured and not noticeable Clear nail varnish	Coloured make up or any make up that is immediately noticeable
Jewellery		One small, plain pair of gold or silver studs worn in the conventional position in the ear lobe	
Hair	Neat and tidy at all times and a natural hair colour	Hair may be worn down as long as it is neat and tidy.	
PE Kit	Blue polo shirt and matching shorts		



SAFA
BRITISH
SCHOOL

safabritishschool.com