



Department: English

We aim to deliver the Mission Statement of the school by:

- The English department curriculum aims to enhance students' lives in the study of English Language and Literature by fulfilling the St Joseph's Mission statement, *Living, loving, learning through Christ*. We strive to make learning fun, inspire a love of reading and a thirst for knowledge in our students, developing them as independent and enquiring learners. Our KS3 curriculum is built around the full coverage of the National Curriculum but tailored to the needs of our students and linked to our whole school aims. In accordance with the JPP, we want our students to think and learn about the role of the individual and their place in society. With this in mind, each year at KS3 has an over-arching theme woven through the texts and units.
- By the end of year 7, we want students to be able to articulate who they are (their own identity) and to have a knowledge and understanding of our own culture and other cultures around the world, becoming familiar with terms like diversity and individuality.
- Because we believe that oracy, and being able to express themselves and elaborate their ideas verbally, is so important to students, year 7 starts with a study of Spoken Language, establishing our expectations for students. We also plan termly oracy assessments for all year groups at KS3 to build students' confidence and ability to speak in full sentences, using Standard English and incorporating tier 2/3 vocabulary into their speech.
- By the end of year 8, we want students to have explored the theme of power through the texts they have studied, understanding how power can be abused or used to change the world for the better.
- By the end of year 9, we want students to have explored a range of different genres, building a deeper understanding of the writer's craft. As well as exposure to a range of text types from across time, students will explore issues such as knife crime, social inequality and injustice.
- The JPP virtues are embedded into all of our SOW at KS3 and KS4. We have a real focus on developing students' understanding of the JPP and using the Frayer model, alongside our 'Elaboration' words, we are helping students to understand the JPP ethos and to develop their wider vocabulary. We aim to make students masters of language, with a clear focus on vocabulary growth both in English and across the school.
- Our curriculum is broad, ambitious and challenging and develops students' knowledge of their community, their country and the wider world –this is integral to our curriculum. Students explore a wide range of Literature texts and experience theatre through film adaptations of Shakespeare, prose and modern plays we study in lessons. Live streaming of Shakespeare productions are used to engage students at KS3. Students are provided with reading lists at KS3 to encourage their wider reading. A Level reading lists are shared with KS4 students who wish to take English at KS5. We have visits from poets, writers and speakers to create exciting opportunities for students to see where their English could take them as a career.
- In order to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, our KS3 curriculum aims to expose students to a range of authors and genres from different cultures and different time periods. Each unit of work is tailored to meet the KS3 assessment objectives, building on prior learning at KS2. The KS3 curriculum will help students to develop a comprehensive understanding of a range of cultural texts, seminal world literature and non-fiction from the Literary heritage canon and more contemporary texts. The curriculum will enable students to have a wider understanding of what we mean by culture, identity and diversity and how people may have faced persecution because of who they are or what they believe in. Each unit of work is tailored to meet the KS3 assessment objectives and continually helping them to develop and elaborate their responses to texts both in their writing



and verbally. We have carefully mapped out core knowledge for each unit, building up students' understanding of the English language and key contextual knowledge.

- The English curriculum is planned and sequenced to build on prior learning at KS2 and reading skills build on blooms taxonomy of skills (identify through to evaluate) For writing skills, students develop various aspects of transactional writing moving from letter writing to broadsheet newspaper articles. Creative writing is sequenced to develop 1st person narrative to a 3rd person omniscient narrator, which is a more challenging concept. KS3 students have a 'Sequence of learning' flowchart in their exercise books to refer to throughout the year and help them to identify and understand the next steps in their learning.
- We are continuing to ensure interleaving at KS3 by including flashback lessons or starters and by using KS2 spellings with our year 7 students to continue to build their vocabulary and spelling skills. We operate an inclusive curriculum, though at times we may choose to study short stories as opposed to full novels. At KS3 we have adapted our SOW to build on key skills and develop a wider understanding of social, historical and cultural contexts when studying Literature. We have mapped out the core knowledge we want students to acquire and use this in our planning and core knowledge tests. Assessments have been scaled back to allow students to develop writing skills and we have separated reading and writing SOW to fully embed skills. The English team have taken on year 7 form groups this year, in order to ensure that our students develop into readers. The focus in form time, following worship, is reading, in order to build comprehension, inference and vocabulary skills. At KS4, setting has been strategic to ensure students are targeted according to the needs of their abilities. Choice of novels is differentiated to meets the needs of students at GCSE level. Some Year 11 students, with a particular focus on PP students, are offered additional tutoring at dinner time or after school, delivered by our own teachers.
- Our KS3 Curriculum builds on prior learning at KS2, we contacted partner primaries to ascertain gaps in students' knowledge and developmental areas linked to reading, writing and oracy, this then informed our planning.
- At KS4 we have built in Throwback Thursday lessons to help students consolidate prior learning and to revisit literature texts studied. Students also complete low stakes recall quizzes each week on SENECA as part of their HW. Interleaving of Literature and Language skills are implemented through the year, for example, students will practise language analysis questions using extracts form the literature texts they have studied. We have also ensure that core knowledge tests in KS3 revisit ideas and concepts from previous units, so that students become used to revising and building up their knowledge.
- In order to stretch students, we have introduced enrichment booklets at KS3, which will run alongside students' usual homework tasks. Students who go 'above and beyond' by completing independent learning from the enrichment booklets, will be praised and rewarded for their efforts.
- We celebrate events such as World Book Day and National Poetry Day, often arranging activities for the whole school or other departments in order to spread a love of literature and reading. We are beginning to plan theatre trips and visits from authors (notably a resent Poetry Day with poet Rommi Smith and the Wordsworth Trust and a year 10 trip to see Blood Brothers) though this has been lessened in the past few years due to Covid.
- Drop Down Days – each term, days have been planned when students at KS3 will be exposed to a poem, piece of non-fiction or an extract from 19th Century fiction, thematically linked to the unit of work they are studying. This will help them to think about the theme, but will also help develop their social, historical and contextual knowledge and ensure that they are familiarised with approaching and responding to previously unseen texts.



