

English Curriculum Statement 2023-2024

Build resilience, self-reliance and perseverance	Raise aspirations and promote “self-challenge”	Experience a broad range of subject and learning opportunities	Increase the “cultural capital” of students	Support Mental Health and Wellbeing	Develop deeper understanding and a love of learning and self-development.
A	B	C	D	E	F

Vision and Objectives

In order to work within the overarching Sandwell Academy aim ‘to maximise performance in all forms’ the English department is dedicated to raising the standard of Literacy for all students. (B) Students are introduced to both English Language and English Literature early in Key Stage 3 to allow, not only the foundational development of key skills, but more importantly the opportunity for students to develop a life-long love of reading and learning while exploring a breadth of concepts and social issues. (C, D, F) Through the teaching of a range of topics from Shakespeare and Romantic Poetry through to Victorian Literature and more modern classics, we allow all students to engage with a wide range of English Literature. (D, F) The development of a thematic approach to Language encourages students to explore a breadth of cultural and societal knowledge that they can take forward into further education and adulthood. This approach also allows staff to ensure students build a wider contextual knowledge around the texts that they read in Literature lessons. (B, C, D, F) Through careful management of Session 3, we aim to offer students opportunities not only to clarify misconceptions in their work but also to explore language use in a range of contexts (B, C, D, F). We consistently explore opportunities for external visits, professional visitors, theatre in education and other extra- curricular opportunities to engage students, enrich both their academic studies, and support their personal development. (C, D, F)

At their core, the study of English Language, Literature, and Media Studies is about communication. (A, B, D) The English department strives to enable students to form ideas, opinions and interpretations; to communicate them effectively; and to actively engage with others to help all students shape their own language use (A, B, D, E). It is a priority for the department that students learn the key skills of interrogation and questioning; opinion forming and justification; and the ability to listen, respond and debate (A, B, D, E). Through engaging with the Academy vision as a whole, the English department aim to ensure that all students leave with a clear understanding that their ideas and opinions are important and that their own voice deserves to be heard (A, B, D, E, F). Developing skills for life is at the core of what we aim to achieve. (A, B, D, E, F).

Curriculum Provision Year 7-9

Students follow a dedicated Key Stage 3 curriculum which builds on the foundation laid in Key Stage 2 while introducing the passion and love of language students will foster as they move towards GCSE study (A, B, C, D, F). While the National Curriculum plays a key part in the development of the curriculum, the focus at Sandwell Academy is on Language and Literature as explicit subjects (B, C, D, F). There is a focus on building not only the skills required to excel in English, but also the development of schemes of knowledge to supplement their transition to future Key Stages and beyond (B, C, F). There is a drive towards introducing students to high quality and challenging texts from a range of eras and allowing the students the opportunity to engage with a wide selection of topics, supporting not only their academic studies, but also their personal and social development (B, C, D, F). Throughout KS3 students build skills and begin to lay the foundations for GCSE success through the texts and topics taught. This is done to allow students to engage with the rigours of the course content while providing

opportunity for all students to master and refine the key course skills and knowledge in preparation for beginning GCSE textual study at Key Stage 4. (A, B, C, D, E, F).

Curriculum Provision Year 10-11

All students follow a GCSE pathway designed to develop and foster the skills required to succeed in both English Literature and English Language. Language in Year 10 is planned thematically, allowing students to engage with high-quality extracts while cultivating their analytical, evaluative and comparative skills (A, B, C). Students learn how writers manipulate language and influence readers, whilst developing their own authorial voice (A, B, C, D, E, F). The curriculum enables students to explore a range of cultural and societal issues and encourages students' active engagement with them (A, B, C, D, E, F). In Year 11, students focus on honing key skills through dedicated modules in order to ensure that they can maximise success during examinations. Students will touch upon the skills and knowledge required for A Level and further study, in order to encourage them to explore this as an option for their next step (B, F). In Literature, texts are selected to build upon the explorations undertaken at KS3 and to allow students to use Literature to as a way to question and challenge the society that they live in and texts complement each other as students consider: Social Class, Equality, Greed, Power, Conflict, Morality and Social Responsibility. Throughout the two years of GCSE study the ability to contextualise is prioritised; we aim for students to be discriminating when reading and evaluating both fiction and non-fiction texts (B, C, D, F). As a department we believe it is imperative that students develop the ability to actively interrogate and engage confidently with the fast-paced and ever-changing world that they will go on to shape. (A, B, C, D, E, F)

BTEC Tech in Creative Media Production Key Stage 4

Within Year 10, students are introduced to key practical and theoretical techniques. They spend time engaging in a range of activities and projects designed to ensure that students have a working knowledge of the skills required to complete the course in Years 10 and 11 (A, B, C, F). Furthermore, Year 10 students' attention is directed to creating, crafting and editing in preparation for the coursework element of the course (A, B, F). They also refine their ability to de-code and analyse Media texts utilising relevant theory in preparation for course assessments. The work completed throughout the course is aimed at furnishing students with skills required for further study, life and leisure (A, B, C, D, E, F).

Curriculum Provision Sixth Form

At A Level, the English department at Sandwell Academy aim to build upon prior learning and to develop students as independent critics, researchers and creators (A, B, C, D, E, F). Across English Language, English Literature and Media Studies students interact with, and interrogate a wide range of texts while developing a working knowledge of key theorists and their relevance to both the studied material and the wider world (C, D, F). At the end of each course, aside from being well prepared for the final exams, pupils will also more aware of the changes that have occurred in society and how ideas such as gender and power are communicated and can be subverted. Students will be well prepared to progress on to higher education or to enter the world of work (A, B, C, D, E, F). The analytical, interrogative and opinion forming skills developed by students will enable them to leave Sandwell Academy as confident, independent and resilient lifelong learners (A, E, F).

Session 3

Students are encouraged to attend a range of extra-curricular Session 3 opportunities, which enable them to expand upon various parts of their courses. These take place in two forms: firstly, there are

compulsory academic development sessions, which students are, requested to attend. These sessions, which run parallel to optional booster sessions, intend to re-cover and refine the students' developing knowledge and skills (A, B, E, F). Secondly, throughout the year students are offered a range of engaging English-themed enrichment sessions; these include but are not limited to: Poetry Slam, Creative Writing, Debate Club, Bar Mock and Book Clubs (B, C, D, F). As a department, we strive to offer students a balance of wider curriculum opportunities, which will enable them to develop life skills and explore subject related content (A, B, C, D, E, F).

Covid-19 Catch-up

During initial and subsequent lockdowns, departmental leaders and staff have adjusted the curriculum in the short, medium and long term. As such, students have had full access to high quality lessons and texts throughout (A, C, F). Emphasis focused on accessibility, engagement and online discussion to ensure that students were able to learn and to ease feelings of isolation through active participation in English lessons (A, B, C, D, E, F). Further, additional curriculum time was allocated to the study of English for all Year groups at Key Stages 3 and 4 (C, F). This was carefully plotted alongside catch-up planning to ensure no child fell behind. This additional lesson aimed to ensure that students could continue to develop vital skills, where progress had been impacted negatively during isolations. This was done through a range of engaging and skills based projects, which supported students' development within the spiral skillsets of Literature and Language. Therefore, allowing students not only to succeed in English and in academic life, but which will allow them to become rounded and confident individuals ready for the next stages of their journey. (A, B, C, D, E, F). The Academic year of 2022-23 sees us return to three sessions of English per week; however, this period of catch-up allowed us to support students as they returned to full Academy life. In this period, the curriculum has undergone thorough review to ensure that all students are placed to make exceptional progress regardless of their individual Covid-19 experiences.