

The English Department at Becket Keys Church of England School



The team

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

Teaching area

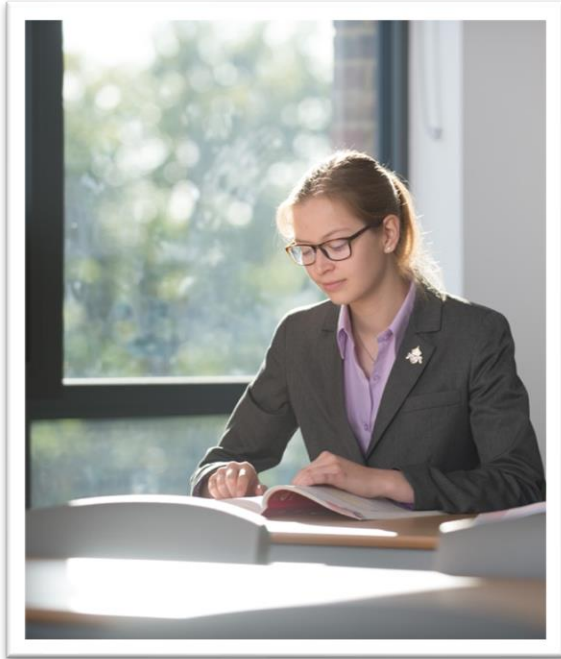
English lessons are delivered in a suite of rooms in our Carey building, close to the school library. All English teachers have their own rooms; they are recently refurbished with new furniture, carpets, new display boards and are all equipped with Interactive Whiteboards and Dell PCs.



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 26 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) to allow us to share schemes of work (SOW) and resources. We work on the assumption that every student will sit exams in English Language and English Literature. Our SOW treats Y7-11 as a single course, so we systematically develop the skills, concepts and knowledge to be assessed at GCSE right from the first term in Year 7. This means, for example, regular exposure to unseen texts, frequent practice at writing under time constraints to replicate GCSE exam demands, 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. The department is typically good at using marking to accelerate learning, identifying 'next steps in learning', which we expect students to act on as soon as their books are returned. 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 rigours 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 hope that she is the first of many!

We teach Edexcel for GCSE and A level. You can see our entire Programme of Study (for Years 7 to 11) 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, 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.

