



Swansea University
Science for Schools Scheme

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to Year 9! This letter tells you about the S4 project and why we are asking you to fill in a few forms. **Completing these forms to enrol your child/ward in S4's science project is entirely voluntary; however, pupils will not be able to attend S4's science project if the enclosed enrolment forms are not completed.**

In September 2020, your child/ward will start/continue on the S4 project. **Due to social distancing measures pupils will not visit the University campus initially and workshops will be live streamed in to their classroom. The workshops will continue to be delivered by the S4 team of Outreach Scientists on topics that complement the National Curriculum. We are hoping that once restrictions are lifted, pupils will be able to visit Swansea University again for one/two days per school term to take part in science workshops (Singleton Park Campus).**

S4 is part of the Trio Sci Cymru programme and the costs are **entirely covered** (transport, teacher costs, lunch, and all materials) by funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Welsh Government Office for Science (WGOS). The aim of the project is to support science learning with pupils throughout Year 7, 8 and 9. We hope that, by participating in our project, your child/ward will be encouraged to take science subjects in school at GCSE, and later too. It is with that aim that S4 has been funded by the European Social Fund and Welsh Government.

When your child/ward is at Swansea University, they will be taking part in science workshops with Swansea University staff in a classroom/lab environment. All our activities are 'hands-on', for example we might be outside hunting for 'micrometeorites', using a magnet, and then coming back into the classroom to look at our micrometeorite samples under a microscope. There would then be a workbook for pupils to complete and some learning concepts to take back into the classroom at school. We work closely with your child/ward's school teachers to design a science programme that complements the school's aims and objectives, and the National Curriculum in Wales. Teachers and TA's from your child/ward's school will be at the workshops at Swansea University plus will be in class when live streaming takes place, at all times.

You can learn about the data we collect on your child/ward below and via our privacy policy which is on our <https://s4science.co.uk/privacy-policy>

If you have any questions, please give us a call (01792 602959) or drop us an email (s4science@swansea.ac.uk) and we will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

S4 Team



What is the S4 Science for Schools Scheme?

S4 is a Swansea University project funded by the European Social Fund and the Welsh Government.

S4 brings pupils into Swansea University, usually for a few hours per term, to do science experiments and workshops that can't be done easily in school.

- **The purpose of the project is to showcase science subjects and University research, to school students in a fun and interactive way.**
- **All our workshops are 'hands on' and include a short presentation and then an experiment or activity.**
- **We cover biology, chemistry and physics topics to encourage pupils to think about taking the Triple Science GCSE now they are in Year 9.**

Background

S4 was founded in 2012 at Swansea University by Dr Will Bryan, who is a physicist, Professor Mary Gagen, who is a geographer, and Dr Ed Pope who is a marine biologist. The project brings science to life for young people through curiosity-driven, hands-on and interactive workshops. We cover everything from climate change to life in rockpools, and the search for far-off planets 'exoplanets', using telescopes.

In 2018 S4 became part of a large, ESF funded, science programme called 'Trio Sci Cymru'. This is a consortium of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea Universities and the Welsh Government. Under Trio Sci Cymru, S4 are working with Key Stage 3 students from schools in South Wales, with the aim of boosting the numbers of young people taking triple science, and more generally enriching the science learning experience of young people in Wales. You are receiving this information as your child/ward's school is part of the S4/Trio Sci Cymru programme and your child/ward is invited to sign up to the S4 science project for workshops in year 9. **Pupils will attend around four or five workshops per year on the project.**

S4 and Trio Sci Cymru aim to give young people positive experiences of science and, encourage young people to think positively about science and enable them to use their science knowledge in their everyday lives. The activities we do at S4 workshops will constitute training e.g. interactive hands-on experiments, learning about science related career options, demonstrations, virtual reality exhibits and much more. The workshops are led by qualified experts in the subjects and are designed to complement the topics taught in science lessons in school.

S4 is supported by a research study exploring the link between the science workshops your child/ward will participate in, and their attainment in science subjects at school.

Each September we will ask you and your child/ward to fill in a survey and questionnaire asking how they feel about science learning - your school will be on hand to support you with this.

S4 is completely free to you and to your school, and we provide lunch and cover the cost of travel between school and the University. All workshops are held at Swansea University, Singleton Park campus.

Data Protection Information

We have a legal obligation to gather and supply information about the schools and students we are working with to our funders (Welsh Government and the European Social Fund). Your child/ward's personal information is required for health and safety purposes **only** and will not be passed on to any third parties. At the end of the project, or if your child/ward leaves the programme, personal information will be destroyed. Participants and their parents/guardians can also remove consent to participate in the project at any time. If you or your child/ward wish to remove consent to participate in the project at any time, please contact us using our details which you will find below.

The questionnaires you complete about your child/ward's thoughts about science and science experience will be used in a research project. This will explore how our science workshops influence pupil's attitudes to science. This is also the purpose of questionnaires we will ask pupils to complete in school, with your consent. We ask these questions to establish pupils' personal opinions and attitudes towards science. **This data will be anonymised before it is analysed for research purposes by Swansea University and the Trio Sci Cymru programme.** We will not store any information that identifies a pupil by their questionnaire answers. More information on our data protection can be found in our online privacy policy, which can be found on S4's webpage <https://s4science.co.uk/privacy-policy>

What to do to Enrol Your Child or Ward for Year 9

1. Please complete as much of the accompanying form as possible in order for us to make any necessary adjustments for your child/ward to participate in the project.
2. **Completing these forms in order to enrol in S4's science project is entirely voluntary. However, if you do not complete the enrolment forms your child/ward will not be able to attend S4's science project/livestreaming.**

Once you have completed the forms please return them in the Stamped Addressed Envelope to us at S4. If you lose the envelope, please post the forms to us at:

Sue Griffiths - S4 Outreach Liaison
S4 Project
Room 215 Margam Building
College of Science
Swansea University
Singleton Park
Swansea
SA2 8PP

Or return them to your child/ward's science teacher at their school.

Should you have any questions or need help to complete the forms please get in touch, we are happy to help!

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET
(Version 1.2, Date: 26/02/2020)

Project Title:

S4 Pupil Focus Group

Contact Details:

Prof. Mary Gagen

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1. Invitation Paragraph

We are inviting our S4 pupils to take part in some research. Before you decide whether or not your child should participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve.

2. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to gain further information about why some children are more interested in science subjects than others, and what understanding children of this age have about University.

3. Why has my child been chosen?

We are trying to engage with as many of our S4 pupils as possible so that we may increase our understanding of any barriers they may face in Key Stage 3. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary and all participants have the right to withdraw during the focus group, without having to give a reason.

4. What will happen to my child if they take part?

Pupils who volunteer will be taking part in a small group discussion centered around the topics of opinions on science and university, which will be audio recorded. At the end of the group discussion all participants will be given index cards on which they may add extra comments if they have any. Overall, this study should take no longer than 30 minutes, during which lunch will be provided.

5. What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

This research has been approved by the Swansea University College of Science Ethic Committee. There are no significant risks or discomforts associated with taking part.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

This data will be used to inform the future development of the S4 programme and how to best assist our pupils.

7. Will my child taking part in the study be kept confidential?

All audio-recordings taken from the focus group will be password protected before being transcribed and anonymised. Once the audio recording has been transcribed it will no longer be possible to withdraw any data due to it being anonymised. Any information gained from the index cards will also be kept anonymous. The data gained from this will be used to inform the development of the S4 programme, will be used for future publications, and as feedback to our funding bodies.

8. What if I have any questions?

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact either of the individuals listed at the top of this sheet.