

English

“In the beginning was the word,” John 1:1

Intent statement

When I read great literature, great drama, speeches, or sermons, I feel that the human mind has not achieved anything greater than the ability to share feelings and thoughts through language.’ – James Earl Jones

English has a pre-eminent place in both education and society. A high-quality education in English teaches students to speak and write fluently, so that they can effectively communicate their ideas and emotions to others. Through reading and listening, others can communicate with them, leading to further understanding across diverse cultural, national, age and gender boundaries, thus empowering students’ empathy for others.

Reading in particular, enables students to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables students to flourish, acquiring knowledge and understanding, building on what they know as well as enriching their understanding of what they may not yet have experienced. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a valuable member of society.

At St Cuthbert’s Catholic High School, it is our intention to develop confident learners and developed young adults, who can communicate effectively in both the written and spoken form, whilst also ensuring that they have the patience and empathy to listen and respect the opinions of others.

English isn’t simply a curriculum area it is a passport for life, which enables students to communicate effectively, developing skills that will help them to navigate through life, reflecting the improving local economy and labour market, and preparing them for life in the world or work.

Curriculum research

The decision was made to move to three units per year group. There is a move nationally towards doing fewer units in greater depth, evidenced through curriculum maps on various school websites.

The National Curriculum states that students should read “a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including in particular whole books, short stories, poems and plays with a wide coverage of genres, historical periods, forms and authors”, with the range including: English literature, both pre-1914 and contemporary, including prose, poetry and drama; two Shakespeare and seminal world literature, with students choosing and reading books independently for challenge, interest and enjoyment. “

[National curriculum in England: English programmes of study - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61222/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study-2014.pdf)

All units to reference the current concepts being covered in the existing curriculum but these will be made more explicit in the curriculum overview document, using the following terminology: Context, Story, Figurative Language, Argument, Structure and Grammar.

For the past eighteen months, research has been carried out regarding David Didau’s concept led curriculum. Whilst the current schemes of learning cover these six areas, identified by the objectives on the curriculum map, they will now be made more explicit on the curriculum end point documents.

[Specifying a concept-led KS3 English curriculum – David Didau \(learningspy.co.uk\)](https://www.learningspy.co.uk/2017/05/01/specifying-a-concept-led-ks3-english-curriculum/)

Six Pillars of Mastery	
Context	The more students know of the broad sweep of literature , the better they can interpret any individual text. If they have some idea of what a writer has read, what concerns they are responding to, how the assumptions they would have taken for granted would have been very different from our own, then their judgement is better informed, more refined.
Story	In order to make sense of our experiences we tell stories. Stories and storytelling have evolved with us as a primary means of describing the world. By examining how storytelling developed from its origins in myth and legend to its modern bewildering array of forms and expressions, students learn to appreciate their place in a conversation that has been unfolding throughout history.
Figurative Language	Our direct experience is of the concrete, tangible world. In order to think about abstract ideas, we draw comparisons between what we have directly experienced and what we cannot. This figurative way of seeing permeates the way we think as much as it does language and literature.
Argument	In order to communicate, discuss and persuade with clarity and force we require formal structures of thought and expression. By analysing the ways arguments are structured and made persuasive , we can start to take part in shaping the world in a more deliberate way.
Structure	Everything around us is composed of rhythms of similarity and difference, discord and harmony, variation and repetition. In perceiving these patterns, we turn chaos into order. This body of knowledge deals with the various ways we use structure to impose meaning on texts.
Grammar	Our instinct for rapidly acquiring grammatical knowledge in order to impose meaning and order on the words we use appears to be innate, but an ability to notice, understand and play with grammatical structures requires learning a new language about language.

[Specifying a concept-led KS3 English curriculum – David Didau \(learningspy.co.uk\)](https://www.learningspy.co.uk)

Powerful knowledge

- Students will develop their knowledge of and skills in writing, refining their drafting skills and developing resilience to write at length.
- Student will understand how to structure quality texts when writing formal and academic essays as well as writing imaginatively.
- Students will know the importance of carefully selecting ambitious and varied vocabulary, as well as appropriate linguistic devices, when writing for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Students will know and understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language.
- Students will understand the importance of using Standard English.
- Students will understand the importance of using the correct grammar
- They should understand and use age-appropriate vocabulary, including linguistic and literary terminology, for discussing their reading, writing and spoken language. This involves consolidation, practice and discussion of language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching. Teachers should build on the knowledge and skills that pupils have been taught at key stage 3. Decisions about progression should be based on the security of pupils' linguistic knowledge, skills and understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils whose linguistic development is more advanced should be challenged through being offered opportunities for increased breadth and depth in reading and writing. Those who are less fluent should consolidate their knowledge, understanding and skills, including through additional practice

