



# CURRICULUM INTENT

## English

- **Challenge** lies at the heart of our curriculum. It goes beyond what is statutory or typical; students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the fundamentals of their learning at every opportunity.
- Our curriculum is fully **inclusive**. All students have access to a broad range of experiences for as long as possible, regardless of prior attainment or additional needs.
- Our curriculum is **knowledge rich**, with subject curricula designed to ensure that any 'powerful' knowledge and skills that are critical to future success are regularly re-visited.
- Our curriculum is **expertly planned** and is therefore sequenced to enable students to build their knowledge and skills towards ambitious agreed end points.
- Wherever appropriate our curriculum gives students the opportunity to **personalise** their experience, thereby facilitating enjoyment and success for all.
- The importance of reading and wider **literacy** skills is a key thread that runs through our curriculum. As well as broadening students' vocabulary, all subjects will develop students' subject-specific literacy, so they can speak, read and write as, for example, a Historian, an Artist or a Physicist.
- A carefully considered and inclusive **extra-curricular** programme supports broader and deeper understanding of the taught curriculum, as well as developing the cultural capital our young people need to be global citizens.
- Students' **personal development**, including careers education, is central to our curriculum, through all subject areas, as well as PSHE lessons, tutor time, assemblies and off-timetable activities.
- Homework and summative **assessment** tasks are strategically designed to promote the concepts of regular review and spaced practice, therefore contributing to a long-term retention of knowledge and skills.

**The English department aims to uphold academic excellence, a passion for learning, and perseverance. We aim for students to be well-rounded individuals who are prepared for life. The curriculum is therefore underpinned by the following concepts:**

### The Key Ideas

1. Past, present and future (to understand the importance of fiction and non-fiction texts from the past and present, informing the future).
2. Diversity (to understand the importance of fiction and non-fiction texts in broadening our knowledge of diversity and inclusion).
3. Communication and society (to develop skills essential to society: communicating ideas and emotions through writing and speaking; reading; listening to others with respect).

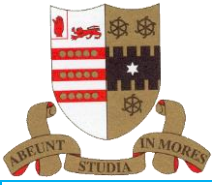
### The Key Threads

The topics throughout the English Learning Journey (Years 7 – 13) explore the following threads, which inform the key ideas:

1. Identity, Belonging and Community
2. Power, Control and Oppression
3. Viewpoints and Experiences
4. The Outsider
5. The Unknown

**Throughout the studies of topics and texts, students link their ideas to the Key Threads and wider consideration of the Key Ideas, with the aim of them understanding that the purpose of studying English is to prepare them for life and to become empathetic, respectful, tolerant individuals who can communicate successfully.**

All students, including those with additional needs, have access to the full English curriculum (both English Language and English Literature), with additional challenge generated through targeted questioning to probe and further responses. As a department, we teach to the top with high expectations and scaffold for those who require additional support. KS3 students cover all aspects of the National Curriculum, with additional exploration of texts that are challenging and typically GCSE level.



In KS4 and KS5, students are expected to engage with super-curricular materials on a fortnightly basis, which include mini-lectures and wider reading, to challenge and further their learning of examination specification content.

To ensure that the curriculum is fully accessible, teachers adapt resources and provide writing frames for those with additional needs, as well as liaising with the AEN team. As a department, we strongly believe in providing a curriculum that is inclusive in terms of diversity too. As such, across all Key Stages, schemes of work are designed to broaden students' knowledge of the world, past and present, to enhance their cultural capital. Our curriculum design therefore aims to reflect the wide range of experiences and cultural backgrounds of our students and beyond, exploring texts featuring differing cultures, genders, and ethnicities, etc.

English is a subject that continually builds upon prior learning; the curriculum is carefully designed to support students in retaining prior knowledge and skills so that they can be applied and linked to future learning. Students are supported in their long-term retention of such knowledge and skills through regular revisiting and practising. In terms of knowledge, retrieval practice takes place at the start of lessons in KS4/5, and through homework activities across all Key Stages. The various skills covered in English are built into every scheme of work from Year 7 upwards, increasing in challenge. Knowledge and skills are assessed via questioning (verbal and written) in lessons, homework tasks, and through summative assessments. Students are given time following each summative assessment to secure and further their learning from the feedback they receive. Where verbal or written work show gaps in learning, these are revisited and addressed to ensure students continue to progress.

We strive for students to not only develop their knowledge and skills in English, but to enjoy the subject too. The texts and topics covered therefore aim to not only challenge students but to develop their passion for the subject too. Elements of personalisation is therefore also provided, whether that is through choice of tasks, choice of library reading book, or choice of NEA focus for Spoken Language and coursework.

As a subject, the importance and development of literacy skills is vital. In addition to careful selection of the texts studied in each Key Stage, additional opportunities for literacy development are provided. In KS3, students have a 1-hour literacy lesson per fortnight, focused on core skills; additionally, they have a 1-hour library lesson per fortnight, whereby they follow a reading scheme. Each KS3 English lesson also starts with 5-10 minutes of independent reading to further students' literacy skills, as well as promote a love for reading. Throughout all Key Stages, students are taught subject-specific vocabulary, which is frequently used and revisited. A core part of our lessons is discussion and debate, and through this the importance of oracy skills is promoted. Students are taught how to write and give effective speeches and presentations too. Ultimately, such skills are developed to create confident readers, writers, and speakers, who are effectively prepared for their future, in school and beyond.

Extra-curricular opportunities are hugely important in developing students' knowledge and enjoyment of English beyond the curriculum. Access to such opportunities also broadens students' understanding of the range of ways English is relevant to life and careers. The department run theatre trips, poetry competitions, visits to Cheltenham Literature festival, author visits, the Carnegie award, and more. Due to the nature of the subject, students explore texts and topics that also provide links to PSHE, such as diversity, equality, relationships, and mental health.