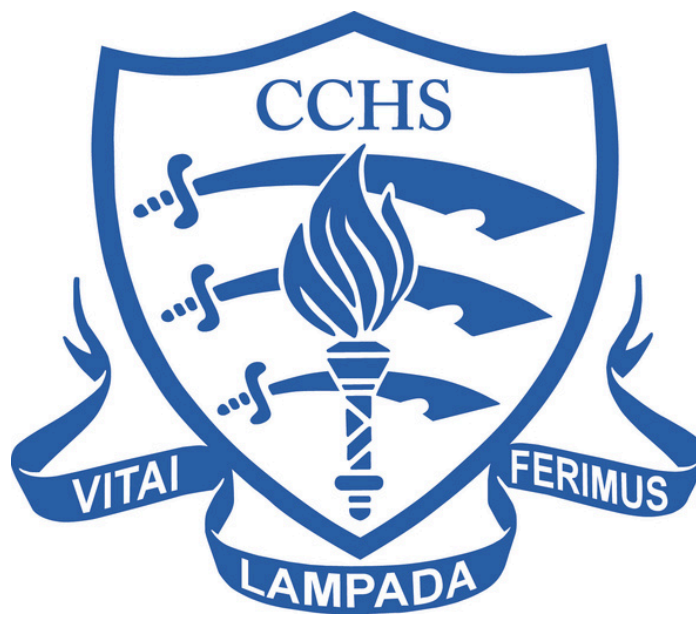




Chelmsford County High School for Girls

Key Stage 4 Information Booklet



2026 – 2027

Welcome to Key Stage 4



Key Stage 4 marks the start of an exciting new chapter, offering opportunities to explore interests, embrace challenges, and prepare for future pathways.

Over the next two years, students deepen their subject knowledge, valuable study skills, and work towards qualifications that will open doors to future opportunities.

At CCHS, we believe success comes from a combination of academic ambition, personal growth, and active involvement in school life. Alongside your GCSE studies, we encourage all students to take advantage of the many enrichment, leadership, and super-curricular opportunities available.

This booklet contains key information about your KS4 journey, support available, important dates, and expectations for Years 10 and 11. We hope it provides a useful guide for both students and parents as you embark on this important phase of education.

We look forward to supporting you throughout Key Stage 4 and celebrating your achievements over the coming years.

Work hard, stay curious, and make the most of every opportunity.

Work hard, stay curious, and make the most of every opportunity.
Your Key Stage 4 journey starts here.



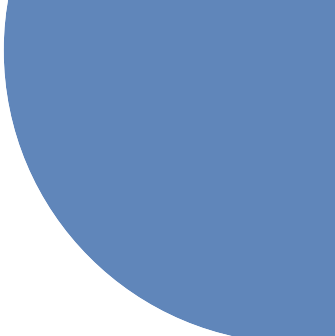
Message from Miss Burnham Year 10 Leader

This year's motto 'big journeys begin with small footsteps', I really think speaks volumes to the students at our school. It is so vital that students take time to find a balance between academic studies, hobbies/ passions and self care.

It is without a doubt that this is a busy and thought provoking year and it is inevitable that students will get nervous and at times unsettled. It is important that they understand a certain level of this is normal. However we are here to help if this does not seem manageable.

This brings me on to my first point, mindfulness. Not to talk about form time in too much detail but this time first thing in the morning sets them up with a good mindset for the rest of the day (even if they don't always want to go outside in the fresh air)! It is a chance for us to really help sign post students to different mindfulness activities. It is true mindfulness is not the same for everyone so by participating in a full range of activities allows students to gain breadth. This includes but is not limited to; morning yoga, walk and talk outside and colouring/ games in form.

**Work hard, stay curious, and make the most of every opportunity.
Your Key Stage 4 journey starts here.**



You may have heard of the big three; sleep, nutrition and exercise. It is so important that we do not mess with these three things and they must especially be protected before and during the exam period. As a parent you can really help here. By having structure and consistency within the home it will enable your child to have a good routine. Ensuring that students get a good amount of healthy sleep, a balanced and nutritious diet and getting fresh air, releasing those happiness endorphins through exercise. As a PE teacher it may seem cliché that I am here promoting exercise to you, however, it is scientifically proven that exercise goes hand in hand with a good mental health.

Following on from this, what can we do at school? First and foremost their form tutors and myself. We are here to offer wrap around support for each student. All students have been involved with an assembly led by Miss Harrison on the pastoral system at CCHS and every student has access to a PowerPoint on teams with different useful apps and links. We also have trained Mental health first aiders in school who offer a drop in session every Friday lunchtime.

Moreover, one of the biggest ways we can support the students is by merely having them in school. If a student is absent for just two days they miss 10 hours of teaching, the impact that this can have not only as a stand alone absence but also in the vicious cycle of attendance is vast. Of course there are times when absence is unavoidable, but keeping this to a minimum has a dramatic affect on their readiness for their GCSEs.