KS3 Curriculum Rationale and Sequencing

Year 7

- Origins of story-myths from a variety of cultures/religions
- Aristotle (ethos/logos/pathos) “the discipline of rhetoric can give an insight into how writers and orators use spoken language”
- Pre 19th Century novel
- Literary canon
- Knowledge of living conditions-Victorian society-poor laws, workhouses-in preparation for further study at GCSE
- Intro to Dickens in preparation for further study

Year 8

- Animal Farm-literary canon-to be used as the main focus for the unit.
- Extracts from other classic texts and modern texts to be use to explore a thematic approach to literature-power and corruption.
- Intro to Shakespeare for further study (genre: tragedy) Macbeth
- How this theme is explored in other quality literature
- Understanding and appreciation of different cultures
- Poems for different cultures: cultural identity and diversity, introduction to some of the poets studied in KS4
- Language of rhetoric-how speeches are constructed extending the work started in Year 7

Year 9

- Gothic Literature-Different genre to those previously studied
- Links to subsequent work in Year 10 (A Christmas Carol).
- Female writer-Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte
- War poetry-lays the foundations for subsequent work in KS4
- War poetry-appreciation for the work of famous poets. Foundations for the Power and Conflict anthology cluster studied at KS4
- Reading of a complete novel. Linked to the unit’s theme-enables a thematic approach. Modern text-written using Gothic tradition (A Woman in Black by Susan Hill)
- 2nd Shakespeare play to be read in its entirety-different genre to previous play. Genre: Comedy. Patriarchal society. Role of women. Contextual information links to R and J (in preparation for KS3). Much Ado about Nothing.
- Branches in to love and relationship poems. Presenting an alternative theme to the War and Conflict of unit 2.
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Key Stage 4 Rationale and Sequencing

Examination Rationale

The decision was made to use the same exam board for both Language and Literature with AQA selected after careful consideration of Eduqas and Edexcel. It was felt that AQA English Language was more appropriate due to the format of the paper. The writing section requires students to produce one piece of extended writing, which enabled students to write at length focusing on just one task. The writing question is also closely linked to the source text from the reading section. There is also a clear focus on structure within the reading questions of paper 1. It was felt that analysing and commenting on the structure of texts would lead to a greater understanding of the impact of a well-structured text and would lead to an improvement in the way students structured their own writing.

The choice of poems on the AQA English Literature specification was the main reason for its selection. There were also 15 poems as opposed to the 19 of Eduqas. It was also felt that the exam paper was much easier to navigate. Whilst focusing on the same texts and assessing the same skills as the other exam boards, the layout of the paper was more user friendly.

English Language

Reading: The ability to independently analyse unseen fictional extracts and non-fiction texts, showing a perceptive understanding of an author's craft and making comparison between the methods they use to establish their viewpoint.

Writing: The ability to write a range of fictional texts (narratives and descriptions across a range of themes) and the ability to produce letters, speeches and articles, which express an opinion about a range of topics.

Speaking and Listening: The ability to articulate their own point of view and respond to the opinion of others, through presentations and debates.

Throughout Key Stage 4, language tasks are interwoven in to the scheme of learning to ensure the skills required are explicitly taught at various points across the two years. Therefore, there are many opportunities for students to develop their ability to analyse a range of texts and to improve their writing craft.

English Literature

Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet. The play is revisited at various points throughout Year 10 and 11 with a different focus each time. Firstly, the plot and an understanding of characters are established before a detailed analysis of the themes contained in the play.

19th Century Prose: A Christmas Carol. This is initially read in Y10 term 1b but is then revisited on numerous occasions throughout Y10 and Y11, each time focusing on different characters and themes

Modern text: Blood Brothers. This is initially read in y10 with a clear focus on context, character and relationships. Each time it is revisited different characters and themes are thoroughly analysed ensuring the students deepen their knowledge of the play, and the skills they acquire are revisited at three separate points across KS4

Power and Conflict poetry. The poems are broken down into three discrete categories: War, Nature and Oppression. By splitting the poems into three sections it enables staff to revisit the techniques used by poets to establish theme on three separate occasions throughout KS4, ensuring students frequently use these skills.

Year 10

Romeo and Juliet	A Christmas Carol	Blood Brothers	Poetry
Study of central characters and their relationships through key scenes to explore the issues raised by a patriarchal society Nurse and Juliet Loyalty Familial love Friendship	Context-Social, cultural, historical Plot-all staves Role of the ghosts Scrooge and his transformation	Context-Social, cultural, historical Plot Mrs Johnstone Mrs Lyons Edward Mickey Linda Class	Nature Kamikaze Exposure The Prelude Storm on the Island War Bayonet Charge Charge of the Light Brigade War Photographer Poppies Remains Power and Conflict (people/oppression) London The Emigree My Last Duchess Ozymandias Checking out Me History Tissue

Year 11

Romeo and Juliet	A Christmas Carol	Blood Brothers	Poetry
Themes Violence Conflict Love-romantic love/ familial love Fate	Themes Family -Fred -Belle -Fezziwig Poverty/Class	Themes Nature v Nurture Violence- Sammy Superstition-Narrator Religion	Comparisons Unseen poetry

Assessment in English

Assessment Rationale

KS3

In the first instance Key Knowledge is assessed through recall. The knowledge of key characters, plot events and key quotes form an integral part of all knowledge tests. Key assessment tasks also include some skills related tasks, so that students can use the knowledge gained to write more detailed responses to questions about texts.

