



English Learning Area

Overview of the English Learning Area

I am Ms McKenzie, the Head of Learning Area for English. We have 17 staff in our Learning Area which is housed in the East Wing of the academy.

The Learning Area has six classrooms, including a dedicated computer room.

At KS3:

In Key Stage 3 at Mossbourne, pupils study a curriculum designed to prepare them for a lifetime of language use. Our focus on key knowledge and skills provides pupils with the foundations for studying English at GCSE, A-Level and beyond. Our curriculum covers classical literary texts, including Homer, Shakespeare and Dickens as well as giving prominence to diverse voices such as Chinua Achebe, Audre Lorde and Benjamin Zephaniah. We cover all forms of writing: prose, poetry and drama as well as studying non-fiction, speeches and creative writing in every year at Key Stage 3. The most valuable asset in our English department, are the dedicated and expert teachers who bring this curriculum to life and aim to bring a love of English to every lesson.

At KS4:

For GCSE English Literature, students have the opportunity to read a variety of canonical texts: they delve into tragic ambition in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, contemplate the secrets of Victorian science in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, attempt to solve the mystery behind the death of a young girl in *An Inspector Calls*, and learn about matters of the heart in a poetry collection about love and relationships. For GCSE English Language, students learn to analyse a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and practise their creative and persuasive writing skills.

At KS5:

Studying English Literature at KS5 provides students with the opportunity to

- engage critically and creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them
- develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and writers' methods
- explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them
- undertake independent and sustained studies to deepen their appreciation and understanding of English literature, including its changing traditions

In Year 12, students will study Mary Shelley's classic Gothic novel *Frankenstein* and prepare to compare this to Margaret Atwood's dystopian *The Handmaid's Tale*. Students will also study a selection of poems from the contemporary anthology *Poems of the Decade* and study Tennessee Williams' tragedy *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

Year 13, students will take on Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello*, including exploring a range of different critical perspectives, and study a collection of 30 Metaphysical poems by Donne, Marvell and more. Students will also undertake their coursework, a comparative essay of 2500-3000 comparing Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* to a text of their choice.



English Learning Area

For a detailed overview of the curriculum offer for subjects please see our curriculum maps for the subjects taught in the English Learning Area.

Students are set by ability from Year 7, with 9 groups across the year group. We assess students through a variety of methods which include end of unit assessments, regular Knowledge Organiser tests, question and answer responses and self/peer-assessed work.

Homework is set regularly with a one-hour long piece of work being set every week. By Year 11 we expect students to be completing independent revision in addition to regular homework.

The Learning Area offers a wide variety of extra-curricular activities such as theatre trips to the Globe, where students are able to see live performances of the plays being studied, the Jack Petchey poetry competition, giving our students a chance to perform their own poems against other schools and visits to authors. Within the school we offer various clubs such as debating and creative writing and every Friday we run our very own 'Cinema Paradiso'.

A high emphasis is placed on literacy both within the department and across the school; students complete regular spelling and knowledge organiser tests and participate in a 'Word of the Week quiz.

Our English results have consistently been in the top 1% of results in the country; this year our 2020 GCSE and A Levels success include:

At A level: 45% of all grades in English Literature were A* - A

At GCSE: 54% of students achieved grade 7+ in English

79% of MCA pupils have achieved grade 5+ in English, compared with the 2019 national average at 43%.