

English in Futures October 2024

Introduction

In a nutshell, this document aims to give an overview of the 'What, why, when, who and how' of English Teaching at our school.

Firstly, it is worth stating that this document is informed by the OFSTED document 23/05/2022 'Research review series: English'

Here are some key points taken from OFSTED's 'Research review series: English' that inform this Statement of Intent for English at our school:

- Teachers model spoken language for pupils. This includes language that pupils might not encounter away from school.
- The curriculum provides frequent opportunities for pupils to practise, refine and apply their spoken language knowledge and skills
- The reading curriculum enables pupils to read increasingly complex and whole texts.
- Time is given to pupils reading a lot of text, across the school curriculum, to develop their reading fluency.
- Knowledge necessary for comprehension is taught explicitly and includes vocabulary, knowledge of narrative structure, lexical and syntactical knowledge, as well as knowledge of context and ideas in the text.
- Pupils write frequently for a range of audiences and purposes
- Teachers teach older pupils to master the components of how to plan, draft, revise and edit their writing.
- Teaching does not rely on differentiated teaching, activities or resources to achieve a curriculum goal.
- Struggling pupils have more opportunities for repetition where necessary. This can secure essential knowledge to automaticity.
- The curriculum has been designed to develop in pupils a genuine love of literature, and an ability to respond to texts personally.
- The curriculum includes ambitious whole texts in different forms and genres, which have been carefully chosen using subject-specific criteria.
- Teachers introduce pupils to texts that they would not choose to read for themselves, especially from other times and places and with a range of perspectives.
- Feedback to pupils is specific and provides them with a 'recipe for future action'.
- Regular, subject-specific CPD focuses on improving disciplinary and pedagogical content knowledge.

In addition, 'Research review series: English' makes the following point which is key to the delivery of English at our school.

'Alternatives to written feedback and marking

Written feedback can be time-consuming for teachers. There is also a risk that the pupils might not read feedback, or that they might not be able to understand it or act on it independently.

Oral feedback is an effective alternative. For example, the teacher might note gaps or common errors in pupils' work and then give feedback to the whole class. Models of excellent work can form a basis for feedback, particularly when a teacher highlights the successful aspects. Research suggests that worked examples can be effective when pupils face a complex task, reducing the cognitive load for them.'

The above points, taken from 'Research review series: English' published by OFSTED in May 2022, dovetail well with our vision for the English Curriculum at our school which is outlined below.

Our cohort:

Pupils arrive to us in Year 10 or 11; some having completed a degree of preparatory work in English Literature with the Outreach Service or The Thomas Group. Those arriving early in year 10 may join the GCSE Group for part of their studies or receive tailored work with the support of TAs until the end of the first summer half term. From the end of the summer GCSE exams the year 10 group begin their GCSE studies in the second half of the summer term with Romeo and Juliet in class.

Year 11 students follow the GCSE Programme or Step Up to English ELC according to their skill level. **Some will elect to drop English Literature GCSE at Christmas but it is important they follow the course until then because it provides invaluable cultural capital and also the skills learned in the study of English Literature texts will prepare them for the English Language exam.**

Our cohort has typically missed a good deal of mainstream school, sometimes several years, through physical or mental ill health.

Working method:

The overarching aim is that during a lesson there is a minimum of teacher talk (usually only to introduce the lesson) and then students read, write or discuss for the vast majority of the lesson time. When engaged in these activities the teacher moves from pupil to pupil to discuss their written work in real time and to ensure they are given the individual help and guidance that they require in particular alternately **if the student is using a laptop to write then the teacher uses the Google Drive system to remotely monitor and observe their writing and give feedback from the teacher's laptop.** Because pupils will have missed a

good deal of Key Stage 3 every student will require personal guidance in their writing especially tailored to their individual needs, which is why a sequence of lessons typically consists of an introduction followed by bespoke tutoring/coaching as required. Most students work on laptops in class, at home and in exams.

All GCSE tasks are posted online using Google Classroom in the English stream so that students who miss lessons can access them later at school or from home.

The main aim of the course apart from exam success is to teach young people how to write an essay as this will empower them for later studies. A lot of time is spent in class on the process of writing essays with the early stages consisting of highly scaffolded work, in the medium term the scaffolding is reduced and in the final pre-exam work students compose essays independently.

Feedback:

In addition to written feedback a substantial amount of verbal feedback and verbally delivered targets are given to students on an individual basis, in real time, in each class; this verbal interaction is not evidenced in writing, but can be reported by students.

Feedback is enhanced by using AI systems to give detailed feedback on how they might improve their work. All AI feedback is carefully scrutinised by the teacher before being passed on to students.

Students are furnished with a report on their progress and targets 3 times a year, and also feedback on the grade they are working at 6 times a year at the end of each half term.

