



English Curriculum Statement

King's Academy Binfield and King's Academy Oakwood

This document sets out the English curriculum that we have selected as most appropriate for our students that will support them to achieve our vision and aims; 'dare to be remarkable' and 'opportunity and success on a global stage', through their English curriculum.

Our primary English curriculum follows the national curriculum aims:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Our secondary English curriculum:

- is informed by a secure understanding of students' prior knowledge at KS2
- effectively prepares students for the future
- offers a mixture of reading, writing and speaking & listening opportunities
- makes meaningful links to potential career pathways
- ensures that students have an understanding of key literary time periods and movements
- is designed to include a wide variety of texts: prose/poetry/drama; old/new; male/female; white British/BAME/other cultures
- is built around high quality texts which are also enjoyable to read and study
- exploits opportunities to establish cross-curricular links to deepen understanding
- has challenge for all (regardless of prior attainment) at its heart
- develops confident readers who are able to read, understand, interpret and interrogate information presented to them in a variety of forms and settings
- develops articulate individuals who are able to write skilfully, critically and evaluatively
- promotes creativity, stamina and resilience
- enables teachers to exploit all opportunities to develop students' cultural capital beyond their existing realm of experience
- provides staff with regular opportunities for professional discussion about subject knowledge and different approaches to teaching English

EYFS and Primary

English in the primary phase at King's will not only be a daily lesson, but is at the heart of the entire curriculum. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the students at King's will be exposed to a language heavy, creative English curriculum which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

Daily reading is integral to our primary curriculum and students read individually as well as being read to by the class teacher. Throughout Early Years and Key Stage One we have used a series of reading programmes to build our own reading scheme. The purpose behind this is to ensure the children have access to a range of text types and genres whilst developing their reading. Our reading scheme includes books from the RWI phonics scheme, fully decodable books, predictable books and more challenging books as students move through the scheme-please see the Reading Curriculum Intent document for further information.

Students are exposed to high quality, stimulating texts linked to each topic and are expected to write in a variety of different styles daily. Students will study a wide variety of text types, often using Talk4writing to imitate and innovate their own versions using the correct features of the text type.

Spellings are taught according to the rules and words contained in Appendix 1 of the English National Curriculum. SPAG is taught in explicit lessons daily but also referenced through every lesson in all areas of the curriculum. Phonics is taught using the Read, Write Inc programme. Handwriting also follows Read, Write Inc suggested letter formation and joining using horizontal and diagonal joins in accordance with the National Curriculum.

Secondary

The English curriculum at Secondary begins with an exploration of character, looking at a range of character experiences across key literary time periods. This develops into a study of a range of settings whilst continuing to progress our understanding of character. The final stage of KS3 explores themes across a range of text types. By the end of this stage students are confident with identifying key character archetypes, a range of settings and themes which leaves them prepared to access the GCSE curriculum with confidence.

During the foundation of the English Secondary curriculum there are several core texts that are being utilised to develop a richer understanding of English. These work in cohesion with the tutor reading programme to ensure that students are exposed to a range of texts. These books have been chosen as Pie Corbett suggests "to develop the children's writing skills: drawing on a range of examples, demonstrating writing techniques such as foreshadowing, and building atmosphere through setting, shift of viewpoint or tension."

We recognise the importance that homework has in supporting the learning that takes place in lesson time. Homework is set regularly in English to build on the knowledge of the classroom as well as develop core skills, such as comprehension and reading, with a mixture of rote learning for spellings, key knowledge, literary terminology and quotation recall.

We have chosen to focus on building six threshold concepts as outlined by David Didau in his blog: **Using Threshold Concepts to design a KS4 curriculum**

- *Understanding the relationship between grammar and meaning.*
- *Understanding the effect of context, both on writers and readers.*
- *Understanding the need to use supporting evidence for ideas.*
- *An awareness of the ways in which language can affect readers.*
- *Understand how different ways of structuring text can produce different effects.*
- *Understanding that language can be analysed to reveal a variety of meanings.*

All of these concepts are explored and integrated into our KS3 curriculum as well as placed into KS4. It is vital that these concepts are explored and developed from day 1 to ensure success at the highest level.