KS4

In the first instance Key Knowledge is assessed through recall. The knowledge of key characters, plot events and key quotes form an integral part of all knowledge tests. Key assessment tasks also include some skills related tasks, so that students can use the knowledge gained to write more detailed responses to questions about texts.

<p>Year 9</p>	<p>Gothic Literature: Wuthering Heights and The Woman in Black</p> <p>KAT 1a and 1b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 1 to 4</p>	<p>War-Poetry (from various wars)</p> <p>KAT 2a and 2b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 5 to 8</p>	<p>Romance and Comedy: The Carpenter’s Tale (from The Canterbury Tales)/Much Ado About Nothing</p> <p>KAT 3a and 3b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 9 to 12</p>
<p>Year 8</p>	<p>Power and Corruption-The Tempest and Animal Farm</p> <p>KAT 1a and 1b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 1 to 4</p>	<p>Tragedy through the Ages-The story of Oedipus/The Miller’s Tale (Sampson’s story-from The Canterbury Tales/Macbeth</p> <p>KAT 2a and 2b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 5 to 8</p>	<p>Freedom-Short stories and Poetry from different cultures</p> <p>KAT 3a and 3b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 9 to 12</p>
<p>Year 8</p>	<p>Power and Corruption-The Tempest and Animal Farm</p> <p>KAT 1a and 1b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 1 to 4</p>	<p>Tragedy through the Ages-The story of Oedipus/The Miller’s Tale (Sampson’s story-from The Canterbury Tales/Macbeth</p> <p>KAT 2a and 2b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 5 to 8</p>	<p>Freedom-Short stories and Poetry from different cultures</p> <p>KAT 3a and 3b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 9 to 12</p>

<p>Year 7</p>	<p>Ancient Origins-Myths</p> <p>KAT 1a and 1b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 1 to 4</p>	<p>Legends of the Past-Legends</p> <p>KAT 2a and 2b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 5 to 8</p>	<p>Victorian Life-Oliver Twist</p> <p>KAT 3a and 3b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary definition • Understanding of plot and character • Language and structure analysis • Writing skills-sentence variety <p>Knowledge Tests 9 to 12</p>
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Formative assessment

- Live feedback
- Questioning
- Review of learning
- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment,
- Low stakes testing

Summative assessment

- Knowledge tests
- Key Assessed Tasks

Cultural Capital

The more students know of the broad sweep of literature, the better they can interpret any individual text. If they have some idea of what a writer has read, what concerns they are responding to, how the assumptions they would have taken for granted would have been very different from our own, then their judgement is better informed, more refined.

Quality literature opens students to a world they may not discover in the confines of their real lives. They are taken to places they have never been, to meet characters they have never have encountered, to discover valuable life lessons that will enable them to evolve in to global citizens.

Catholic Social Teachings

Our English curriculum is designed with Catholic Social Teachings at its heart, underpinning our text choices, units and activities that students complete. The Dignity of the Person is explored through our work on mythology and autobiography, where we look at human experience from across different times, places and cultures; students are encouraged to use creative writing as a way of exploring their own sense of self. Solidarity is valued and promoted, primarily through our development of a reading culture that encourages empathy and understanding; students are asked to write from different perspectives, allowing them to imagine life in someone else's shoes. Peace is explored through first-hand accounts of war, for example, where students are able to empathise with the impact of conflict across the world. How human actions have consequences for the natural world is a common concern of Literature, allowing students to consider our obligations to Care for Creation, shown most vividly in our study of the Romanticism Movement. Dignity of Work and Participation is explored through a wide range of careers that students are introduced to, but, more fundamentally, through how we prepare our students to participate in the wider world, as passionate advocates of equality with confident control of the written and spoken word.

Multi-culturalism and Diversity

Our curriculum includes authors from diverse backgrounds to reflect the rich variety of voices and experiences that make up our society. Exposure to different cultures, perspectives, and identities helps students develop empathy, critical thinking, and a broader understanding of the world. Including authors from various ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds ensures that all students can see themselves represented in what they read, which can increase engagement and a sense of belonging. It also prepares students for life in a multicultural world by challenging stereotypes and encouraging open-mindedness. A more inclusive curriculum not only enriches literary study but also supports a more equitable and informed education system.