I could talk in much more length about the pastoral care at CCHS and this is just a brief overview. If we look after mental health and wellbeing it makes exams so much more accessible in the summer next year.

If at any point you would like to get in contact to discuss your child's wellbeing or academic progress please do not hesitate. I know that by working as a team we can enable your child to do reach their potential and at the end of the day we can only ever ask them to try their best.

Thank you,

Miss Burnham

YR10 Leader and PE Teacher



The CCHS Achievement Strategy

Ambition Support Challenge Success

At CCHS, achievement is about far more than examination results. Our Achievement Strategy reflects our commitment to ensuring that every student is supported, challenged, and inspired to fulfil their potential, both academically and personally.

Our Vision

We are an ambitious grammar school community, committed to excellence in girls' education and empowerment. Through our curriculum, pastoral care, enrichment opportunities, and culture of challenge, we encourage every student to strive for their very best.

Academic Excellence

Our curriculum is designed to:

- Ignite a passion for learning.
- Develop deep subject knowledge and understanding.
- Encourage curiosity and independent thinking.
- Inspire students to pursue interests beyond the classroom.
- Prepare students for future study, careers, and leadership.

Pastoral Support

Students are supported by a dedicated pastoral team, including Form Tutors, Year Leaders, SEND specialists, and wellbeing professionals. Through mentoring, wellbeing initiatives, leadership opportunities, and strong home-school partnerships, we ensure students feel safe, supported, and able to thrive.

Achievement at CCHS is enriched through a wide range of opportunities, including:

- Clubs and societies
 - Enrichment Days
 - Leadership programmes
 - Public speaking and competitions
 - Community engagement and service opportunities
- Our Commitment

We believe that every student can succeed when they are challenged academically, supported pastorally, and encouraged to make the most of the opportunities available to them.



KS4 Curriculum

Welcome to Key Stage 4 at CCHS. Having carefully considered your options and chosen the subjects that inspire and motivate you, you are now beginning an exciting new chapter in your educational journey.

At CCHS, education goes beyond acquiring subject knowledge. We believe it is about developing a lifelong love of learning, embracing new opportunities, and growing into confident, independent young people. Key Stage 4 offers the chance to explore your interests in greater depth, challenge yourself academically, and discover new strengths and talents.

Our broad and diverse curriculum combines academic rigour with a wealth of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities. Alongside your GCSE studies, we encourage you to take part in the many activities available, helping you to develop leadership, teamwork, creativity, and resilience.

The subjects you have chosen will allow you to pursue your passions while building the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking needed for success in the modern world. Throughout the next two years, your teachers will support and challenge you to achieve your very best, preparing you not only for examinations but also for the opportunities and challenges that lie beyond school.

We are excited to support you on this journey and look forward to celebrating your achievements as you embark on your GCSE studies.

Details and information for all our KS4 courses can be found in the curriculum pages of our website:

[KS4 Curriculum](#)



Super-Curricular Learning: Higher Project Qualification (HPQ)

All Year 10 students take part in Core Religious Studies, exploring contemporary religious, philosophical, and ethical issues such as human cloning, prejudice, terrorism, and animal rights. The course encourages critical thinking, independent research, and informed discussion of the issues shaping our world today.

Higher Project Qualification (HPQ)

As part of the course, students have the opportunity to complete the Level 2 Higher Project Qualification (HPQ), a nationally recognised qualification accredited by AQA.

Students:

- Choose a topic of personal interest.
- Conduct independent research.
- Produce a written report.
- Deliver a presentation of their findings.
- Receive support from a dedicated project supervisor.

Why Take Part?

The HPQ helps students to:

- Develop independent learning and research skills.
- Build confidence in presenting ideas.
- Strengthen critical thinking and problem-solving.
- Prepare for A Levels, university, apprenticeships, and future careers.
- Explore a subject they are passionate about.

A unique opportunity to pursue your interests, challenge your thinking, and develop valuable skills beyond the classroom.

[AQA Level 2 Higher Project Qualification](#)



Effective Study and Revision: A Guide for Students and Parents

Academic success is not simply determined by the amount of time spent revising but by the quality of the revision strategies used. Research shows that students learn most effectively when they revisit information regularly, actively test their knowledge, and maintain healthy routines that support learning.

Student Advice

For students, establishing a consistent study routine is essential. Revising little and often is far more effective than last-minute cramming. Creating a realistic study timetable helps spread learning over time and reduces stress when we are approaching tests or in school exams. One useful approach is the Pomodoro Technique, which involves studying for 25 minutes before taking a 5-minute break. After four study sessions, a longer break should be taken. This helps maintain concentration and prevents mental fatigue. Students should focus on active revision methods that require them to think about and retrieve information from memory. Retrieval practice, such as self-quizzing, using flashcards, answering practice questions, and explaining ideas aloud, is one of the most effective ways to strengthen memory. The more embedded knowledge is into our long-term memories; the easier it is to recall for examination or test-based scenarios.