In Year 7 when students arrive at King's we utilise any KS2 results as well as our own baselining to identify students who have not met the floor standard for intervention. These students take part in an intervention programme with core focuses on: punctuation, vocabulary, reading speed and crafting sentences. Dependent on need, students will be selected for the area they need help with. We also use the online NGRT reading and the spelling test to inform planning for progress at the start of year 7. If students require further intervention in year 8, they may be invited to our period 6 programme. This is dependent on need as quality first teaching is always our intention and priority.

When it comes to exploring writing, our focus is on how to write competently and coherently building on the successes of KS2. We aim to focus on allowing students to develop an appreciation for the writing process, crafting, drafting and redrafting pieces. This is supported by having key 'model' texts by a range of voices to support this process.

In KS3 year 7 students have 8 lessons of English a fortnight. This rises to 9 lessons per fortnight in year 8 and 9. In KS3 one lesson a fortnight is dedicated to private reading and a reading challenge. Throughout the year we also use the *Let's Think in English* programme to enhance their critical thinking skills. This programme is designed to allow students to think evaluatively using mainly open ended questions and discussion to support students' oracy skills. These are vital skills for being prepared for the rigours of GCSE. Content lessons explore both language and literature together to support students' understanding of how these work in cohesion.

In the 2020-2021 curriculum all KS3 students will have 9 lessons per fortnight of English to help to address some of the lost learning time as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

Explicit vocabulary teaching is at the centre of each unit, with core vocabulary being taught and reviewed in lessons and during homework. Each unit has specific opportunities to review and develop students' understanding of a range of words in relation to the unit of study. We are also trialling the use of the PIXL vocabulary APP to motivate and inspire students to develop their vocabulary in all subjects. From the outset, writing like an expert and developing analytical writing skills are being explicitly modelled and taught. Structure strips and scaffolds are used in years 7 and 8 to ensure our students are writing like experts. It is our mission to ensure students are GCSE ready at the end of KS3. By the end of year 9 our students will become more competent at writing independently and with less structured support.

At GCSE we follow the AQA specification for English Language and Literature. Our approach to the GCSE is integrated, following on from the KS3 stage; allowing for an appreciation of language and how it influences meaning in a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. As well as the 'set' texts, students are provided with a range of reading materials to enrich and supplement their knowledge of their core texts, bolstering their knowledge from KS3 and building on this further. We will focus on refining students' academic writing skills and how to develop a line of argument in essays (timed or otherwise). The use of low-stakes quizzes is embedded from KS3 and will continue to help students' review and reflect on gaps in their knowledge.

Students who have formed part of our fresh start programme lower down the school may also complete the AQA Step-Up to English qualification, if this is appropriate to their needs. We feel that a bespoke approach to this that takes into the consideration the needs of the individual is best.

At A-Level we plan to follow the AQA Specification for English Language and for English Literature the Specification B.

The English Literature course builds on students' knowledge of key literary genres such as tragedy. It also continues to develop their academic writing skills in preparation for University or the world of work.

The English Language course allows for more appreciation of linguistic study as well as a developed understanding of linguistic terminology which is built from KS2 all the way to GCSE.

Impact

At the end of KS2 students will be fluent readers or working towards fluency with support. They will enjoy reading a range of texts and will be able to tackle new texts with confidence.

At the end of KS3 students will be GCSE ready as well as having developed an appreciation for a range of Literature and Language texts. They will have developed their analytical reading responses and be moving away from scaffolded support. Students will have built the confidence and stamina to tackle GCSE texts with success.

At the end of KS4 students will be critical and evaluative thinkers. They will have a solid knowledge base to allow them to access A-Level Language or Literature with conviction. They will be confident in their essay style and prepared for A-Levels or applying for further education in alternative settings.

Our results will be above the national average.

Reflections - areas for development

Supported by several experienced colleagues, the English faculty is reflective and reviews the successes and needs for tweaks periodically through the year. As a result, we have created a robust and successful curriculum that offers success for all.

References

Closing the reading gap by Alex Quigley

Closing the vocabulary gap by Alex Quigley

Opening doors to a richer English curriculum by Box Cox with Leah Crawford and Verity Jones

Opening doors to quality writing by Box Cox

How to teach English by Chris Curtis

How to teach English Literature by Jennifer Webb

Teach like a writer by Jennifer Webb

<https://learningspy.co.uk/english-gcse/using-threshold-concepts-to-design-a-ks4-english-curriculum/> David Didau

<https://learningspy.co.uk/english-gcse/principled-curriculum-design-teach-english/> David Didau

Reading Reconsidered by Doug Lemov