



## English Department

The department occupies a suite of 9 classrooms. Each classroom is equipped with a state of the art Smartboard linked to a desktop computer. The desktop is linked to a classroom speaker system. There is also a standard whiteboard in each room. The department has a set of portable netbooks available to staff on a booking basis. The department share resources and work collaboratively to produce comprehensive SOWs at each key stage.

The English Department is made up of a team of enthusiastic teachers who aim to give their students the best possible experience in Language and Literature. There are currently 14 members of staff in the department – 9 are full time and 5 are part time. There is a Head of Department and two Deputy Heads of Department. 1 member of the department is a Pastoral Leader, 1 is a Teaching and Learning Coordinator and 1 member is on the Senior Leadership Team. As a teaching school, St Mary's hosts many ITT students on PGCE and Schools Direct routes, and the department values the opportunity to nurture trainee teachers through this work.



English  
Department

**Aerial model of the school**

English is a thriving and successful department and achievement is strong at all key stages. Recent highlights include:-

### Key Stage 5

- 100% pass rate in A Level Language and A Level Literature over the last 3 years.
- 100% A\* - C in A Level courses offered by the department in 2018 and 2019.

- In English Language A level in 2019, an extraordinary 70% of students achieved A\*-A, whilst in English Literature this figure was 63%.

#### Key Stage 4

- 90% of pupils achieved grade 4 and above in the challenging new specifications in English Language and Literature in 2019, and 41% achieved a grade 7 or above.
- Consistently outstanding Progress scores in English, averaging +0.57 over the past 3 years.

#### Key Stage 3

- Key Stage 3 is exceptionally strong too, with very able cohorts coming through.
- Leadership, teaching and the climate for learning in English are all strong.
- An excellent curriculum is in place.

The English Department also offers a vibrant programme of activities outside of lessons that students can get involved in. There is a well-attended creative writing club offered to KS3 and the department regularly works with the school librarian, organising author visits and participation in the North East Teenage Book Awards. Enrichment activities such as theatre visits and study sessions are also arranged regularly.

#### **Setting Arrangements**

In Year 7 students are set using a mixture of Key Stage 2 data from feeder primary schools as well as CAT scores taken in the first term. For the Key Stage 3 course the students are grouped by ability across split bands.

For the GCSE programmes in Key Stage 4, the students are also grouped by ability.

Sets are reviewed every term and updated using students' assessment performance. Class size in KS3 are typically 30 pupils in sets 1 and 2, 25 in sets 3 and 4 and 15 in set 5. GCSE classes follow the same pattern. We currently have 4 A level classes of mixed ability students.

#### **KS3**

Key Stage 3 provision is currently 6 x 1 hour lessons per 2-week cycle in Y7 and Y8 and 7 hours in Y9.

Students in Year 7, 8 and 9 study from a range of texts including Shakespeare, Poetry, English Literary Heritage, Media and Non Fiction. Year 7 students currently study a range of texts including Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Tempest', "Frankenstein" by Shelley, and a selection of non-fiction.

In Year 8, students currently study a range of texts including Shakespeare's 'Macbeth', War Poetry, short stories by Arthur Conan Doyle and 'Animal Farm' by George Orwell.

In Year 9, students currently study a range of texts including Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet', 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens, 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck and 'Lord of the Flies' by William Golding and media and non-fiction.

There are comprehensive schemes of work and resources for all modules covered. Each scheme of work provides for structured learning and regular assessment. Students are encouraged to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of English using varied approaches to learning.

## **KS4**

Year 10 and 11 students have between 7 and 9 hours of English per 2 week cycle. The Department follows the new AQA Language and Literature courses. Students currently study 'A Christmas Carol', 'An Inspector Calls' 'DNA', 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time', 'Conflict and Power' and 'Love and Relationships' poetry and Shakespeare's 'Macbeth', in addition to a range of pre-19<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary non-fiction and fiction texts. Students sit 2 exams for English Language and 2 for Literature at the end of Year 11; assessment is 100% examination.

## **KS5**

The department currently offers A Level English Language and English Literature. Key Stage 5 provision is currently 10 x 1 hour lessons per 2-week cycle per subject. This time is split equally between two members of staff.

In Literature, students follow English Literature Spec B course, studying 'King Lear', 'Richard II', 'The Great Gatsby', Ian McEwan's 'Atonement' and a selection of Poetry, .

Language students follow the AQA Spec B. Assessment is on-going with students sitting a mock exam in Years 12 and 13 with grades reported home.