

CURRICULUM INFORMATION



English

We believe that students learn best when they enjoy their studies, and are committed to offering a varied and engaging diet of literary and non-fiction texts from years 7-11. Our schemes of learning are based on developing the skills needed for GCSE. Students will begin studying for their GCSE courses from January of year 9 with the aim to obtain two GCSE qualifications at the end of year 11: English Language and English Literature. Throughout their years of study, students explore how and why writers make their creative decisions. They investigate setting, structure, characterisation, context, authorial perspective and form through a wide range of contemporary and traditional texts.

Years 7 – 9 – Key Stage 3

Please note: Students will begin studying texts for GCSE from January of Year 9

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
Writing Skills	The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins	Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens	Poetry (Relationships)	Macbeth by William Shakespeare (GCSE)
Ruby in the Smoke by Philip Pullman	Stone Cold by Robert Swindells	Viewpoints & Opinions
Aspects of Love	Great Speeches	Animal Farm by George Orwell (GCSE)
Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare	Crime Fiction	Descriptive writing

Assessment details

Students will have a formal (summative) reading assessment and a writing assessment for each scheme of learning with questions designed to prepare them for GCSE. They will also be continuously assessed throughout the school year in order to review their progress and ensure skills are developed.

Years 10 - 11 – Key Stage 4

We use the AQA examination board and students will study for two GCSE qualifications: English Language and English Literature starting from January of year 9.

The table below shows the range of texts and skills that students are expected to have studied and learnt for their GCSE examinations.

English Language	English Literature
Fiction from the 19th, 20th and 21st Century	Modern Text: <i>Animal Farm</i> by George Orwell
Non-fiction from the 19th, 20th and 21st Century	Shakespeare: <i>Macbeth</i> by William Shakespeare
Writing to describe and narrate	19th Century Novel: <i>Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i> by Robert Louis Stevenson
Writing to persuade and argue	Poetry Anthology: <i>Collection of 15 poems on the theme of Conflict and Power</i>
	Unseen Poetry: <i>Poetry the students will not have seen until the actual examination</i>

Assessment details

Students will have 2 formal (summative) assessments per Scheme of Learning with questions designed to prepare them for GCSE. They will also be continuously assessed throughout the school year in order to review their progress and ensure skills are developed. Mock examinations are held at the end of Year 10 and in December of Year 11.

Final Examinations

English Language: Two papers assessing both reading and writing skills. Both papers last 1 hour 45 minutes)

English Literature: Two papers assessing understanding of all the set texts studied. Paper 1 is 1 hour 45 minutes while Paper 2 is 2 hours 15 minutes long.

How do we support your child in English?

Fresh Start Phonics

As part of our programme of interventions to support students' learning and progress we have invested in an excellent educational resource called 'Fresh Start', to enable students to become better readers. 'Fresh Start' supports students to develop the skills they need to be proficient readers and lifelong learners. This will make a difference to their learning and progress across all areas of the curriculum and in turn to the outcomes of their GCSE courses.

The underlying premise of 'Fresh Start' is that language comprehension and word recognition are both essential skills for becoming successful readers. In order to overcome the problems of reading comprehension faced by some pupils, the main challenge is to understand the relationship between sounds and written letters. Reading comprehension follows once pupils understand the principle of phonics and recognise the meanings of words.

'Fresh Start' teaching also involves specific strategies for modelling sounds, encouraging practice among pupils, motivation and praise.

Reading Plus

Reading Plus is a computer-based intervention programme that is designed to improve students' reading speed and accuracy. This is particularly important for the new GCSEs which require a high level of proficiency in both reading speed and reading comprehension. All students in years 7 and 8 will be regularly tested and expected to complete lessons as part of their homework.

How to support your child in English

Years 7 – 9

The best support at this stage is to encourage your child to read as much as possible. Fiction and non-fiction are equally valuable! Students in years 7 and 8 will be expected to complete Reading Plus lessons as part of their homework each week (see below for details).

Years 10-11

It will really help your child if they have their own copies of our set texts so that they can annotate them and use them for revision.

Students in years 9-11 will be targeted for Reading Plus intervention which they will complete during school time and at home.