

CHARLES DICKENS SCHOOL – ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Facilities

The English department is comprised of ten teaching rooms and we have access to the drama rehearsal space and a “mini theatre”. In addition to these, there is the potential to make use of the school’s ICT suites, including the Learning Resource Centre.

Key Stage 3

KS3 (Y7 & 8) English is delivered through eight lessons per fortnight, and homework is set in 3 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. A range of literary genres will also be covered. Students will also participate in rigorous study of punctuation, spelling and grammar with key assessments on a regular basis.

There are assessments at the end of the six terms and key skills are assessed in areas such as Speaking and Listening, writing creative fiction, Non – fiction analysis, Media awareness, Reading and Comprehension skills and group work. By the end of KS3 we expect our students to express their ideas clearly, confidently and effectively. We also encourage wider reading and involvement in extra-curricular activities such as creative writing, debate and public speaking

Key Stage 4

The Department teaches English Language and English Literature at GCSE via the AQA Examination board. Year 9 undertake a foundation year in which they focus on learning the majority of the content for the English Literature GCSE.

The new AQA examinations are all closed book so students are expected to know the texts well and to demonstrate a thorough understanding of those texts with an emphasis on authorial methods. There is great emphasis in KS3 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 – Creative Reading and Writing

English Language Paper 2 – Writers’ Viewpoints and Perspectives

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 (Conflict and Power)

General notes

The department runs a KS3 afterschool club to support completing homework and various KS4 intervention programmes, 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.