Curriculum Plan - Overview

As an English faculty, we are passionate about providing our students with the opportunity to explore the wonderful world of Language and Literature; we see it as an opportunity to promote, entice and inspire students and further their understanding of how language has been used.

Our curriculum provides our students with the opportunity to read, write and discuss a range of novels, poems, plays and non-fiction work. We believe by exposing them to high-quality material, they will gain in-depth knowledge about how language is used to create stories, articulate voices and influence others. Our aim is to make students feel confident about reading a variety of texts, from a variety of times and places, understanding the influences that inform a piece of work. We want them to master the skills of reading, writing and communicating so they become productive members of society when they leave our school.

Our knowledge rich curriculum builds on the prior learning of students from KS2 and helps them utilise this knowledge in analysing, evaluating and composing texts. Through our four key principles of chunking, modelling, scaffolding and checking understanding we encourage our students to articulate their ideas and opinions on the given texts being studied. These principles provide integrated support in lessons and help our students achieve. Our aim is, through high quality teaching, to embed the core knowledge so students have the skills to independently work on a text, be that through reading, writing or discussion, and be confident enough to tackle the text in hand.

English is a superb vehicle for developing a student’s social, moral, spiritual and culture understanding. Within each unit we raise awareness of other people’s beliefs, values, expectations and promote a culture of acceptance. As we are a rural secondary school, we believe it is our duty to help students understand the wider world they live in and share with them the rich diversity that exits. We know that literature (in all its forms) can span across age, disability, religion, race, sexual orientation and gender – ‘books’ have the power to unite, to heal and to bridge and this is something we are passionate about sharing with our students.

**Year 7: What makes a story?**

In Year 7, the English curriculum focuses on unravelling the essence of storytelling. Students delve into the fundamental components of a story, such as plot, characters, setting, and themes. They explore various genres, from fantasy to historical fiction, learning how to identify and categorise different types of stories. Drawing inspiration from mythology, while developing cultural capital, students grasp the concept of the oral tradition and its impact on narratives. They read "Ghost Boys" by Jewell Parker Rhodes, which not only introduces modern storytelling, but also initiates discussions on authorial voice, aligning with the upcoming Year 8 theme.

Furthermore, the curriculum incorporates ‘Travellers’ Tales’ immersing students in non-fiction reading about the tales of adventure, travel and experiences across the world. Our Shakespeare element of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ focuses on the story of love and family conflict that permeates the whole play – students are exposed to how playwrights share their tale, their story as a performance. Concluding the year, students bring their knowledge and understanding of What makes a Story by acting as journalists producing an engaging article on an unusual hobby/event of their choice. Students will read blogs, reviews and articles on various events around the world and then produce an article about their chosen story. This diverse exploration equips Year 7 students with a solid foundation in recognising and creating captivating stories.

**Year 8: How do writers use their voices?**

In Year 8, the focus shifts to the power of voice in writing. By reading George Orwell's "Animal Farm," students analyse the persuasive impact of words and views. They explore how a key character uses their voice to manipulate and control others. Following from this, students, in the Imaginative Writing Unit, write stories based around the idea of voice and how a voice can create a character. In our Year 8 play, ‘Blood Brothers’, the students look at how the voice of the playwright can be seen in the content of the story and the plot. How a writer can influence an audience through the power of their words. Voices are prevalent in our Shakespeare unit looking at the voice of villains and deception in several of Shakespeare plays. This introduces students to the idea of themes whilst exposing them to a selection of key Shakespearean characters. Moving from villains, we then look at childhood voices focusing on non-fiction literature and poetry when the voice of children can be explored. Finally, students combine their knowledge and understanding of voice to create their own speech focusing on the idea of power and protest.

**Year 9: What influences a writer and their choices?**

Year 9 builds upon the foundation laid in previous years, emphasising how context influences a writer and impacts the reader because of this. Through a unit on Gothic Fiction, students explore how writers have been influenced by societal and cultural contexts which evolved into the genre of Gothic Horror. From this, we look at the horror of war through War Poetry and how war poets are heavily influenced by their personal implications of war and/or the reflective implications of war. The study of war poems deepens their understanding of historical periods and attitudes, reinforcing connections to historical events from previous years.

The curriculum then moves to the idea of "Challenging Experiences," examining biographies of explorers and adventurers to dissect the interplay between context, culture, and voice. Students then move to a transactional writing unit that looks at writing in context and how a person’s personal experience will influence their own work.

