

## English

### Intent

Compelling and challenging texts are placed at the heart of our curriculum to inspire a love of reading, creativity and curiosity. Curriculum is designed to include a breadth of knowledge and skills that will become more sophisticated as we move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, with the intention that those skills can be transferred into Key Stage 5.

The main intention at KS3 is to ensure a richness of curriculum that, while retaining a focus on the needs of KS4, allows a broader discovery of learning. Our aim is to challenge all learners, regardless of their prior attainment, utilising creativity and curiosity which helps develop conceptualised responses to texts on the GCSE specification. We are particularly aware of the need to promote progress for our key groups such as pupil premium learners and high prior attainers. Our Schemes of Learning are integrated across the key stages, allowing focus on themes that are introduced in Year 7 and remain important as learners progress through the key stages. For example, conflict, society and power which form the basis of our transactional writing topic in Year 7 and translate to the study of Romeo and Juliet in Year 10 and 11.

A thematic approach allows us flexibility within the curriculum to explore significant dates in the calendar such as Holocaust Memorial Day, National Poetry Day and International Women's Day. All offer an opportunity to enrich the skills embedded in the Schemes of Learning. We intend our learners to develop creative minds from a Catholic and global standpoint, questioning real world events with criticality.

### Implementation

We aim to implement a curriculum which develops key skills within English such as analysis, creativity, gathering of knowledge and evaluation. These skills will strengthen the ability of our learners to articulate themselves both in the written and spoken medium.

There are Schemes of Learning in place for all terms, across all year groups. While there are resources available, ensuring consistency across the Faculty, teachers are encouraged to add their own in order to keep learning relevant and allowing teachers to share their expertise. Several types of formative assessment are ongoing in every scheme to move learners on and prepare for the best outcomes in the end of term assessment. Each module culminates in a set of concrete outcomes that are linked to GCSE assessment objective for every year group. This ensures that all learners are familiar with the language of learning needed for future success. Summative assessment is marked with top

sheets formed using GCSE specifications and the department uses current research around feedback, enabling consistency of results.

Teaching at KS3 is designed to accumulate the key skills needed for future English study. The department uses a specific range of strategies and frameworks (i.e. FEEDOWL and FILMS) to embed concepts that allow for top reading and writing skills. We have developed these strategies using pedagogical research and best practice so that learners are prepared to apply skills to any texts, at every stage of the education and not necessarily exclusively to English. Each lesson is structured to develop creative and critical thinking using texts, model answers and real world examples as stimuli.

This creative and critical thinking is further developed with KS4 teaching. In English Literature, set texts are explored through key themes and character where higher order questioning develops a conceptualised argument. This is strengthened by university style lectures delivered by staff who read widely and have become experts in the given texts; high prior attaining learners benefit from such an approach. As learners are more confident in their ability to write analytically and creatively, we encourage them to move away from simplistic and limiting frameworks in favour of a personal and conceptualised style. In English Language, creativity is a consistent thread through each term with imaginative and transactional pieces inspired by relevant and current fiction and non-fiction writing as well as set texts. In teaching English Language skills, we focus on the top end of Bloom's Taxonomy with particular emphasis on analysis, synthesis and evaluation which allows our learners to access the top of the GCSE mark scheme.

Our pupil premium students are given opportunities to close the gap such as free tickets to trips (i.e. Poetry Live and theatre productions) and places on our First Story program.

Our learners develop some of skills required to succeed at A Level such as analysis and evaluation. However, the requirements of both English Literature and English Language A Level make broadening this skill set necessary in Year 12. In English Literature, we focus on academic essay writing which involves forming thesis statements, backing up arguments with the perspectives of literary theorists and contextualising set texts within literary history. In English Language, learners are exposed to a very wide variety of texts which they are expected to analyse through a range of linguistic frameworks using the work of linguistic theorists. Lessons use a mixture of both university style lectures and seminar based discussions to teach new material and build on prior learning. As learners for both subjects move into Year 13, the foundations built in Year 12 are developed so that they can apply skills and knowledge to exam technique.

## Impact

The English Faculty at St Bede's aims to prepare learners who are independent, inquisitive and insightful. We want them to enter further education or the world of work as creative and analytical members of society.

We are aware of the consistent strength of our Year 11 cohorts. In regards to high prior attaining pupils, university style lectures and interventions have improved progress with 16 Grade 9 results in both 2017 and 2018, nearly double the national average. We remain high attaining with 87% of learners achieving Grades 4-9 over the last three years.

Through maintaining high expectations from Year 7 to Year 13 and giving incremental steps to success, learners in the English department feel supported, confident and well equipped for their future.