



# Queen Elizabeth's

— ACADEMY —

## Curriculum Rationale

### English



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Part of  
Diverse Academies

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham

## **Introduction**

The English department strives to impart and promote a love of language and literature within our students. We aim to develop students' ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of contexts; to enable pupils to use accurate Standard English and develop an interest in the richness of the English language in its various forms. We teach the mechanics of reading, writing, speaking and listening, but also believe teaching of English should provide students with the skills and abilities to express themselves via both the written and spoken word, and that they are equipped with an extensive vocabulary (explicitly modelling tier two and three vocabulary) in order to communicate fluently and effectively with others in varied situations.

The study of English Language and Literature helps students to explore and analyse some of life's big questions. It is about history, culture, and the human experience. By exploring an interesting range of texts students are encouraged to form opinions and express them confidently. Students are encouraged to investigate, question and reflect on our three overarching themes: power, morality and motivation. The knowledge rich curriculum helps students to engage in debate and form diplomatic responses to a wide variety of issues. We encourage students to clearly and confidently 'answer like a scholar'.

We strive to give pupils the opportunity to study challenging and ambitious texts celebrated within our literary heritage. Above all else we provide a curriculum which offers a rich and diverse range of learning experiences enabling all pupils to enjoy and achieve. Confidence in literacy and oracy have a direct impact on self-esteem, motivation, resourcefulness and independent learning. Our curriculum is designed to challenge all students regardless of background and ability and to instil in them a love of learning and the expectation of success

## **Christian Distinctiveness**

In the English and Media Faculty we promote our nine Core Values by promoting and modelling high standards of expected behaviour such as greeting students at the door (Politeness), English teachers taking pleasure in and demonstrating enthusiasm for their subject (Joy Matters) etc.

We sign-post how the core values can be explicitly applied to our lessons with the inclusion of visual prompts to our lesson slides which encourage discussion and allow students to see how all-encompassing these values are. This is particularly relevant to the study of Literature. For example, in the play 'Macbeth' the theme of duplicity elicit discourse around the value of Truthfulness, whilst Macbeth's bloody end prompts debate about Justice.

## **Knowledge in English Language and Literature**

The Five Year Plan has challenging literature texts at its heart. At KS3 students benefit from four lessons per week and study a range of texts from both the literary canon and modern texts more diverse in nature. In KS4 students follow the AQA curriculum and have four lessons per week. Knowledge of the context and content of texts is shared in order to enable students to critically and successfully interpret different texts. This knowledge unlocks layers of meaning which aids interpretations. For example, without knowledge of the inequalities of British society in 1912 a student could not fully explain the motivation of characters in the play 'An Inspector Calls'.

To further aid cohesion to the Five Year Plan we have a thematic approach and apply common questions to schemes of work. The areas identified are: power, religion/morality and motivation. These are designed to allow students to identify links between texts, contexts, characters and authorial intent. These questions are included in our lessons and as each student progresses through the curriculum, they are expected to know and understand more with concepts becoming increasingly complex as we teach more challenging texts. These areas provide numerous opportunities to make cross curricular links to areas of study in History and Religious Education. For example, when studying 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' we examine the context of the Victorian Era and the conflict between religion and science (Darwinism), whilst in Religious Education the scientific explanations of the origins of the universe and humanity are also examined.

Knowledge a student needs to demonstrate mastery of is identified in the areas of context, plot, characters, themes, language and form. This valuable knowledge is sequenced systematically across lessons, they are regularly tested via recall, questioning and formal assessment on whether they've understood and mastered the essential content.

### **Careers and Aspirations**

English is the fundamental building block to securing success in all aspects of education and society. It underpins progress, affects attainment and success beyond school. As a result, the importance of English cannot be over-stressed as it enables students to access further and higher education opportunities and prepares students for work in all sorts of fields. Sought after skills such as using Standard English and practical skills such as letter writing are embedded within our schemes of work.

Through English Language, we seek to provide students with the language capacity to navigate and succeed in courses of their own choosing, as well as inspiring those students who wish to pursue more language-based careers, such as writing, journalism, speech therapy, education. Through English Literature we seek to develop students' ability to think deeply about life's big questions and to discover the riches of their Literary Heritage, whilst developing the critical faculties to evaluate the ideas and the craft in these texts

We encourage our students to go on to study English at A Level and at University. Writing, publishing and journalism are popular careers for English graduates, as well as careers in the arts, advertising and marketing. Essentially, if a career involves a lot of written and verbal communication, an English graduate may well be a good fit!