



## The English Department

The English department is based in the impressive John Milton Centre, which it shares with the newly expanded school library. The English team consists of ten members of teaching staff, who work closely with the Literacy Hub team who are based in the same building. Teaching rooms are equipped with a digital projector and three whiteboards. There is also an open plan performance/lobby area with a mezzanine and all students have their own personal chromebook for use in lessons. The English team is hard-working and innovative and they work together to develop their practice. Sharing good practice is at the heart of what the English department values. The curriculum is rich, knowledge-based, and carefully sequenced to promote long-term retention of key skills. There is a large social team room and a department working space.



### Key Stages 3 and 4

Students are taught in their tutor groups in Year 7. In Years 8-11, students are taught in a mixed-attainment groups. The Key Stage 3 curriculum goes beyond the National Curriculum, placing an emphasis on literary genres and movement; on the context in which texts are written and received; and on the acquisition of a precise and sophisticated vocabulary that students can use to communicate their personal view. The curriculum has also been designed to teach students the skills needed for the GCSE course and prepare students for the challenges ahead.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum, for the class of 2019 onwards, follows the AQA specification and detailed curriculum mapping, schemes of work and student data tracking procedures are in development. In 2019 83% of students secured a grade 4 or above, and 71% of students achieving a grade 5 or above, in English Language or English Literature.

### Key Stage 5

At A-Level, two courses are offered: English Literature and English Language and Literature, both following the AQA B syllabus which offers a broader specification to students wishing to continue elements of both their GCSE courses in the Sixth Form. Both courses are popular and we have a consistent record of excellent outcomes in terms of both attainment and progress.

### Beyond the Classroom

The English department runs theatre trips as well as having visits from authors and guest speakers. Students have the opportunity to take part in Talk the Talk, creative writing workshops, a spoken word workshops and theatre visits. The department also run a debating group.

## **Literacy**

There has been a significant shift in the whole school approach to literacy over the last two years. An emphasis on direct instruction of vocabulary, informed by best practice and research, ensures that our students are able to express themselves with precision and purpose. A growing reading culture, supported by the launch of the Accelerated Reader programme in 2019, is building conversations around reading across the school.

The school has a well equipped library run by an experienced librarian who works continuously with the English team to develop the quality of the resources on offer to students. In KS3, all students have a fortnightly library lesson.

## **The Team**

The Head of Department is supported by a 2nd in department and other team leaders (TLR holders).

The English team are a genuinely friendly and committed team. They are enthusiastic about their work and set high standards in terms of the quality of planning and feedback provided for our students. They offer excellent support to teachers joining the team and work together to achieve goals. They regularly host interns, student teachers and other visitors wishing to see the work of an English department. The well resourced literacy hub provides effective interventions to support students who join us with low levels of literacy; innovative approaches to improving literacy are being developed, both within English and across the school.

Please contact Robin Marsden (Head of English / Assistant Headteacher) [rmarsden@wheatleypark.org](mailto:rmarsden@wheatleypark.org) if you would like any further information. We welcome visits from any prospective applicants.