The focus then moves to transition to GCSE units with the focus on Shakespeare’s ‘Macbeth’ and Charles Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’. These units continue to help students understand how context informs characters, themes, and writers' intentions.

**Assessment in English**

English students in Years 7 and 8 have their progress assessed using our Age-related Expectations (A.R.Es). Each A.R.E. is divided in to four ranges, from Emerging to Mastery and within each range divided into subcategories High, Mid and Low. This allows us to have a clear picture of the progress the student is making and the areas needed for further development.

We use four strands of A.R.Es for Reading and five strands for Writing assessments:

* Reading: Comprehension, Text Analysis, Inference and Interpretation, and Critical thinking and Evaluation.
* Writing: Expression of ideas, Organisation and structure, Language and Vocabulary, Grammar and Mechanics and Adaptation to Different Audiences.

Prior to each assessment, students are given a planning lesson, so they can formulate their ideas, thoughts and opinions prior to the summative assessment. It is crucial for us to help our students understand the importance of planning and preparation as this is an essential exam skill. Students complete their summative assessments in formal, exam-style conditions (within the classroom) completing the work on lined paper with a question sheet. These are then kept in their work folders and used to support further assessments. This work is also used when revising the knowledge, and/or skill, in future units. This creates a sequence of learning that spirals back to prior knowledge and experience to help students slowly build the necessary and knowledge to develop the important English skills required.

Students in Year 9, at KS3, complete a KS3 course that has been specially designed to transitions them into GCSE. Students are marked against Assessment Objectives from the GCSE examinations specification; the assessments set, however, are based on GCSE requirements, but are not GCSE questions.

Within each unit, students are given opportunities to complete oral tasks to develop and build on the essential skill of communication. Specific, tailored tasks for each unit are being developed (and will commence Jan 2024) to ensure students are assessed on the key areas of oral communication:

* Clarity and Coherence
* Engagement and Active Listening
* Adaptation to Different Audiences
* Discussion and Participation
* Presentation Skills

**Across all years (7 – 11)**, feedback in English is instant. We use strategies such as Show-me Boards, Whole-Class Feedback, Live Marking, ‘Say it Again, better’ and many more to help support our students. Feedback does not have to be a written comment in an exercise book, or on an assessment. It is adapting our talk to ensure that each student understands how they could improve that aspect of their learning. Through regular Book Looks, we can monitor the quality of the student work and ensure that they maintain our high standards and expectations.

Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (D.I.R.T) is completed following any summative assessment. Students are given the opportunity to revisit their assessment and improve a targeted section (the yellow box). They use the Success Criteria to see where they have achieved and through the Feed Forward, they complete a task to improve meeting the aspects of the Criteria that had not been achieved.

To support students’ knowledge retention, we also set regular Recap and Retrieval starters and also ask students to complete Blended Learning Tasks that require them to recap prior learning. In some KS3 units, we also use ‘Show me What you Know’ assessments that are comprehension-based questions that target students explicit and implicit knowledge.

As English teachers, we understand the importance of Reading, so we included a fortnightly Library lesson in our schemes that promotes independent reading as well as reading for pleasure through the whole class reading of a novel, for example ‘The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ for Year 8 in the Autumn Term. Along with this, we conduct a fortnightly session using the online package of Reading Plus to ensure the development of the core skill and to monitor the progress they are making. Reading ages are assessed through this.

At GCSE, students in Year 10 follow the Pearson Edexcel English Literature course for one year studying ‘Macbeth’; ‘An Inspector Calls’, ‘A Christmas Carol’ and the Conflict Cluster from the Pearson anthology. They sit their external examination at the end of Year 10 before moving on to the Spoken Language Endorsement that is needed for the English Language GCSE that they begin in Year 11.

In Year 11, students follow the Pearson Edexcel English 2.0 qualification and complete the examination in the May/June of that year.

Due to staffing changes, the curriculum has been reconfigured to support our overarching Key Questions for the year group and is a work in progress. If you have any specific comments about the curriculum, then please do contact your child’s English teacher in the first instance.

