

# CHARLES DICKENS SCHOOL – ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

## Facilities

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The English department is comprised of ten teaching rooms and an office and integral staff room and we have access to the drama rehearsal space and a 'mini theatre' for seminars. In addition to these, there is the potential to make use of the school's ICT suites, including the LearningResource Centre.

## Key Stage 3

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KS3 (Y7 & 8) English is delivered through eight lessons per fortnight, and homework is set for Literacy and English 3 times per week. Literacy homework tasks are set 2 times per week, including Bedrock and reading sections of a book from our Cultural Capital Reading programme, and English homework is set once per week. In the first two years we prepare students for the close reading, creative writing and analytical tasks of GCSE through a broad and challenging curriculum. Learning is supported by a wide range of tasks, ICT and printed resources, ensuring that a variety of activities are offered to suit every type of learner.

The focus is on the three key skill areas of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. Students will learn key skills of language analysis, including arguing and persuading, describing and writing to entertain. All students will study poetry and a complete Shakespeare text during Key Stage 3. A range of literary genres will also be covered. Students will also participate in rigorous study of punctuation, spelling and grammar with key assessments on a regular basis.

There is a clear assessment calendar including a range of summative and formative assessments throughout the six terms and key skills are assessed in areas such as Speaking and Listening, writing creative fiction, non-fiction analysis, reading and comprehension skills and group work. By the end of KS3 we expect our students to express their ideas clearly, confidently and effectively. We also encourage wider reading and vocabulary through a challenging selection of Cultural Capital texts, Bedrock and involvement in extra-curricular activities such as Poetry By Heart, creative writing, debate and public speaking.

## Key Stage 4

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The Department teaches English Language and English Literature at GCSE via the AQA Examination board. Year 9 undertake a foundation year in which they focus on learning the majority of the content for the English Literature Paper 2 GCSE. Students have ten lessons per fortnight.

The AQA examinations are all closed book so students are expected to know the texts well and to demonstrate a thorough understanding of those texts with an emphasis on authorial methods. There is great emphasis in KS4 on teaching students how to create effective revision notes, how to study and revise for examinations and how to respond to examination prompts perceptively and using a range of judiciously chosen textual evidence.

There are four examinations at the end of KS4:

English Language Paper 1 – Creative Reading and Writing  
English Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives  
English Literature Paper 1 – Romeo and Juliet (William Shakespeare) and A Christmas Carol (Charles Dickens)  
English Literature Paper 2 – An Inspector Calls (J.B. Priestley) and a selection of poetry (Power & Conflict and Unseen)

## General notes

There is a central afterschool club to support completing homework and the Department offers a range of KS3 clubs and various KS4 intervention programmes, together with a school magazine (CDSNEWS) and regular booster sessions to support key stages at various times during the year. We try to bring in visiting writers and theatre groups to perform to our students. We also arrange theatre visits as opportunities arise. The department supports various competitions and initiatives during the year such as creative writing and spelling.