

THE ENGLISH FACULTY

In the English faculty at St Martin's school, teachers are encouraged to take risks within a supportive and carefully planned framework and to be innovative in employing challenging, engaging teaching strategies to cater for all learning styles. This approach is underpinned by high expectations in terms of classroom management and student behaviour, a philosophy which is fully embodied in the courses, resources and structures provided for all students and staff. Consequently, the atmosphere in the English teaching area is one of calm purposefulness, progress, energy and engagement.

There are twenty teachers of English (three part-time) and a lively, healthy balance of experienced and younger staff. A number of members of the team also hold whole-school leadership/management responsibilities in addition to their English teaching load. There is a great sense of shared purpose, with contributions to policy, management and resources expected from all members of the team.

The faculty is well equipped with audio-visual resources and one English classroom houses 15 networked computers for the use of students in English lessons. A centrally held stock of laptops is also available for use in all English classrooms. All classrooms are equipped with teacher computers, data projectors and DVD/video equipment. There is a large, well-maintained stock of texts and other printed resources. The faculty is based on the top floor of the south building in a suite of 12 classrooms. Full-time teachers of English can expect to be based in one teaching room.

The faculty is fully committed to the professional development of the individuals within the team and opportunities are provided to ensure this takes place. These will include one-to-one mentoring, in-faculty training, whole school induction and external training. Teaching and learning "forums", in which subject knowledge and good practice related to specific aspects of the English curriculum are shared, are a key part of faculty life and are held in addition to regular formal faculty meetings. It is a core aim of the English faculty at St Martin's that all meetings focus on teaching and learning strategies, assessment for learning and sharing good practice. Good practice and teaching resources are also shared enthusiastically at a more informal level on a day-to-day basis by all the members of this close-knit, highly supportive and professional team. NQT's will be supported by a formal mentor with designated development/ mentoring time. Other new staff are supported through a more informal "buddy" system.

It is the policy of the faculty to extend and develop its team members' teaching repertoire across the full range of age, ability and syllabuses and this will usually include delivery of A Level English Literature, A Level English Language or A Level Media Studies as well as key stage 3 and key stage 4 English.

We have always been keen to broaden and enrich our practice and teachers are encouraged to develop new strategies and resources, both individually and collaboratively. A central database of schemes of work, lesson plans and resources is maintained and developed for use with all key stages as appropriate. A wide range of linguistic, visual, kinaesthetic, musical, intrapersonal and interpersonal teaching and learning strategies is employed and involvement in local and national groups concerned with the development of English teaching ensures the faculty remains forward-looking and in-touch with best practice elsewhere in education. Our most recent Ofsted inspection (June 2013) observed that progress and achievement in English is "Outstanding" and in July 2014 we hosted and led a county-wide "Excellence in English" conference.

Syllabuses and schemes of work at all key stages are clearly structured and flexible, allowing dedicated teachers scope to work imaginatively within a highly supportive framework. Expectations of student achievement are high and results at all key stages are excellent. Students are taught in banded groups at Key Stage 3 and in sets at Key Stage 4. In order to increase the pace of teaching and learning and strengthen the transition from Key Stage 3 to 4, the Key Stage 3 English programmes of study are delivered in years 7 and 8 and GCSE English Language and Literature courses begin in September of year 9 for all students.

All our current year 11 students are taking the AQA GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature courses. In 2015, 87% of students achieved grades A*-C in GCSE English and 86% in GCSE English Literature, with 23%/23% respectively achieving A*-A grades. The faculty also delivers successful GCSE Media courses at Key Stage 4.

English is a very popular choice at Key Stage 5. English Literature and English Language are taught as discrete qualifications with a total of 6 groups in each of years 12 and 13. Students undertake the Edexcel English Literature A Level and the Edexcel English Language A Level courses and A*-B pass rates in both courses are usually between 60% and 70%. Media Studies is also very popular with 2 groups in each year of the sixth form, and, as a year 12/13 enrichment course, a group of sixth form students are taking the new AS in Creative Writing offered by AQA.

Extra-curricular activities such as theatre visits, public speaking and writers' workshops are seen as being very much an integral part of the life of the faculty. A gifted and talented programme has delivered AS English Language to year 9 and 10 students, while a handwriting "club" supports students who have difficulty in this area on entry to St Martin's in year 7.

Effective intervention and support of literacy are also delivered through programmes which include timetabled and out-of-school hours 1 to 1 tuition, small-group exam-focussed sessions, individual daily reading support for weaker readers, additional GCSE and A Level revision lessons, "Accelerated Reader" and "DEAR".

The successful candidate will be joining a team which is held in very high regard by students, parents and staff, and will contribute to a working environment which fosters and rewards innovation, collaboration, professionalism and a passion for the teaching and learning of English in the 21st century.

T S Dearmer
Head of English Faculty

<p>The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding our students against radicalisation and extremism and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.</p>