**KS3 Overview**

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| **Year 7** | **What makes a story?** | | | | | |
| Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
| Outline | An introduction to storytelling and genre.  Moving to a focus on Mythology.  \*Due to split classes, two classes have these units running concurrently | | Ghost Boys – Jewel Parker Rhodes | Travellers Tales: Non-fiction reading of memoirs, anecdotes | Shakespeare  Tales of love and conflict: Romeo and Juliet | Recounting events: Writing |
| Summative Assessment | Introduction: Writing  Writing a story in a genre  Mythology: Writing  Writing a myth | | Reading:  Oral Communication: | Reading:  Oral Communication: | Reading:  Oral Communication: | Writing:  Oral Communication: |
| Links | SMSC Link – cultural development –  Cultural diversity  Tolerance  National, global communities | | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives | SMSC Link – cultural development –  Cultural diversity  Tolerance  National, global communities | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives |  |

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| **Year 8** | **How do writers use their voices?** | | | | | |
| Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
| Outline | The power of having a voice: George Orwell’s ‘Animal Farm’ - novel. | Voices and Character:  Imaginative Writing | Voicing n opinion: Willy Russell’s Blood Brothers’ - play. | Voices from Shakespeare: Villains and Deception – a variety of Shakespearean characters | Voices from childhood: non-literary fiction and poetry | Using my Voice: power and protest |
| Summative Assessment |  | Write about a time when you or a character felt afraid using the image as a stimulus. | Oral Communication: | Oral Communication: | Oral Communication: | Oral Communication: |
| Links | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy |  | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives |  | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy |

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| Year 9 | **What influences a writer and their choices?** | | | | | |
| Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
| Outline | Writers’ times and lives:  Gothic Horror | Writers’ times: War Poetry | Writers’ challenging experiences: Non-fiction reading | Transactional writing in context:  Letters and Speeches | Transition to GCSE 1:  ‘Macbeth’ – themes and context | Transition to GCSE 2:  ‘A Christmas Carol’ - themes |
| Summative Assessment |  | Poem Analysis – How is war presented in the chosen poem? |  | Writing in context from the point of view of an explorer.  Letter writing: the role of Simon using the extract from ‘Touching the Void’.  Speech writing: Tim Peake inspirational speech |  |  |
| Links | SMSC Link –  Own beliefs and other perspectives  Reflect on personal experiences | SMSC Link –  Moral development Consequences of actions  Their experiences – family backgrounds  Moral issue of war | SMSC Link – cultural development –  Cultural diversity  Tolerance  National, global communities |  | Religion: Protestant and Catholic faith |  |

**Key Stage 4 Overview:**

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| Year 10 | **English Literature – Pearson Edexcel** | | | | | |
| Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 | Summer 2 |
| 10: GCSE Literature  Edexcel | An Inspector Calls  JB Priestley | A Christmas Carol  Charles Dickens | Conflict Poetry  Pearson Edexcel Poetry Cluster  Unseen Poetry | Macbeth  William Shakespeare | Revision – all four texts and exam skills | Spoken Language Endorsement GCSE English Language  Pearson Edexcel 2.0 |
| Summative Assessments | The significance of Mr Birling | Extract analysis – Q4a  Whole Text – themes - Q4b | Conflict Cluster  -comparison  Unseen Poem  -comparison | Extract analysis –Q1a  Whole play -  Themes - Q1b | Exam style questions and timed responses | SLE Assessment – recorded presentation  Pass, Merit, Distinction |
| Links | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy | SMSC Link – moral development –  right and wrong  consequences of behaviour  viewpoints of others  application to own lives  British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy |  |  | British Values: Tolerance, Liberty, Democracy |

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| **Year 11** | **English Language Pearson Edexcel** | | | | | |
| Autumn 1 | Autumn 2 | Spring 1 | Spring 2 | Summer 1 |  |
| 11: GCSE Language  Edexcel Lift 2.0 | Paper 1: Reading | Paper 1 Writing  Paper 2 Writing  SMSC Link: Creativity and Imagination | Mock Paper 1  Paper 2 Reading | Paper 2 Reading  Paper 2 Writing  SMSC Link: Creativity and Imagination | Revision for Paper 1 and Paper 2  Exam Technique  Time Management |
| Summative Assessments | Exam Paper 1  Q1 - 6 | Transactional Writing timed response  Creative Writing timed respons | Mock – full Paper 1 | Exam Paper 2 Q1 - 6 | Mock Paper 2 |  |
| Links |  |  |  |  |  |  |