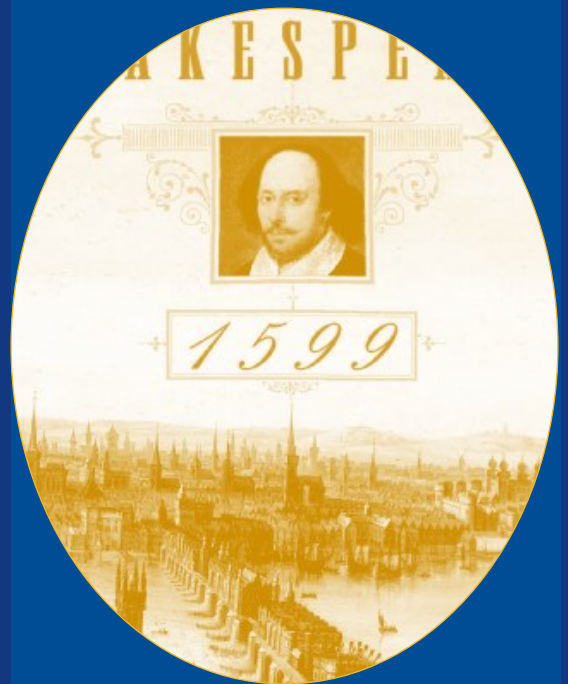




The Minster School English



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Background

The English Department is large, lively and academically very successful.

Our philosophy is that we are here to develop the whole child and to that end we teach entirely mixed ability groups across Key Stages 3 & 4. We are a reflective department that always considers carefully the very best ways of meeting the continuing changes to the curriculum in ways that best suit students here at The Minster school.

The English team is talented, hardworking and well respected within the school and the community.

Facilities

The Department enjoys the fantastic facilities one could expect in a £34 million school complex including a media suite and superb ICT facilities in every classroom.

The Team

Matthew Oxley - Curriculum Team Leader

Alison Guest

Richard Berry

Tim Meads

Karen Crone

Claire Morgan - TLR2

Esme Davidson

Lorraine Potts - TLR 2

Mrs Eaton

Katie Simpson

Georgina Forster



Key Stage 3

Students in Year 7 are taught in mixed ability groups and have eight periods a fortnight; in Years 8 & 9 this becomes six periods. In Year 9, students are put into smaller groups, still of mixed ability. A lot of care is given to the placing of students in Year 9 to ensure that we have an even spread of ability and behaviours.

We are very well resourced at Key stage 3 and give the students as wide a learning experience as possible. Students study a range of literary texts including novels, plays and poetry, as well as exploring the conventions of non-fiction and some media texts. We encourage students at all times to become critical readers, expressive and accurate writers, and to develop as confident speakers and responsive listeners.

Whilst all students are taught a common skills and knowledge base which includes a strong emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar, teachers are invited to deliver these skills via a range of texts. This allows teachers to follow their own instincts and interests which they believe will inspire and challenge their particular classes. We continually refine Schemes of Work and take an entirely collaborative approach to this development work.

As a result, we have a very wide variety of resources on our Staff Drive and we continue to develop and upload high-quality resources onto the school's Learning Platform which enables students to embed skills and revise areas of subject knowledge.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, all students study for the AQA English Language and Literature GCSE's. GCSE results are consistently very good for both Language & Literature with approximately 85% of students achieving a grade 4 pass in both subjects.

Mixed ability classes at KS4 are typically of 24 or 25 students which allows us to support and differentiate for all learners. Some students also receive further support with their English via Guided or Supported Pathways options. Within the common schedules that all classes follow, teachers opt to teach texts that they feel are best suited to their classes. We all do study the play DNA at the moment and everyone has opted to study Macbeth. However, for the 19th century novel unit, 'Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde', 'A Christmas Carol' and 'The Sign of Four' are all currently taught.

Students are regularly assessed following the first teaching of Literature texts and Language topics and again in class pieces and more formal mocks. This allows careful tracking and monitoring of student progress to take place and informs us where interventions are necessary.



Key Stage 5

English Language and English Literature are popular sixth form choices, normally attracting between 30-40 students in each subject each year. A good number of students opt to pursue English for Higher Education courses.

We follow the Edexcel specification for English Language whilst the OCR syllabus for English Literature, utilising a range of active, "hands on" teaching and learning styles to accommodate the ability range. Alongside the specified class texts and topics, these specifications also provide scope for students to negotiate a focus and, with staff guidance and support, work independently on their coursework projects. We are always keen to offer students enrichment opportunities such as attending theatre productions of drama texts that are being studied and have seen 'A Streetcar Named Desire' & 'Richard III' in the last couple of years.

Results at KS5 are consistently very strong; for example, in 'A' Level Literature the vast majority of students consistently achieve A* - B passes.

Media

A-level Media Studies is a well-established and very popular subject within the Sixth Form. Students study a range of media forms in terms of a theoretical framework which consists of media language, representation, media industries and audiences.

The following forms are studied in depth through applying all areas of the framework: newspapers, magazines, television, online, social and participatory media. Advertising and marketing, film, music video, radio and video games are studied in relation to selected areas of the framework. The students sit two exam components both 35%.

For the Non-Examined Assessment (30%) students have the options to choose from annually set briefs by the exam board which connect two forms of media text (print/ audio-visual and web based), in one of the following areas: magazines, television, advertising and marketing in music or film.