Another key strategy is spaced repetition. Instead of revising a topic once, students should revisit it several times over increasing intervals. Returning to information after a few days, a week, and then later again improves long-term retention and reduces forgetting. Mind maps can also support revision by helping students organise knowledge and make connections between concepts, particularly in subjects that require deeper understanding. Students should also recognise the importance of learning from mistakes. Reviewing incorrect answers and responding to feedback helps identify misconceptions and improves future performance. Studying with friends can also be beneficial when discussions focus on explaining concepts, sharing ideas, and testing each other's understanding.



Parent Advice

Parents play a crucial role in supporting effective study habits. Rather than focusing on how long a child studies, it is more helpful to discuss what strategies they are using and what they have learned. Encouraging evidence-informed techniques such as flashcards, retrieval practice, spaced repetition, mind maps, and practice questions can help students make the most of their revision time. They can also support learning by providing a quiet, organised study environment and minimising distractions where possible. Simple activities such as asking questions about a topic, listening to explanations, or helping test flashcards can reinforce learning and build confidence. Encouraging healthy routines, particularly regular sleep patterns, is equally important. Effective learning is closely linked to wellbeing. Students should aim for regular sleep, healthy eating, exercise, and a balanced lifestyle. Sleep is especially important because it supports memory consolidation and concentration. A well-rested student is better able to learn, retain information, and perform effectively in assessments.

Finally, parents should promote resilience by viewing mistakes as opportunities for learning and improvement. Maintaining high expectations, showing interest in education, and celebrating effort as well as achievement can have a powerful impact on motivation and success.



Examination Access Arrangements

For some students there may be a need for adjustments in examinations (known as examination access arrangements) to enable them full and fair access to these assessments.

All examination access arrangements are made according to the Regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). These are reviewed and/or updated each academic year. In accordance with the requirements set out by the JCQ, any discussion regarding the need for particular access arrangements for public examinations must be initiated and/or led by the school and be based on what has been observed in school by a student's teachers and the school's SENDCo. As stated by the JCQ, "Specialists (for example, a medical consultant or a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are not responsible for decisions about access arrangements." If you would like to discuss the examination access arrangements in place for your child, please contact our SENDCO, Miss Pocock, so that you can work together to identify the best arrangements for your child that meet the regulations outlined by the JCQ.

Further information can be accessed here:

[Joint Council for Qualifications - Guidance for parents, carers and students about access arrangements](#)



Pastoral Support

For students in Key Stage 4, life can sometimes feel busy, challenging, and overwhelming. Whether your daughter is worried about schoolwork, friendships, family life, mental health, or simply needs someone to talk to, remember that they are not alone. Our school has a wide range of support available to help every student feel safe, supported, and successful.

Who Can Help?

Form Tutors

Form Tutors are often the first adults in school to see your daughter each day. Through their regular interactions, they get to know students well and are often able to notice the small changes that others might miss, whether that is a change in mood, friendship difficulties, worries about learning, or a drop in confidence.

Year Leaders

Your daughter's Year Leader is often the first person to speak to if she has a concern. They get to know your daughter well and can offer advice, guidance, and help her access additional support where needed. Year Leaders are there to support your daughter's wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, and overall school experience. They can help with problems in school and work closely with families and staff to ensure your daughter receives the support she needs.

Mental Health First Aiders

Our trained Mental Health First Aiders are available to listen, offer support, and help students access appropriate services when they are struggling with their emotional wellbeing. We run a weekly drop-in.

School Nurse

The School Nurse can offer confidential advice and support on physical health, emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, and any health concerns that may be affecting your daughter.

Renew Counselling

Renew Counselling provides a safe, confidential space where students can talk through worries, challenges, or difficult experiences with a trained counsellor.

SENDSCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator)

The SENDSCO supports students with additional learning needs and works with staff, students, and families to ensure appropriate support and adjustments are in place.

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)

CAMHS provides specialist support for young people experiencing significant mental health difficulties. Referrals can be made when more specialist intervention is needed



Thrive

Thrive offers targeted emotional and wellbeing support, helping students build confidence, resilience, emotional regulation, and positive relationships. Referrals can be made if needed.

Young Carers

If your daughter helps care for a family member at home, she may be a Young Carer. We can provide additional support, understanding, and practical help to ensure she thrives both in and out of school.

MHST (Mental Health Support Team)

The MHST works alongside our school to provide advice, early intervention, workshops, and support for students experiencing emotional or mental health difficulties. Referrals can be made when more specialist help is needed.

Remember...

It is always okay to ask for help. No concern is too small, and there is always someone willing to listen. If you are worried about your daughter, speak to one of the team and we will help you find the right support.

Your daughter does not have to face challenges alone. We are here to help!

Other helpful sites:



Platform for success in our Outstanding Sixth Form

Strong outcomes at Key Stage 4 provide the foundation for success in our highly successful Sixth Form.

