

## Statement of Intent - English

*“Great books help you understand, and they help you to feel understood” John Green*

In English, our curriculum is designed to explore, rationalise and instil a lifelong reminder of our Academy vision of *‘Living Well Together with Dignity, Faith and Hope.’* Pivotal to our curriculum is the importance of voice: through both the impact that writers bygone and current have on our understanding of society, to the value we place on each individual student’s expression through their written and spoken command of the language. We hope that through the stories and accounts of novelists, poets, dramatists and inspirational writers, students will resonate with the resilience, courage and determination these writers strove for in their pursuit of a society that will *‘Live well together.’*

Students are exposed to the rich heritage of literature that both Britain and the world possess; both fiction and non-fiction from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day is critiqued, debated and analysed to enable students to explore the triumphs we as a global community have achieved, and the areas in which their voices can contribute to change. We hope that through an exploration of the inspiring writers on our curriculum, students will have hope and faith that the world around them can change. Central to the philosophy behind our curriculum is the belief that by empowering our students to reflect upon society, challenge ideas and formulate knowledge-based answers, they can live a life of dignity on the path of great authors who precede them.

To ensure that all of our students can access the world-widening impact of English Language and Literature, we will ensure that our pupil premium budget is spent on providing access to novels, plays and non-fiction covered in our inspirational modules. Furthermore, extra-curricular trips to see live literature – from Shakespeare and Dickens to creative writing focus workshops, will ensure that our students are given the cultural capital to develop them as well-rounded individuals. Within lessons support scaffolds, amendment of assessments and differentiated work booklets are provided to ensure that each and every one of our students, SEND, PP or High Achievers, not only progress but are able to reach their full potential. All of our students are provided with satellite reading lists which encourage them to engage with a multiplicity of genres (from Shakespeare, to poetry, to non-fiction) to extend their learning outside of the classroom. The reading lists additionally encourage our High Attainers to fulfil their potential by encouraging them to read more widely around the topics they are studying. The pupil premium budget enables us to purchase multiple copies of these texts to distribute to students from the Academy library.

At Key Stage 2, many of our students arrive with a superficial knowledge (identification with limited analysis) of the linguistic and grammatical foundation of English. Across Key Stage 3, we ensure that these foundations are solidified for KS4 and life beyond. In Year 7, students are assessed on their written command of the language to ensure that both adequate provision can be provided for students requiring intervention, and to identify students who need stretch and challenge activities. Through a passionate invigoration of the linguistic, grammatical and structural choices made by writers - alongside their social motivations, students leave All Saints instilled with the ethos that *‘Living Well Together with Dignity, Faith and Hope’* creates a better world for us all.

### **Research informed practice in Languages (English)**

Recent research by UCL (*Teaching English grammar in school, 2020*) has informed planning across all key stages and has seen the introduction of a specific SPAG lesson every week for year 7, year 8 and year 9. The content at KS3 has been changed to reflect a higher proportion of female and BAME authors, and new unit on inspirational women in year 8, after School Library Association research (2022) was published which highlighted the importance of this to making lessons more relevant and appropriate. This research has supplemented recent thinking that emphasises the importance of personal empowerment at KS3 and that highlights working class background and culture (Education policy institute, disadvantage gap is increasing; S.Tierney *Educating with Purpose*). This too has led to a wider breadth of study in year 7 and 8 as we move away from the typical “white middle class” curriculum that we were taught when we at school.

### **Specific support planned for SEND students:**

In English key words are used to support specific tasks in the lesson. Teacher support is highlighted in pink pen in exercise books, and other immediate support is given during the lesson. The teacher actively checks and supports during the assessment for learning and independent practice parts of the lesson. Learning mats are used at both Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four to support learning. The ‘hidden slide’ provides differentiated reading and other opportunities for support each lesson.

## **Year 7**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

In their first year of KS3, students are baseline tested in their creative writing; student then develop their understanding of metaphors and writing about settings in relation to their own. They then explore units on Poetry exploring the mental impact of World War 1 on soldiers through a refined analysis of metaphorical and structural devices. In the final half term of term one, students conduct a novel study of Sky Hawk evaluating characterisation, descriptive devices and structural choices made by the author. The impact of society on the written and spoken word is then explored through a study of the themes of adventure and exploration in non-fiction texts across the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Students explore how people have lived with and without dignity across these periods before producing their own speaking and listening pieces employing a range of rhetorical devices. Students then analyse the depiction of London in 19<sup>th</sup> century poetry. Finally, students encounter an ambitious unit covering Myths and Legends from the Greek and Roman eras before finishing the year with a study of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

### **Substantive Knowledge for Literacy Lessons**

The curriculum for Year 7 is designed for students to have three English lessons (covering the disciplinary content above) and one literacy focussed lesson in which students practise their spelling, punctuation and grammar. Due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic over the last two years, the literacy lessons are designed to ensure there are no gaps in the students’ foundation knowledge in Key Stage 2 literacy. Students will revisit: word classification (adjectives, nouns, prepositional phrases, verbs); basic punctuation rules (capital letters, full stops, commas, apostrophes

and paragraphing) alongside completing 10 key spellings each week (comprised of topic specific vocabulary and commonly misspelled words). Once we have covered the basic foundation of English grammar in the lessons, we will then focus on reading comprehension, inference and 'big writes' to ensure that each student can apply accurate grammar choices to their work.

