

**Curriculum Area** - **English**

We are a team of 10 committed and hardworking specialist teachers. There is a good balance of experienced teachers and those newer to the profession. The team is led by the Director of English and Literacy. There are four staff with additional responsibilities: two at department level and two Lead Teachers. We use Accelerated reader to promote reading in KS3 and we are also using the Achieve 3000 and Pearson Success Maker programmes to support Literacy. We work closely with the SEN department and specialist SEN teachers and Learning Behaviour Mentors support many of our learners in class. Subject knowledge among staff in the department is high and we see success in the classroom as of paramount importance. The ethos in the department is one of collaboration and mutual support: we share ideas, resources and give each other help and guidance.

The subject is taught in a suite of 10 rooms, all with views over the vale and the hills beyond. The teaching environment is pleasant and we take pride in our environment using displays to celebrate learner success. One of our rooms is a dedicated computer suite. We are also located next to the Library, which is currently being updated and revitalised - in collaboration with student leaders - there are also ICT facilities that can be used in lessons. We are well resourced in terms of equipment and texts: each teacher in the department has a dedicated room as a base and we have access to kindles, recording facilities and projectors. We have Activlnspire installed in all classrooms and some have interactive whiteboards.

All staff teach across the whole age and ability range. Learners in Year 7 are currently taught in seven streamed groups. In Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 learners are setted. In Key Stage 4 learners are also taught in ability groupings. We follow the Edexcel GCSE syllabi. There are additional nurture groups in years 9-11 to support more vulnerable learners. Some of our learners in year 11 attend mini-school in KS4 where they complete GCSE English, Maths and Science in conjunction with work experience and vocational learning.

We encourage learners to take part in extra-curricular activities and offer theatre trips, extended learning opportunities and competitions as and when appropriate. This has included Debate Mate, Poetry by Heart, Creative Writing Club, a trip to Harry Potter World and BBC 500 words competition.

This is an exciting time to join the department: as we make the transition to Life After Levels and the new GCSE, there will be opportunities for everyone in the department to contribute to the shared vision we are developing. As a curriculum area, we create and share Schemes of Work, regularly reviewing departmental planning. We are keen to welcome any new ideas that additions to the department may bring.