

Ladybridge High School

Welcome to the English Department

*“Ladybridge is a good school with outstanding Leadership and Management”
Ofsted February 2017*

The English Department at Ladybridge High is a strong and well-resourced team who are committed to working together, and supporting one another, in order to achieve our common purpose of ensuring all students make excellent progress in their reading, writing, and communication skills. We have ten experienced teachers that make up the team, including two Lead Practitioners and one Assistant Learning Director of English, all led by the Learning Director for English. We also have a Library Manager who we work with very closely.

The aim of the English department at Ladybridge High is to ensure that all our students become critical readers and sophisticated writers; that they are able to communicate effectively in all situations, with an understanding and appreciation of the world, and their role in it, through the study of literature. We have a strong focus on teaching skills through texts, and are constantly looking to widen the range and challenge of the materials we give to our students. We are also strong advocates of the importance of good grammar knowledge and use, and have recently been engaged in a programme of departmental professional development in order to increase our own skills in this area.

The department is committed to the ongoing improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in English, and we are constantly looking for innovative strategies and resources that we can use to increase student engagement and progress. Our Lead Practitioners live up to their titles by actively seeking out and disseminating new ideas and developing new approaches, whilst the rest of the team routinely develop and share their own bespoke resources and materials. We are active users of new technology and social media, both for exploring new ideas in teaching and learning, and for engaging students, such as through our VLE, GCSE Pod and our Twitter account @LBHSEnglish.

In Years 7 & 8, students are organised into two equal bands within which they are then placed into classes of varied size, depending on need. Students are placed in mixed ability groupings, in addition to our small EAL and literacy support classes. Students are taught for four periods per week. In Years 10-11, students are all taught in one band, which sees the very brightest set into an ‘acceleration’ set, with the rest of the cohort placed in mixed ability groups. They are taught English for five periods a week. For year 9, we are currently teaching the two qualifications separately, with three periods per week each for Literature and Language. These are taught by different teachers.

Our KS3 Curriculum is taught in termly modules, which incorporate aspects of reading, writing and spoken language, all developed through a core reading text and supplementary anthology. There is a keen focus on creativity and engagement but with the GCSE Assessment Objectives running through to ensure cohesion with, and readiness for, GCSE programmes of study.

There is an increasingly strong focus on the quality of assessment and its role in supporting students' progress, and we have in place a robust and forward thinking bespoke assessment package to support teachers' judgements and students' development.

Whilst we are very proud of the work we have done on redeveloping our KS3 Curriculum, and strongly believe we are on the right path to having a world class provision for our young people, we are quite clear that there is much work still to be done on refining and resourcing our package, and on developing innovative and engaging strategies for teaching and learning; we will be looking for our newly appointed practitioner to actively contribute to these developments and we are looking forward to being able to gather new ideas to add to our plans. This post represents an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, imaginative and creative teacher of English to join the team at a time of development, and be able to play a part in building a curriculum that is the best of its kind.

At GCSE, all students follow the new AQA specifications for both Language and Literature, with the intention being that as many students as possible will be entered for both GCSEs. Like all centres, we are currently responding to the challenges of national changes in GCSE assessment, considering how we can foster resilience in our students and good study habits that will ensure they are successful in examination, and this is a key focus for our development work at KS4.

We are committed to offering students a variety of extra-curricular activities and consider this a growing strength of the department. Recent events have included theatre trips, Easter GCSE revision workshops (attended by over 100 students), an English and Maths weekend revision residential, revision sessions at Bolton Arena and many other competitions and activities.

This is a key department in a popular, thriving, and constantly improving school, truly comprehensive in the range of its abilities, but with a strong sense of identity. Whilst our work demands energy and commitment, there are many rewards for teachers willing to contribute to the next exciting phase of our development.

We look forward to welcoming you into our team!