

KS4 English Language

Curriculum Intent

Our KS4 English Language curriculum is designed to develop confident, critical and articulate communicators who can read, write, speak and listen effectively in a wide range of contexts. Through the study of diverse and challenging texts, students develop the literacy skills, cultural knowledge and analytical thinking needed for academic success, future employment and active participation in society.

The curriculum aims to:

- Foster a love of reading through exposure to a broad range of literary and non-fiction texts from different periods, cultures and perspectives.
- Develop students' ability to analyse how writers use language and structure to shape meaning and influence readers.
- Build strong writing skills, enabling students to write accurately, creatively and persuasively for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Enhance spoken language skills, encouraging students to communicate ideas clearly, listen respectfully and participate confidently in discussion and debate.
- Strengthen students' vocabulary, grammar and technical accuracy to support effective communication across the curriculum and beyond school.
- Promote critical thinking by encouraging students to evaluate viewpoints, question assumptions and engage thoughtfully with contemporary issues.
- Prepare students for success in GCSE examinations while equipping them with transferable skills essential for further education, employment and lifelong learning.

By the end of KS4, students will be able to communicate with clarity, analyse texts independently, and apply their literacy skills confidently in both academic and real-world settings.

Assessment, Marking and Feedback

At the end of each term, students will complete an assessment in line with the AQA GCSE English Language specification.

Writing assessments will assess either:

- Creative writing (Paper 1 Section B): descriptive or narrative writing
- Transactional writing (Paper 2 Section B): such as articles, letters, speeches or reviews

Reading assessments will be based on either:

- A fiction extract (Paper 1 Section A) requiring analysis of language and structure
- A non-fiction text (Paper 2 Section A) requiring comparison and analysis of writers' perspectives and viewpoints

At the end of Term 5, Year 10 students will complete PPE (Pre-Public Examinations), focusing on AQA English Language Paper 1. These assessments are designed to replicate GCSE exam conditions and provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of key skills in reading and creative writing.

The purpose of these PPEs is to identify strengths and areas for development ahead of Year 11, allowing targeted intervention and focused revision. They also support a smooth transition into Year 11 by building familiarity with exam timing, question styles, and expectations, helping students to approach their final examinations with confidence and resilience.

In line with school policy, teachers will provide feedback within a two-week turnaround period. This marking will be used to inform subsequent teaching, address misconceptions, and support further progress.

Students will receive feedback using their Yellow Assessment Papers and will be set targeted progress tasks to improve their responses and develop their exam skills.

Homework

In line with the school's Praise and Reward Policy, students are set regular independent learning tasks to support their progress in AQA GCSE English Language and Literature. These activities are designed to reinforce classroom learning and develop the knowledge and skills required for success in their GCSE examinations. Tasks may include exam-style reading and writing activities, retrieval practice, revision of key terminology and concepts, analysis of extracts, and the completion of practice questions linked to the AQA specification. Students are also encouraged to engage with wider reading and revision resources to further develop their literacy skills and exam confidence. These independent learning opportunities help students to consolidate learning, strengthen exam technique, and prepare effectively for both internal assessments and their final GCSE examinations.

Links to National Curriculum / Syllabus Specifications

Key Stage 4 National Curriculum

[Department for Education](#)

AQA GCSE Language Specification

AQA GCSE Language: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/specification-at-a-glance>

Exam Support & Revision Resources

English Language Exam support:

Reading Practice

Focus on:

- Language analysis (words, techniques, effects)
- Structure (beginning, shifts, endings)
- Inference and interpretation
- Comparison (Paper 2)

Practice ideas:

- Read newspaper articles (BBC News, Guardian)
- Highlight language devices and explain effects
- Summarise viewpoints in 3–5 bullet points
- Compare two articles on the same issue

Writing Practice -Paper 1 (Creative Writing)

Revise:

- Descriptive techniques (imagery, senses, zooming in/out)
- Narrative structure (flashback, cyclical, tension building)
- Varied sentence types

Practice prompts:

- A place that feels abandoned
- A moment of fear or tension
- A journey through a strange location

Paper 2 (Transactional Writing)

Revise:

- Writing to argue, persuade, explain, inform
- Tone and audience
- Structuring paragraphs clearly (FEARRRS)

Practice tasks:

- Speech on school uniform
- Letter to a local council
- Article about social media

Exam Skills Checklist

Reading

- Highlight key words in the question
- Use short, embedded quotations
- Explain effects of language
- Analyse structure shifts
- Compare viewpoints (Paper 2)

Writing

- Plan before writing
- Use ambitious vocabulary
- Vary sentence structures
- Use paragraphs clearly
- Check spelling, punctuation, grammar

You can find Exam support and additional revision resources below:

- AQA GCSE English Language specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>
- AQA sample papers and mark schemes: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/assessment-resources>
- BBC Bitesize English Language: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zr9d7ty>
- Seneca Learning (AQA GCSE English Language): <https://senecalearning.com>
- Physics & Maths Tutor (English Language papers + model answers): <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/english-revision/gcse-aqa/>

Extracurricular and Enrichment Opportunities

Trips/Visits

Students have the opportunity to further enrich their understanding of English Language and Literature through an educational trip to the theatre.

Target Form Year 10

In Year 10, students are placed into one targeted intervention group, based on their current attainment and aspirational target grade. This ensures that support is precisely matched to their individual needs and progress pathway.

These interventions are carefully tailored to close gaps in learning, reinforce key concepts, and build confidence in exam skills, with the overall aim of improving outcomes and supporting students to achieve their English target grade.

Target Forms Year 11

Students are grouped into two intervention pathways: one targeting English 4+ and one targeting English 5+, ensuring that support is precisely matched to their current attainment and target grades. These interventions are carefully tailored to individual needs and are designed to close gaps in learning, reinforce key concepts, and ensure students are fully equipped to meet or exceed their target grade. The overall aim is to improve exam performance and support students in achieving their English 4+ and 5+ progress targets.

Afterschool revision

After-school revision sessions are available for students to support progress in AQA GCSE English Language and Literature. These sessions provide structured opportunities to revisit key exam skills, address misconceptions, and strengthen understanding of both reading and writing components. GCSE set texts studied on the course.

This experience helps students to deepen their understanding of plot, character, themes, and context, while also supporting their ability to analyse how meaning is created in live performance.

The trip broadens students' cultural capital, strengthens engagement with literature, and supports the development of high-level analytical skills required for GCSE success.

Interested to know more?

To read:

- BBC Bitesize GCSE English Language – revision guides, practice questions and exam skills.
- [BBC Bitesize GCSE English Language](#)
- AQA GCSE English Language specification and past papers.
- [AQA English Language Resources](#)
- A range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including newspapers, magazines, biographies and short stories, to develop reading, inference and analytical skills.

To watch:

- [Mr Bruff YouTube Channel](#) – exam skills, model answers and question walkthroughs for AQA GCSE English Language.
- [First Rate Tutors YouTube Channel](#) – GCSE English Language revision and exam technique.
- [GCSE English Videos on BBC Bitesize](#) – short videos covering key reading and writing skills.

To listen:

- GCSE English revision podcasts available through BBC Sounds.
- [BBC Sounds Bitesize Revision Podcasts](#)
- Audiobooks of fiction texts to develop vocabulary, comprehension and understanding of narrative methods.
- News and current affairs podcasts to broaden knowledge of contemporary issues and improve understanding of viewpoints and perspectives.

To visit:

- Local theatres to watch live performances and develop an appreciation of language, characterisation and dramatic methods.
- Public libraries to access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Museums and cultural venues to broaden contextual knowledge and support the development of reading and writing ideas.