Term by term:

The GCSE programme: The GCSEs may begin, for some, in the second half term of the summer term of Year 10 as described above. For the rest of the cohort, it begins in September of Year 11 and lasts through to the end of the exams in May/June of the following year. The programme is challenging because many students effectively study and take two GCSE's in English in two and a half terms.

Pupils are encouraged to take both AQA English Language and AQA English Literature GCSE. See appendix 1.

In the Autumn term pupils study An Inspector Calls for the first half term, and A Christmas Carol for the second half term. Because we guide pupils through both English Literature and English Language in two and a half terms (which normally takes two years in mainstream) the whole course can only be covered if pupils study units outside of school, during the evenings and weekends. In order to do this, we support pupils with homework reviews and deadlines for the work they need to cover at home. The work that is covered outside of school are the poems from the AQA Poetry Anthology (Love and Relationships) and a Shakespeare play, usually Romeo and Juliet or Macbeth (many have studied a Shakespeare

play previously in their home schools-it is an advantage in the exam if they have); Students are directed towards online resources to carry out their study outside of school e.g. Mr Bruff or Mr Salles You Tube videos, and SENECA learning; in addition, pupils are provided with copies of the texts and CGP study books to take home. Also a specified shared drive has been created for students with powerpoints created to help students in their study of the poems required in the English Literature exam..

The skills taught/revisited/revised in the study of English Literature in the autumn term also provide the foundation for the study for the English Language GCSE after Christmas in the Spring Term.

In the spring term pupils are given a plan of the topics to be studied in class week by week and the homework to be completed (see appendix 2). This plan is mainly designed for their English Language in class and also to continue to prepare them for English Literature though homework.

In the weeks immediately before and after Easter, students engage in mock exams in English Literature and Language; they receive detailed feedback and guidance as a result of taking these mocks. Personalised revision and practice questions are then conducted until the exams themselves in May/June.

Attainment:

I wrote above that our pupils will typically require individual support with development of their skills through non-attendance at school in Key Stage 3. I have listed these skills below as Skill Groups A, B and C.

The Skill Group A, I describe as elementary, B as intermediate and C as the more advanced.

WRITING SKILL GROUPS

A

- Communication is simple
- There is a simple attempt to match purpose, form and audience and register
- There is a simple use of vocabulary with simple linguistic /structural devices
- There are one or two relevant ideas, simply linked
- There may be some use of paragraphs
- There is evidence of conscious punctuation
- There is a simple range of sentence forms
- There is accurate basic spelling
- There is simple use of vocabulary

B

- Communication is sometimes successful
- There is some sustained attempt to match purpose, form and audience and register
- There is conscious use of vocabulary with some linguistic /structural devices
- There are an increasing variety of linked and relevant ideas
- There is some use of paragraphs and some use of discourse markers

- There is mostly secure and sometimes accurate use of sentence demarcation.
- There is some control of a range of punctuation
- There is an attempt to vary sentence forms
- There is some use of Standard English with some control of subject / verb agreement
- There is accurate spelling of more complex words
- There is varied use of vocabulary

C

- Communication is clear
- Tone, style and register are generally matched to purpose, form and audience
- Vocabulary is clearly chosen for effect and there is the successful use of linguistic devices
- Writing is engaging with a range of connected ideas
- There are coherent paragraphs with a range of discourse markers
- There is usually an effective use of structural features
- Sentence demarcation is secure and accurate
- A range of punctuation is used, mostly with success
- A variety of sentence forms are used for effect
- Standard English is used appropriately with mostly controlled grammatical structures

READING SKILL GROUPS

A

- Show simple understanding of how writers use language / structural features
- Make simple comment on the effect of choices made by the writer
- Select simple references/ examples or textual details
- Make simple use subject terminology
- Make simple identification of writers' methods
- Write responses which include simple focus on the task or statement
- Make simple cross reference of ideas and perspectives of texts

B

- Attempt to comment on how writers use language / structural features.
- Show some understanding of the effect of choices made by the writer
- Select some appropriate references/ examples or textual details
- Make some use of subject terminology, mainly appropriately
- Show some understanding of and make some comment on writers' methods
- Write responses which show some focus on the task or statement
- Attempt to compare ideas and perspectives of texts

C

- Show a clear understanding of how writers use language / structural features
- Select a range of relevant textual detail, quotations / examples
- Offer evaluation and examples from texts to explain views clearly

- Clearly explain the effects of the writer's choices of language / structural features
- Use subject terminology accurately
- Write responses which show clear and relevant focus on the task or statement
- Compare ideas and perspectives of texts

SPOKEN LANGUAGE SKILL GROUPS

A

- Identify and extract information in straightforward explanations
- Make requests and ask questions using appropriate language
- Communicate information and opinions clearly
- Respond appropriately to questions
- Follow the main points of discussions
- Make contributions to group discussions
- Listen and respond appropriately to other points of view.

