**English Department**

**Who are we?**

The English department at Buile Hill Visual Arts College is a supportive, aspirational and committed team. At our heart lies good and outstanding teaching that produces excellent outcomes for our students. Across both qualifications, 63% achieved a minimum of a Grade 4 in Language or Literature in 2018, an increase on last year’s total. The individual results were 53% Grades 4-9 in English Language and 56% Grades 4-9 in English Literature. Grade 5s in English Language increased by 10% to 39% in 2018, a pleasing increase and testament to the focus on high expectations in teaching and learning within the department. This is an excellent platform for us to move forward from, with the potential to make significant advances in outcomes for our pupils.

Currently there are 7 full time specialist teachers and a salaried trainee. The department is a mixture of experienced and recently qualified teachers, with a new head of department who is looking to capitalise on the developments that have been made in recent years. This is an exciting time for the English department, as we sustain more consistency and develop our curriculum to meet the needs of our pupils. As a team we have significant capacity to become outstanding. This post will give an experienced subject specialist the opportunity to support the strategic direction of this department, helping to enhance our successes going forward. We work closely with The Tutor Trust and have our own specialist TA, who leads on a range of intervention strategies.

Within the English department we benefit from having our own classrooms each with an interactive whiteboard and the use of a departmental set of laptops. In addition, there is a comprehensive literacy programme coordinated at a whole school level. The outstanding resources within our faculty demonstrate the drive within our school to improve the literacy skills of our students and to ensure that they have the best opportunities in life.

All students at Key Stage 3 receive 4 hours of English per week and at Key Stage 4 they receive 5 hours per week. Every student at Key Stage 4 studies English Language and Literature, with our current Year 10s following the AQA Language course and the AQA English Literature qualification. Our passion lies in collaboration, with members of the team planning and marking together, sharing resources and good practice.

**What are we good at?**

Our department includes a range of dedicated, specialist staff that have developed the collaborative climate that has enabled teaching standards to improve in recent years. In a recent faculty review led by an external consultant we were identified as ‘good’ under the current Ofsted framework in all areas. In our lessons the teacher-student relationships have been identified as a strength, as they are good and mutually respectful. Planning and questioning for progress has improved within the department. In the best lessons, questioning checks understanding and supports progress through challenge and developing responses. The use of 1-2-1 intervention and the weekly extended day session for Year 11s has enabled our most vulnerable students to make good progress. Recently, we have put an emphasis on developing pupils’ experiences through enrichment, trips and bringing more visitors into the school. A key passion of ours is developing oracy and helping pupils to understand the importance of vocabulary.

**What do we want to develop?**

Our key priority is to develop the outcomes for students within both English Language and English Literature at Key Stage 4, through a structured and challenging curriculum, beginning at Key Stage 3. We believe that all pupils will benefit from being stretched and challenged, in a supportive and consistent environment. There is an opportunity to make significant improvements to our pupils’ progress, with a particular priority of ensuring that we are serving learners of all abilities and backgrounds. We are excited about bringing new ideas into teaching, as well as new strategies which aim to stretch pupils to the very top of the new GCSE grades. Within our lessons we are focusing on developing student response to marking, with the marking dialogue becoming an integral part of our learning and teaching. As a team we are developing the curriculum to ensure standards are maintained and increased as we move into our second year of the new GCSE Specification. The English department is a passionate, collaborative and student-centered team looking forward to welcoming a hard-working team player next year.