

SHIRLEY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS COLLEGE



INFORMATION ABOUT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Department Aims/Philosophy

The English Department's core business is to arm students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve success in communicating effectively, both in writing and in speaking; and therefore to meet the expectations of the Curriculum. We want students to be able to achieve to the best of their ability in this vital subject. To that end it is central to our aims that we foster a love of reading in all our students. To read is to know, to understand, to think and feel. We believe in the central importance of English as a vehicle for student success in life for both their careers, and as decent, thoughtful citizens.

Department information:

The English department is staffed by 7 full time teachers and 1 part time teacher, who work across English and Media.

The English Department works to an agreed Curriculum Assessment Map for each year group, setting common assessment tasks. The Maps reflect the recent changes in the curriculum and explicitly map learning from year 7 to year 13. Teachers use the Map to plan for their classes and for individual student needs. Moderation occurs regularly to ensure parity and accountability across all classes. The Department works as a team, where everyone is expected to share in ideas, tasks and decision making to meet the continuing demands placed upon the core subject of English. Every member of the Department teaches across the age and ability range. Classes in year 7 and 8 are currently in mixed ability groups. Classes from Year 9 to Year 11 are set according to ability.

KS3

In English we teach engaging and challenging KS3 units covering: Drama, Prose, Poetry, as well as 19th century fiction and Shakespeare. Year 9 is used as a preparation for GCSE with increased focus on preparing students for 100% external exams. Thus many assessment tasks are held under exam conditions. KS3 units clearly articulate into the new GCSE units of work for both Literature and Language.

KS4

All students at GCSE level follow AQA for both Language and Literature. In accordance with the changes in curriculum and assessment we offer a programme of study that prepares students for the new rigorous exams, offering the following texts for Literature: Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, An Inspector Calls, Shakespeare and a cluster of poems from the AQA anthology. Literature and Language are taught alongside each other and students are continuously and regularly assessed under exam conditions, and have the experience of several Mock exams before their final 100% external exam assessment in May/June of year 11. English Language and Literature are no longer tiered: all students sit the same exams.

KS5

At AS and A2 we offer both English Literature and English Language, both through AQA. Both subjects are rigorous but offer very different challenging experiences for the more able student. A love of reading and an interest in debating and expressing oneself clearly and effectively in both writing and discussion is essential for success at English at KS5 level. The study of English at KS5 is a wonderful preparation for many careers, as well as higher education.