- In order to offer our students a strong reading foundation, all year 7 forms have been assigned English teachers as their form tutors. Like the rest of KS3 forms, form time comprises largely (after The Way of the Day) of reading. Having English teachers for form will ensure that reading is carried out with passion and enthusiasm, and that students are engaged in the reading through the skilled questioning of our practitioners.

To achieve our Mission Statement, our curriculum:

- The English curriculum is structured to ensure that students are compassionate, loving, ambitious and strive for excellence. Through our class discussion of literature and the JPP words linked to each SOW, we help teach students the Catholic values which are central to the mission statement. We have department policy for achievement and rewards. Behaviour for learning in English is good and students understand the high expectations staff have. There is mutual respect with staff and students, students appreciate the compassion and care the English dept have and strive to achieve their best and fulfill their potential. Behaviour issues in English are very few. We endeavour to instill a love of literature in our students, and this is evident with the large number of students who go on to study English at KS5.
- At KS3, all SOW have built in opportunities for Oracy. This year we have developed Oracy assessment tasks looking at a range of oracy skills including role play, discussion and debate and public speaking. We have also created half termly HW tasks enabling students to develop Oracy presentation skills. At KS4, students have to complete a spoken language assessment and so develop presentation skills which are developed in lessons and linked to communication skills required for KS5 and life after school – this is linked to the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Promoting reading for pleasure is a key focus in the English department. Reading lists are shared with students and parents, and regular book recommendations are posted on our social media platforms. Year 9 students participate in the Reading for success' scheme in which they complete a regular reading record and receive achievement points for reading.
- Writing skills are integral to our English curriculum from year 7-11. As a dept we insist on high expectations for writing in line with the whole school 'St Joseph's Writing Standards'. We have developed 'slow writing tasks' to help students think about the writing process, develop cohesive written responses and demonstrate a wide range of tier 2 vocabulary in their writing.
- Our curriculum is differentiated to ensure all students, regardless of starting point or learning needs make good progress. For our SEND students, teachers work alongside the SEND dept and use IHCPs to help plan and differentiate their lessons. Scaffolding, word banks and sentence starters are used to help support students, literature texts are also differentiated. PP students are targeted in lessons first with key questions. Staff make regular contact with parents of PP students and PP students' book are regularly sampled in work scrutinies. All KS4 PP students are provided with their own Literature books.
- We are very lucky to have 6 English specialists in the dept who have a wide range of experience and expertise. One member of staff is also an examiner. We work collaboratively as a dept to help develop curriculum plans, lessons and assessments, tapping into the expertise in the dept. Internal dept CPD is carried out in dept meetings with sharing of resources, standardising and moderation and dissemination of whole school CPD and initiatives. We also work collaboratively with colleagues across the county via the English Subject Leader Network meetings.



Living, Loving and Learning through Christ



- The English dept implement various Meta-cognitive strategies to help students know, understand and apply more. Students have built in opportunities for reflection on their learning, this is often linked to RYG lessons. At KS3 and KS4, dialogic teaching is common practice in the English department allowing students to question and reflect on learning. Whenever we teach writing skills, staff use the 'thinking out loud' method where we model the writing process, explaining each step and verbalising our writing decisions as we go along – this links in with the 'slow' writing' practice we are developing with students. Mind-mapping is a key technique we used to help students develop essay planning skills.
- Students have lots of opportunities to review learning to challenge misconceptions and interleave prior work, this is through Flashback lessons at KS3 and throwback lesson at KS4. The use of quizzes and HW booklets for KS4, allows students the opportunity to reflect on prior learning. The testing of elaboration words in KS3 at the start and the end of a SOW enables students to reflect on learning. Students complete end of unit 'Knowledge tests' linked to the SOW
- Each half term students have calendared assessment opportunities to review knowledge, skills and understanding. Students have a 'practice' assessment which is taught, students prepare for the assessment collaboratively though class discussion, teacher modelling, exemplar answers, scaffolding and sentence structures etc. Following on from teacher feedback and RYG/ DIRT time, students then complete an 'unseen' assessment to demonstrate learning, knowledge and skills. This is for reading, writing and oracy. Ongoing low stake assessments such as spellings and elaboration words tests at KS3 take place, with SENeca recall quizzes at KS4.