

13 October 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you with more information about changes to GCSEs and to give you course content information in order to help you plan for supporting studies. The largest change is that there is no longer any opportunity to submit coursework, so examination is by terminal exam only as follows:

Literature	Language
Paper 1 – 40% <i>19th Century Novel</i> <i>Shakespeare</i>	Paper 1 ‘Explorations in creative reading and writing’ - 50% <i>Narrative/Descriptive Writing</i> <i>Response to unseen fiction</i>
Paper 2 – 60% <i>Modern Text</i> <i>Poetry Anthology-</i> <i>“Power & Conflict” poems</i> <i>Unseen Poetry</i>	Paper 2- ‘ Writers viewpoints and perspectives’ -50% <i>Writing to present a viewpoint</i> <i>Response to unseen texts</i> <i>Article/letter/ Persuasive/Argumentative writing</i>
<i>Speaking and Listening –endorsement</i>	

English teachers will have already informed students about which texts they are studying over the two years. The choices are from the following list, prescribed by the National Curriculum:

Shakespeare	The 19th Century Novel
<i>Macbeth</i>	Robert Louis Stevenson <i>The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</i>
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Charles Dickens <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
<i>The Tempest</i>	Charles Dickens <i>Great Expectations</i>
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Charlotte Brontë <i>Jane Eyre</i>
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Mary Shelley <i>Frankenstein</i>
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Jane Austen <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>
	Sir Arthur Conan Doyle <i>The Sign of Four</i>

Cont’d....

Modern Text:	
Drama	Prose
JB Priestley <i>An Inspector Calls</i>	William Golding <i>Lord of the Flies</i>
Willy Russell <i>Blood Brothers</i>	AQA Anthology <i>Telling Tales</i>
Alan Bennett <i>The History Boys</i>	George Orwell <i>Animal Farm</i>
Dennis Kelly <i>DNA</i>	Kazuo Ishiguro <i>Never Let Me Go</i>
Simon Stephens <i>The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time</i> (play script)	Meera Syal <i>Anita and Me</i>
Shelagh Delaney <i>A Taste of Honey</i>	Stephen Kelman <i>Pigeon English</i>

Many of the texts have content of a challenging nature, and that is why they are included in the National Curriculum. Please be assured that this content will always be being taught in a sensitive manner, upholding the Catholic ethos of the school. We'd encourage parents to engage with these texts by discussing them with their children. Parents are invited to consult with their child's teacher if they would like any support, guidance or further information.

We have a selection of revision guides available at school and extra help is available for all students by prior arrangement with their English teacher. Additionally, Wednesday afterschool drop-in sessions are available to all students in year 11.

To further help support their studies, students are encouraged to attend play versions of texts, especially the Shakespeare, in their own time. We will endeavour also to arrange trips to plays, wherever possible. In addition, opportunities to explore wider reading for pleasure, outside the classroom, is recommended at KS4 and this will support preparation for the English exam. Students can discuss private reading choices with their English teachers and our Librarian, Miss Hamilton.

Spoken language is now separately endorsed, and for this, a video recording is required. If you have any questions about this please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your on-going support of your child's education in English. Whilst there have been many significant changes to the curriculum we have every confidence in continuing our track record of success, which for the last 4 years has placed the department in the top 1% in the country.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Brogan
Head of English