

The English Department at Becket Keys Church of England School



The Team

We currently have eight English teachers, ranging from the very experienced to those in the early stages of their career.

Teaching Area

English lessons are delivered in a suite of rooms in our Carey building, close to the school library. All English teachers have their own rooms; they are recently refurbished with new furniture, carpets, new display boards, digital projectors and are all equipped with visualisers and Dell PCs.

There is a newly established open collaborative study area used by staff and students alike. There is also a Sixth Form IT room which is always open and well used.



Curriculum, Assessment & Student Groupings

English is taught in a variety of groupings – usually mixed ability unless there is good cause to do otherwise. Class sizes average at 28 across KS3 and KS4. Students have ten 50-minute English lessons per fortnight. All Russell Education Trust (RET) schools use the same examination board (Edexcel) and frequently share schemes of work (SOW) and resources. We develop core skills in Key Stage Three with the following focuses:

Year 7: The Big Picture

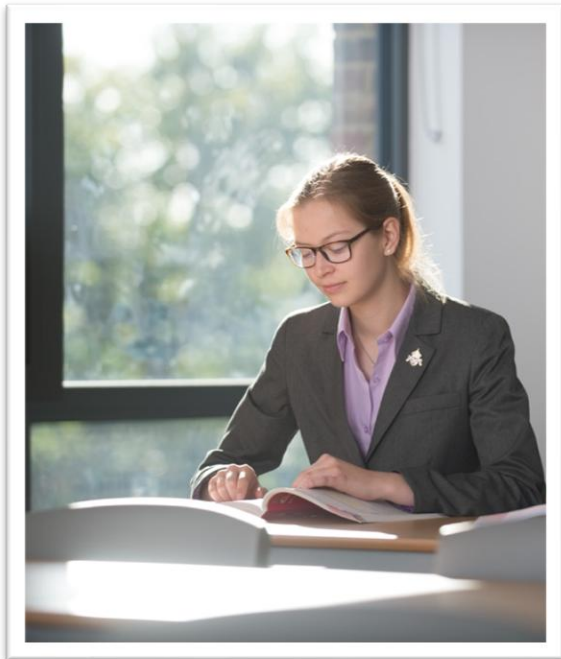
Year 8: Writer's Craft

Year 9: Voice, Intent and Perspective.

There is regular exposure to a range of unseen texts produced by writers of varied backgrounds to increase students' cultural capital, frequent practice at writing under time constraints, and systematic development of spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPAG).

As far as possible, our schemes promote integration, to ensure key skills are regularly developed throughout the five-year course. Skills are assessed every half term. For our KS3 pupils these are Common Marked Pieces or 'Checkpoint Tasks'. At KS4 and 5 these are exam responses. The department is particularly good at using marking to judge the success of the

intended curriculum, identifying 'next steps in learning', which we guide and support students to act. These include, but go beyond, SPAG errors and misconceptions, challenging students to extend their thinking and develop their abilities as readers and writers.



Our sixth form emphasises the importance of A level Literature as one of, if not, the most facilitating subjects for university and later life. Good numbers of students have selected the subject, bucking the trend across the country where students are turning their back on English after the demands of the GCSE. We were proud to send one of our founding students off to study English Literature at Durham University with an A* and two A grades in her A Levels.

We teach Edexcel for GCSE and A level. You can see our entire Programme of Study (for Years 7 to 13) on the school website.

Professional Development

We take our CPD seriously, as all of us can develop our generic and subject-specific expertise. Department meetings focus on sharing ideas, jointly planning lessons, moderating assessments and generally making ourselves better at teaching English. Students write regularly and we review their progress in both English Language and English Literature every six weeks, talking through strategies for addressing the learning needs of individuals, teaching groups and cohorts. We benefit from work scrutiny, pupil book studies, learning walks, and longer observations by RET advisors and our senior team, which help us focus on what works well and where we need to adjust our practice. The RET English network provides opportunities for Trust-wide training, and for meeting our counterparts in the four other RET schools.

