

BARTON COURT GRAMMAR SCHOOL – ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Facilities

The English, Film and Drama department is comprised of seven teaching rooms and a specially designed Drama Rehearsal space or “mini theatre”. In addition to these, there is the potential to make use of the school’s four ICT suites, including the Library.

Key Stage 3

KS3 (Y7 & 8) English is delivered through seven lessons per fortnight, and homework is set in 4 of those lessons. In the first two years we prepare students for the close reading, creative writing and analytical tasks assessed on the new English specification. Learning is supported by a wide range of activities, ICT and printed resources, ensuring that a variety of activities is offered to suit every type of learner.

The focus is on the three key skill areas of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. Students will learn key skills of language analysis, including arguing and persuading, describing, and writing to entertain. All students will study poetry and a complete Shakespeare text during Key Stage 3. Students explore literature in Year 7 through the study of archetypes and genre. In Year 8 there is a focus on non-fiction as students explore how language is a powerful mechanism for change and political protest.

There are regular formative and summative assessments in key skills, including: Speaking and Listening; writing; creative fiction; non – fiction analysis; reading comprehension and group work. By the end of KS3 we expect our students to express their ideas clearly, confidently and effectively with a sound understanding of the technical elements of English Language. This is encouraged through rigorous study of punctuation, spelling and grammar and a course on word derivation which focuses on Greek and Latin roots.

Key Stage 4

The Department teaches English Language and English Literature at GCSE. We use Edexcel for both English Language and English Literature.

Year 9 undertake a foundation year in which they focus on gothic fiction, a Shakespeare play, poetry and an introductory approach to the skills of the new English Language specification.

The literature examinations are all closed book so students are expected to know the texts well and to demonstrate a thorough understanding of those texts which an emphasis on authorial methods. There is great emphasis in KS4 on teaching students how to create effective revision notes, how to study and revise for examinations and how to respond to examination prompts perceptively and using a range of judiciously chosen textual evidence.

There are four examinations at the end of KS4:

English Language Paper 1 – Fiction and Imaginative Writing

English Language Paper 2 – Reading and Transactional Writing

English Literature Paper 1 – Macbeth (William Shakespeare) and A Christmas Carol (Charles Dickens)

English Literature Paper 2 – An Inspector Calls (J.B. Priestley) and a selection of poetry

Key Stage 5

English is a very popular A-Level at Barton Court and currently we have four classes in the current Year 12 cohort. A-Level English is now a two-year linear course culminating in two examination papers at the end of Year 13.

A Level

Students follow the Edexcel A-Level Literature specification, which is divided into four areas of study:

1. Drama – Othello, by Shakespeare and A Streetcar Named Desire, by Tennessee Williams.
2. Prose – Beloved by Toni Morrison and The Picture of Dorian Grey, by Oscar Wilde
3. Poetry – Romantic poets (collection) and Modern poets (collection)
4. Coursework

General notes

The department runs two separate writing clubs for older and younger students, together with regular booster sessions to support key stages at various times during the year. We try to bring in visiting writers and theatre groups

to perform to our students. We also arrange theatre visits as opportunities arise. The department supports various competitions and initiatives during the year such as creative writing and spelling.

The Department is looking to enhance the extra-curricular activities that it offers and it would expect that a new member of staff would be similarly willing to take charge of an activity. Future options include film making, Journalism, and assisting with the school magazine, 'Barton Press.'