B

- Identify and extract relevant information in straightforward explanations
- Make requests and ask concise questions using appropriate language
- Communicate information and opinions clearly on a range of topics
- Respond appropriately to questions
- Follow and understand the main points of discussions
- Make relevant contributions to group discussions
- Listen and respond appropriately to other points of view, respecting conventions of turn-taking.

C

- Identify relevant information and lines of argument in explanations or presentations
- Make requests and ask relevant questions to obtain specific information in different contexts
- Respond effectively to detailed questions
- Communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly and accurately on a range of topics
- Express opinions and arguments and support them with evidence
- Follow and understand discussions and make contributions relevant to the situation and the subject
- Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium.
- Respect the turn-taking rights of others during discussions, using appropriate language for interjection.

Generally, students who are in the skill level A groups and below, will be entered for Step Up to English ELC and possibly GCSE English Language; those in skill groups level B or C will be entered for GCSE English Language and usually English Literature.

All students will spend some time each week building up word study/grammar and comprehension using the Lexia PowerUp programme (see appendix 3). Students who are predominately in skill group A above, will spend a significant time each week using the programme, often with one to one support from a teaching assistant.

Functional Skills is an option that is rarely appropriate for our pupils but it is always considered before deciding which qualifications pupils will be entered for.

It is an aim that pupils make progress within individual skill strands within skill groups A, B and C whilst they are with us. This is achieved through the individual teaching/coaching that students receive during lessons.

In order to speed up the initial assessment and the subsequent individual teaching/tutoring/coaching process, pupils are asked to complete a google form survey on entry to year 11 which helps to identify gaps in their knowledge. This survey is taken again at Christmas to see what progress has been made and where individual emphasis needs to go in the spring term. Finally the survey is taken again near the end of the course to assess how effective the teaching has been, and what weaknesses remain to be addressed in their final run up to the exams. **During the course the initial assessment is used in individual tutorial sessions so that pupils can be taught bespoke skills and self-assess their progress according to need.** Assessment of progress in individual skill strands is also carried out by the teacher through questioning, verbally given targets, and teacher observation of pupils' work throughout the course.

Spoken language is developed through class and individual discussions and also through the Spoken Language components of English Language GCSE and Step Up to English. Our SALT therapist is also on call to help students with this aspect of their English work.

In addition to seeking to rapidly restore/teach, writing/reading/speaking skills through individual teaching/coaching, our pupils taking GCSE are also specifically taught to construct PEE paragraphs (what / how / why questioning processes) to build upon their reading skills and begin to build understanding of this as a means of analysis. They will infer and deduce information from texts. GCSE students are also taught how to construct a thesis for an English Literature essay and further structure their written responses with the correct use of paragraphing and topic sentences.

Interacting with students:

It is an intent of the delivery of the English Curriculum at our school that the teacher is sensitive to the needs of our students who typically experience EBSA, anxiety or may be recovering from an eating disorder or another condition. Therefore, the timing, delivery

and nature of feedback, whilst being realistic, is given with a view to maximising a pupil's growth in confidence, both within the subject and within themselves. This means that when giving feedback, the timing, content and nature may vary from pupil to pupil according to their individual psychological needs at any given moment in time. It is important to build a student's confidence so they are able to attempt the more challenging parts of the course. In this regard every student is different.

Safeguarding

Sometimes there can be subject matter that our students may find distressing (given our knowledge of their backgrounds) in such circumstances the class will be given a 'trigger warning' with the option to sit out of the class.

Appendix 1

The GCSE EXAMS

English Language

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing. (1hr 45mins – 50%)

Section A (Reading)

Students read one unseen extract from a piece of 20th or 21st century fiction and answer 4 questions on the skills of:

- Retrieval
- Language Analysis
- Structure
- Evaluation

Section B (Writing)

Students create a piece of creative writing, such as a description or a narrative piece.

Paper 2: Writer's Viewpoints and Perspectives. (1hr 45mins – 50%)

Section A (Reading)

Students read two unseen non-fiction extracts, one from either the 20th or 21st century, and one from the 19th century. They then answer 4 questions:

- Comprehension
- Summary & Comparison
- Language
- Comparison (Writer's attitudes)

Section B (Writing)

Students create a piece of non-fiction writing, such as a newspaper article, letter or feature article.

English Literature

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (1hr 45mins – 40%)

- Section A (Shakespeare) Students write a character or thematic study, beginning with an extract and widening their discussion out to the rest of the play.
- Section B (A Christmas Carol) Students write a character study or thematic study, beginning with an extract and widening their discussion out to the rest of the novel.

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry (2hr 15mins – 60%)

- Section A (An Inspector Calls) Students write either a character study or thematic study, form a choice of two questions, exploring the dramatic effects of the play.
- Section B (Love and Relationships Poetry) Students write a comparison of two poems they have studied in class.
- Section C (Unseen Poetry) Students write a response to one unseen poem before adding a short comparison to a second unseen poem.

