



## Wath Comprehensive School

Wath Comprehensive School is a large regularly over-subscribed secondary school in Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The school was founded in 1923 as Wath Grammar School and changed to Wath Comprehensive School in 1974. We are a mixed 11-18 school with 1793 students on roll, including 320 in the sixth form.

In April 2005 we moved to brand new accommodation on our original site through a PFI scheme and now benefit from a building equipped for the demands of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A new floodlit full size synthetic turf sports pitch was added in August 2008 and, through a separate project, a community swimming pool was completed in December 2008.

The school is set in extensive grounds and enjoys excellent facilities, including a well-resourced library/learning resource centre, drama studio, sports hall and recreation centre, dedicated ICT areas and fully equipped science and technology areas. Subjects are suited with dedicated staff work/preparation areas available throughout the school. Investment in ICT is ongoing in all areas of the school and all classrooms have interactive whiteboards.

From March 2019, the school is due to become a sponsored academy within Maltby Learning Trust and we are looking forward to continuing to provide an environment where the highest standards of teaching and learning can take place.

There is a strong and effective partnership between school, parents and the community.

The school's aims are to ensure that:

- Students achieve high standards in their work and behaviour.
- Students and staff are encouraged to achieve their full potential.
- The school is a happy, secure environment and a caring community.

Wath Comprehensive School has a well-qualified and dedicated staff. The school's management style is based on teamwork and team leaders are supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

We are committed to continuous improvement. As such this is an organisation which values its staff and their work with students. Staff are supported with training opportunities designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as their own individual professional development. A comprehensive programme of support for newly-qualified teachers and staff new to the school is well established and is viewed as a key strength by those who have followed it.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their work and behaviour. They are also encouraged to develop their own values and to respect those of others. We have an extensive programme of extra-curricular provisions, including many visits and residential opportunities. The work with representative student groups is a strength of the school.

Wath Comprehensive School is a school in which we aim to challenge, develop and support all our students. There are many opportunities for them to develop their talents, skills and interests. Sport, music, drama, community service and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme are all flourishing activities that students can enjoy. We aspire for our students to leave us "able, active and qualified."

We ask parents to work in partnership with the school. Parents are asked to support the school in its efforts to encourage students to behave responsibly, dress sensibly and work effectively. In addition to specific communications we inform parents of our activities and key information through our half termly in-house newsletter 'The Torch,' our website and through regular progress reports for all students.

## Wath English Faculty

The Faculty is focused on ensuring that all students, regardless of ability, achieve their full potential in English. The skills of reading, writing and oral communication are each given full consideration in order to develop students into competent and analytical users of English. Furthermore, the Faculty hopes to inspire a love of language and literature and, where appropriate, prepare students for university-level study.

There is a team of seventeen teachers of English. There is also a dedicated Departmental Support Assistant.

### Facilities

The Faculty of English is housed in fifteen classrooms mainly on the first floor of the main school building. Each classroom contains an interactive whiteboard and visualiser, along with a class set of dictionaries. Two of the classrooms are dedicated ICT suites. Every classroom has a computer, which is linked to the Internet and to the SIMS network for registration purposes. In addition, the Faculty has its own set of iPads as well as a number of video cameras. The large collection of novels, novellas, short stories, plays, poetry collections, textbooks, DVDs and specialist computer software used for teaching is continually refreshed. The Faculty enjoys good links with the Library.

### Key Stage 3

All classes in KS3 typically receive four lessons of English a week. The faculty operates setting systems throughout Key Stages 3 & 4. The curriculum strikes a balance, ensuring students encounter engaging content whilst enhancing their skills. The units studied ensure that students have a wide-ranging experience of English. Reading is encouraged, with a range of awards available to those who read and engage with a range of books independently.

English in Year 7 is magical! Students begin Year 7 with an exciting magical writing project. They then go on to discover the magic of reading and writing through the study of a novel, a play, poetry, creative writing and media texts. Throughout the year, students go from exploring Shakespeare's world in *Hamlet* to taking on the role of Arctic explorers and reporting back to base camp. During the festive season, we even brave the ghosts of Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. Last year, we took students to work with Rotherham's only apothecary Grimm and Co and this trip is sure to become a firm favourite.

Year 8 students study a further novel and a play (the classic and gripping *Dracula*), along with war poetry. Creative writing skills are developed through an ever-popular unit based around the sinking of The Titanic. Students also visit the mystical island of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, where their spoken language skills are developed.

### Key Stage 4

All students study separate GCSEs in English Language and English Literature, following the AQA specifications. Year 9 is focused on securing students' skills for the GCSEs, before moving onto completing the examined content in Years 10 and 11. We take an integrated approach to the course, with linguistic and literary skills being taught side-by-side.

In GCSE English Language, students analyse a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, from the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Students also refine their writing skills, both for creative purposes (including writing descriptions and narratives) and to give their views for different audiences.

GCSE English Literature exposes students to the full range of the literary canon. As expected, Shakespeare is an important part of the course, with a play (typically *Romeo and Juliet* or *Macbeth*) being considered in detail. In addition, students analyse the nineteenth-century novella, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and a twentieth century drama, *An Inspector Calls*. A range of poetry (consisting of set works published since 1789 and contemporary unseen poems) completes the course.

## Sixth Form

At A Level, both English Language (AQA) and English Literature (Eduqas) are offered. Both courses are popular. To make full use of the Faculty's expertise, each class's lessons are split equally between two teachers.

Students opting to study A Level English Language look at how language is used in everyday life and how it reflects the world around us. Year 12 students are introduced to the concepts and skills needed to analyse both written and oral language and apply them to a range of texts. The diversity of language – including differences between different genders, social groups and occupations – is also studied, along with some expressive writing skills. In Year 13, children's language development and language change are introduced. The coursework consists of a piece of original writing and a language investigation into an area of the student's own interest.

The A Level English Literature course develops students' analytical skills through a range of prose, poetry and drama. At the time of writing, Year 12 students study a pre-1900 novel (such as *North and South*), a post-1900 novel (such as *A Room with a View*), a poet (typically Ted Hughes) and a play (usually *A Streetcar Named Desire*). In Year 13, students study poetry from before and after 1900 (for example, John Donne and Sylvia Plath respectively), a Shakespeare play (normally *King Lear*) and a further pre-1900 play (such as *The Duchess of Malfi*). Students also develop their ability to tackle unseen prose and poetry. For coursework, students complete an essay on pre- and post-2000 prose.

Regardless of other subject choices, any sixth former who does not have a good grade in GCSE English Language is given the opportunity to re-sit this vital qualification.

## Beyond the Classroom

Not only do we work hard, we play hard too! We have a great many extra-curricular activities on offer to KS3 pupils. Both pupils and staff alike particularly enjoy celebrating World Book Day by dressing up as characters from books. Depending on availability, we like to invite a writer into school to run workshops for our students as part of our World Book Day celebrations. Colleagues also run various lunchtime clubs such as "The Torch", our school newspaper, the Magistrates' Mock Trial Competition and a More Able reading group who are shadowing the Carnegie Short List. We are always keen to encourage students to enter their creative writing into competitions. Our Y7 trip to the Harry Potter studios has been extremely popular. Our KS4 and KS5 students have enjoyed theatre visits to performances of 'Blood Brothers' at the Sheffield Lyceum and 'King Lear' at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. We value our strong links with Sheffield University and our KS5 students have had their learning enriched by attending study days and workshops.