### **Disciplinary knowledge**

In their first year of Key Stage 3, students learn how to analyse both descriptive and individual lexical choices made by writers beyond superficial identification of techniques. Teaching both the denotive and connotative ideas behind authorial methods, students are able to develop their analysis into fully explorative paragraphs. Furthermore, students consider the structural choices made by writers in poems, non-fiction and novels to consider the cyclical and cohesive links chosen by authors to engage their audience. Students are then able to consider their own grammatical, descriptive and rhetorical choices in their own writing to sustain their engagement of a reader/audience. Finally, Shakespearean dramatic techniques are refined to enable students to combine lexical and metaphorical devices with the form of a 5-act play.

## **Year 8**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

To begin Year 8 students explore the impacts of societies on individuals. Students begin the year conducting a novel study of *Stone Cold* considering the impacts of social deprivation on both the main protagonist and antagonist. Students consider how authorial and structural methods create empathy in readers to reflect the emotional effects of poverty on individuals. Following on from the exposition of the term, students study a unit of Crime Poetry considering how attitudes to class and gender across the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century impact crime in their respective eras. Furthermore, the relationship between morals and the law is debated and evaluated within lessons. This enables students to add philosophical and ethical layers to their analysis. Students then study a creative writing unit refining their repertoire of vocabulary, plot and sentence variety to engage readers. The impact individuals can have on society is then explored through a unit analysing the genre of dystopia. Here students reflect upon their own worlds, and how writers explore their visions for different societies through political protest writing and science fiction. The power of the individual's voice is further consolidated when students study Important Female Voices enabling them to critique gender alongside language analysis. The formation and subversion of gender is then explored in comics; students will explore how popular culture has the power to both perpetuate and subvert toxic gender stereotypes. Finally, students finish the year with a study of Romeo and Juliet applying their now secure understanding of social impact on people.

### **Substantive Knowledge for Literacy Lessons**

The curriculum for Year 8 is designed for students to have three English lessons (covering the disciplinary content above) and one literacy focussed lesson in which students revision spelling, punctuation and grammar. Due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic the last two years, the literacy lessons are designed to ensure there are no gaps in the students' application of KS2 and KS3 literacy skills. Students will: revisit word classification (fronted adverbials, superlatives and comparatives, verb types); basic punctuation rules (semi-colons and colons, using brackets for subordination) alongside completing 10 key spellings each week (comprised of topic specific vocabulary and commonly misspelled words). Once we have covered the basic foundation of English grammar in the lessons, we will then focus on reading comprehension, application of grammatical terminology for analysis and 'big writes' to ensure that each student can apply accurate grammar choices to their work.

## **Disciplinary Knowledge**

In Year 8, students explore how writers use language (phonetics, syntax, structure and descriptive devices) to reflect upon, protest against and empower society. The teaching of embedding contextual information into analysis enables students to evaluate their own attitudes to writers' ideologies. Furthermore, students develop their ability to express their own ideas in formal settings, from creative writing to debates, by having a sophisticated repertoire of vocabulary, engaging syntax and passionate communication of ideas. In their study of advertising, students combine their analysis of language and ideology with media techniques from Maslow's hierarchy of needs when learning and applying media speak to comic book analysis. Finally, in their study of Shakespeare and poetry, students begin to consider the importance of form, meter and rhythm to convey changing tensions within the texts studied.

## **Year 9**

### **Substantive Knowledge**

Students enter their final year of Key Stage 3 by conducting a study on '*Of Mice and Men*' enabling them to explore how a novel can expose societal prejudices against vulnerable members of society. This 20<sup>th</sup> century study then provides them with the foundation to explore the Gothic genre in which poets, dramatists and novelists protested against social deprivation and personal implication of the effects of poverty in their respective works. The theme of social protest and the importance of an individual's voice continues when students study poetry from other cultures – broadening their perspectives from western literature to global voices. An interdisciplinary study of non-fiction and fiction around the topic of Society's biggest questions is then explored for students to evaluate the importance words have on empowering people to challenge their ideologies. In their second novel study of the year, students then move on to read, analyse and debate William Goldings' '*Lord of the Flies*'; students consider the importance of democracy, the rule of law and the ethical foundations of human interaction and society. Finally, students consolidate Key Stage 3 through an exploration of Shakespeare's villains encountering the genres of tragedy and historical plays through a contextual and literary focus.

### **Disciplinary Knowledge**

The English curriculum at ASAD exponentially develops skills honed in Year 7 and 8. Students refine their linguistic and grammatical knowledge of the language to include phonetic and semantic analysis of words and clauses; additionally, their metaphorical interpretation of techniques expands beyond metaphor and simile to consider the wider structural impact of devices across a novel. Furthermore, students are encouraged to critique and develop an appreciation for structure beyond a comprehensive level; Freytag's pyramid, media-techniques and engagement with the audience are applied to both reading and written activities. Finally, the development of the students' voice develops across Year 9 – through a focus on the importance of paralinguistics alongside expression and confidence in ideas.

### **Substantive Knowledge for Literacy Lessons**

The curriculum for Year 9 is designed for students to have three English lessons (covering the disciplinary content above) and one literacy focussed lesson in which students revision spelling, punctuation and grammar. Due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic the last two years,

the literacy lessons are designed to ensure there are no gaps in the students' foundation knowledge in Key Stage 3 literacy. Students will revise syntax and grammar through by focussing on clauses (main, minor and subordinate), phrases (fronted adverbials, prepositional and verb phrases) and sentence types. Students will also revise punctuation rules for commas, apostrophes, semi-colons and colons. This will enable our students to make succinct analytical comments about a writer's syntax and grammar choices whilst also being more ambitious in their own grammar choices in their work. Students will also complete a ten-word spelling test within these lessons each week to ensure that they have an accurate, written command within English. Once we have covered syntactic and grammar in the literacy lessons, students are then guided in their reading competency of 19<sup>th</sup> century sources enabling us to support them in their deciphering and understanding of texts.