

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

### Introduction

The English Department has developed rapidly over the last few years. The department comprises a strong and committed team of teachers who plan activities collaboratively. Teachers have high expectations, and work well together to create an atmosphere in which all students can fulfil their potential. It has supported students in achieving strong English GCSE results, despite the recent increased rigour. In 2018 the percentage of students achieving at least a grade 4 was 79%.

Value added scores for A Level English Literature, as judged by ALPS, have been on an upward trajectory, and forecasts for this summer are positive. A Level English Language is now in its third year, our 2019 results resulted in an ALPS grade of 2.

### Staff and Accommodation

The department is made up of fourteen specialist English teachers, many with additional roles. We have two Literacy Coordinators who work to raise the profile of literacy and reading outside of the department, and organise whole-school events. Likewise, one of the High Achieving Students Coordinators is a member of the Department, and we are fully committed to challenging our most-able students in all that we do.

The department is currently organised on a traditional model of separate Key Stage Coordinators; there are three post holders in addition to the Leader of Learning for English. The Key Stage coordinators work with their teams to develop and to build on good practice and they take a major role in working with the Head of Department to shape the development of faculty practice. All members of staff teach across the age and ability range. Individual teachers are expected to develop and contribute to the resources; we share materials and ideas in order to provide the best possible experience for the students. We also work to curriculum plans that are discussed by the whole faculty before they are set in place. We embrace a collegiate approach to planning and development, and are a forward-thinking department.

There are six specialist rooms in Key Stage 3, each one being the responsibility of the teacher who has the most teaching in that room. In Key Stage 4 we also have five specialist rooms, and one room which is allocated to A-Level teaching. There are IT rooms on both sites which can be booked for department use. There are also laptops that can be booked and taken into classrooms. Most of the English rooms at Key Stage 3 are equipped with interactive whiteboards and there are currently two in classrooms at Imberhorne Lane. We use the library with our classes one lesson every two weeks.

### Curriculum

Key Stage 3 has undergone a period of transition, with development and remodelling of our KS3 curriculum in order to prepare our students for the rigour and demands of GCSE. As such, students follow more thematic units that are designed to allow students to make links across texts and evaluate literature more holistically. We are mindful of the changes that will be required in our teaching practise, so schemes of work and resources have been developed to support teachers. These can be developed and adapted, with extra differentiation for individual students.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum starts in Year 10, with all students studying for both the AQA 1-9 in Literature and Language. In Years 10 and 11, as well as throughout Key Stage 3, English is taught in mixed

ability classes. Work is differentiated so that all students can achieve their potential, and we find that students enjoy being taught in a mixed-ability setting.

At Key Stage 5 students follow a two-year A Level, with both AQA English Language and AQA English Literature offered. There is also one small class of students who have not achieved a pass at GCSE. English is a popular subject at Key Stage 5, and we often have more than one class of Literature. English Language is a new course at Imberhorne, but already the student interest has doubled since our first year. The Key Stage 5 team is dedicated to engendering a love of the subject, and a range of extra-curricular activities are offered to enhance students' experience of English.

The use of data to track the progress of students is a key part of our practice and the Key Stage coordinators will have access to the information about all the students in the key stage for which they are responsible. This provides an effective way for us to target support. We have worked closely with Mark Conroy, one of the deputy heads, to provide intervention for different groups of targeted students, using data and feedback from class teachers. We have been particularly concerned with offering opportunities to Pupil Premium students and to students who are vulnerable in one way or another.

### **Extra-curricular**

We have popular reading clubs at Key Stage 3. Most teachers offer extra support to exam classes in after-school or lunchtime sessions. Whilst this is voluntary, the sessions are widely supported in the department. Liaison with primary schools is very strong and we have a KS2 liaison teacher who invites students in to school, as well as takes students to visit their old schools. Throughout the year we invite local book sellers, acting groups and poets to perform to students, as well as organise evening theatre trips for interested students.

CPD opportunities are extensive for members of the department, with teachers attending various courses throughout the year to enhance their professional development. Collaboration within the team after a course is encouraged within the department CPD.