

## English Learning Area Information

The English Learning Area comprises English Language and English Literature across the school Key Stages and the teaching of Media Studies in KS4, leading to Film Studies in KS5. High quality, engaging, and dynamic Teaching and Learning is the foundation of the philosophy of teaching within this learning area to ensure that all learners, regardless of ability, can thrive and attain their true potential.

The team is based predominantly in the main school site, with regular access to our wonderful Library. Alongside our classrooms in the hub of the school, we also have a bespoke Media and Film suite as our numbers continue to grow in this discipline. We are a well-established and friendly team, we enjoy each other's company and are able to ask for help as well as offer help when needed. We have twelve specialist teachers, with a range of experiences in terms of years teaching, with the majority in some role of responsibility across the school. As a result of this, we work in a supportive and collaborative manner drawing on our wide range of expertise.

Within the learning area, we currently have four TLR positions; Leader of Learning, Second of Department responsible for KS4, KS3 Coordinator, and KS3 Intervention Coordinator. At KS3 all students follow a curriculum consisting of three overarching units per year, with each unit covering a range of text types, both fiction and non-fiction, and specified language and SPaGV elements. The units are progressive and the skills build on year from year with the requirements at GCSE as our ultimate focus without being a watered down version of the GCSE curriculum. Each unit has an assessment focus and we are looking at developing a more dynamic assessment routine with pupil progression at its core. We do not see KS3 as a part of GCSEs, but as developing the necessary skills and building blocks for students to achieve as they progress into this area. In our most recent Ofsted Inspection (2020) the English curriculum across all key stages was praised for its depth, range and development of core skills which we look to continue to develop to ensure it is pedagogically current and engaging and this is an area we look to uphold with our most recent curriculum evolution.

Across KS3, Students are taught in broadly mixed ability groups. In KS4 students are established in to sets that promote progress for all pupils as the balance between challenge and inclusion is at the core of our approach. Due to this, there is a certain amount of overlap of ability and groups are created according to the child's potential which we place at the forefront. We are using the Reading Plus programme for weak readers in Year 7 and Year 8 alongside a bespoke curriculum designed to enhance rather than replace the English Curriculum. A number of students have been identified as having additional learning needs and will transition to Functional Skills in Year 9 instead of learning a modern foreign language.

At A level English Language, English Literature and Film Studies are offered. The Learning Area has a strong success rate and has been a popular choice for students for many years. Our English classes only continue to grow with current Year 12 at record numbers across all three subjects. Oldfield Sixth Form



is the natural choice for students wishing to pursue an academic post 16 route and we lead the way in this approach. New approaches to teaching and learning at A level are welcomed as fresh ideas are incorporated and welcomed.

Obviously extra-curricular activities are a part of what we offer and something we look forward to reintroducing to our enrichment programme, but as a team we believe that the main focus of our efforts has to be in the classroom. All teaching posts come with extra-curricular activities as a part of the remit. Currently in the department we offer Debating Club with a weekly debate open to KS4 and 5 and for some of those students we take part in various local and regional debating events. Previously we also offered a Creative Writing Club; trips to see productions of set texts, as well as visiting writers. During the whole school Activities Week programme English teachers offer a number of activities, such as a trip to the Warner Studios outside London, backstage events at the theatre in Bath. We have contacts with our closest local primary schools and we run transition events for Year 5 which is an area we are looking to develop even further to ensure our pupils start as they mean to go on in Year 7.

Developing effective Teaching and Learning is a fundamental principle which underpins our values as a department. Therefore, we have two trainee teachers as part of the BET programme each year and we pride ourselves on providing a supportive environment in which to grow as a teacher. A testament of this is the amount of staff that have trained or been an NQT/ECT with us and remain a valued member of our department. Quality assurance systems are in place with a programme of work scrutiny sessions, learning walks by the Leader of Learning and SLT. Feedback and self-reflection are considered important aspects of the development of all teachers and as such we welcome opportunities to work collaboratively within school and to work alongside other subject areas as appropriate.

The English Learning area is dynamic, successful and a real team of individuals with a common commitment to the teaching of the subjects they love and this underpins everything we do across all aspects of school life.