Spoken Language

As part of the GCSE course students will be assessed on their ability to communicate through spoken language. This part of the course does not count towards the overall GCSE grade but is certified separately as a 'Spoken Language Endorsement' (graded pass, merit or distinction). Each student must deliver a speech and will be assessed on their ability to present information, listen and respond to others and communicate through Standard English.

APPENDIX 2

Example of a spring term plan for class and homework, issued to students.

Week beginning	Contents of lessons for the week in class	Homework
3/1/24	Revise Inspector Calls Thursday MOCK EXAM on Inspector Calls	Revise Shakespeare play and answer past paper exam questions on same play. Ensure you have covered all 15 Love and Relationship Poems or Christmas carol.
10/1/24	Unseen Poem English Lit Exam Prep	
17/1/24	Unseen Poetry Comparison Preparation Thursday MOCK EXAM Unseen Poem, and Poetry Comparison	
24/1/24	English Language Paper 1 Walk through and practise	
31/1/24	English Language Paper 1 Walk through and practise	
7/2/24	English Language Paper 1 Walk through and practise including introducing Q5	Q5 Language Paper 1
14/2/24	HALF TERM HOLIDAY- Q5 Language Paper 1	
22/2/24	English Language Paper 2 Walk through and practise	Q5 Language Paper 2
28/2/24	English Language Paper 2 Walk through and practise Thursday PM session with Jen	
7/3/24	English Language Paper 2 Walk through and practise	English Literature: Revise and answer question on Christmas carol or Love and Relationships. Spoken Language Presentation
14/3/24	English Language Paper 1-Question 5 Mini Mock	

22/3/24	English Language Paper 2 -Question 5 Mini Mock	English Literature: Revise and answer question on Shakespeare. Spoken Language Presentation
28/3/24	Opportunity to present Spoken Language Presentation Revise and take MOCK English Paper 1 Mock Thursday PM session with Jen	
4/4/24	EASTER HOLIDAY- REVISE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 1	
11/4/24	EASTER HOLIDAY- REVISE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPER 2	
18/4/24	Opportunity to present Spoken Language Presentation MIND MAPS Revise and take MOCK EXAM English Language Paper 2	Revise and answer question on Unseen Poetry. Spoken Language Presentation
25/4/24	Opportunity to present Spoken Language Presentation Revise and take MOCK EXAM English Literature Paper 1	
2/5/24	Final opportunity to present Spoken Language Presentation Revise and take MOCK EXAM English Literature Paper 2	Revision and Past papers as required
9/5/24	Practise issues arising from Mocks	
16/5/24	Revision: English Language Paper 1 Preparation English Lang Paper 1 EXAM 18th May am	
23/5/24	Revision English Lit Paper 1 Inspector Calls or Lord of the Flies and Love and Relationships Poetry or Christmas Carol English Lit Paper 1 25th May am	
30/5/24	Half Term Holiday. Revision.	
6/6/2024	English Lit Paper 2 Shakespeare and unseen poetry EXAM 8th June am English Language Paper 2 EXAM 10th of June am	Revision and Past papers as required
13/6/2024	Revise GCSE subjects as required.	
20/6/2024	English Literature Paper 2 EXAM 22nd of June am	

APPENDIX 3

What is Lexia PowerUp Literacy?

PowerUp is a computer-based program that adapts instruction to the specific needs of adolescent learners.

The activities in PowerUp support and build on your school's English Language Arts curriculum, focusing on developing reading skills in three areas: word study, grammar, and comprehension.

- Students begin at a point in each area of the program that is right for them, based on the results of a brief set of placement activities.
- Each week, students get a weekly goal of 75–135 minutes each week. Total time includes 25–45 minutes in each of the three areas of the program (Word Study, Grammar, and Comprehension). This weekly goal decreases over time as students make progress. Students can see their weekly goal in the student dashboard.
- Online activities include direct instruction and immediate feedback as your student learns new skills.
- Progress and performance in the program are reported directly to teachers so that they can provide assistance when needed.
- Paper-and-pencil and hands-on activities are used for practicing and extending skills.

What skills does PowerUp teach my learner?

PowerUp uses a structured and systematic approach to filling in skill gaps for adolescent learners. The program is broken up into three main skill areas, since students may have different needs in each.

- **Word Study** — Students develop reading accuracy and fluency by focusing on sound and syllable patterns in words.
- **Grammar** — Students learn how written language works in order to improve their writing and reading comprehension. They learn how parts of speech function in sentences and how sentence parts convey meaning.
- **Comprehension** — Students learn skills & strategies to become independent and strategic readers. Passages include original and authentic texts of multiple genres including informational texts, narratives, drama, and poetry.