Pyrland School

English

Curriculum Booklet for 2026 - 2027

Subject Lead: Mrs Logsdon

Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

English Curriculum Intent:

"A drop of ink may make a million think." — Lord Byron

Our goal in English is to give each student the best experience when studying our English curriculum, enabling them, whatever their starting point, to make excellent progress and develop a love of our subject. Pyrland's vision is for students to live "lives in all their fullness": in English "fullness" means to be able to read fluently, write confidently and engage enthusiastically with the world around us but also to appreciate the various experiences of the human condition through the study of literature. Our English curriculum aims to nurture this ambition through academic rigour, careful text choices and opportunities for young people to articulate their place in our world.

Our KS3 curriculum is diverse, comprehensive and challenging. Students explore a wide variety of texts that go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum, covering non-fiction, drama (including Shakespeare), ambitious and engaging novels and poetry from different time periods and perspectives. We recognise the importance of our subject to a student's moral and spiritual education and our literature texts provide a springboard for reflection on universal concerns: how we care for our planet; how we treat others and what it means to be human.

In our texts, we think carefully about the writers' craft, identifying purpose, audience, format, and methods employed. Learners make thoughtful and insightful inferences and consider the impact of social and historical context on a writer's choices. They learn to evaluate and compare the ways in which differing viewpoints are presented.

Through the study of carefully chosen texts comes the invitation to participate; students utilise their knowledge to craft their own imaginative writing for a range of audiences and with a focus on clarity, accuracy and creativity.

In addition, our curriculum and its delivery aim to develop students' oracy, confidence and their ability to self-advocate skilfully and thoughtfully. Students are given opportunities to present, discuss and debate through the curriculum and in vocabulary rich classrooms. We value our students' insights and understand the role our subject plays in students "finding their voice". They are taught to actively listen and are coached to respond in a careful and developed way.

Our KS3 curriculum is also designed to embed and develop core skills at KS3, equipping students to deal with the demands of the GCSE at KS4 and enabling an appreciation and enjoyment of Literature. They continue to develop their ability to evaluate, analyse and compare as well as improve the sophistication of their expertise as writers as they move through our curriculum.

Students should feel confident in approaching their GCSEs regardless of needs, ability or barriers, and the curriculum is designed to build resilience and confidence in approaching the exams. We want students to value their experience of English at Pyrland, to remember the texts they read and why they matter. Our aim is for students to leave school not only with vital life skills in reading, writing and oracy, but also with a greater emotional literacy around the human condition, and of themselves.

English Curriculum Implementation:

Our curriculum is sequenced like a spiral, meaning that students encounter and revisit core concepts such as character, sentence structures and metaphor throughout Key Stages 3 and 4, with teachers deepening and increasing the sophistication and complexity with each passing year. We work closely with the MNSP Trust Leader for English to ensure our curriculum and assessment model is well sequenced and ambitious.

Our year groups are divided into halves. Each half of the year group has a more able group and three mixed ability groups. This enables us to meet the needs of all our students most successfully and illustrates our ambition for all students (including those with SEND) to succeed. There is opportunity for movement between groups as students excel. Learners are supported through a clear lesson routine whether we are working with texts, creating texts or debating an issue. Our lessons will feature open questioning, eliciting students' thoughts, the sharing of ideas and the collective analysis and discussion of the literature we encounter. Teachers and students craft together and explore high quality, ambitious examples of writing to further inform their own production.

Key Stage 3
Key Stage 3 topics focus on five areas: prose, drama, poetry, creative and non-fiction writing. These are revisited each year in our spiral curriculum with increasing complexity. For example, we journey from exploring nature poetry and introducing students to poetic form in Year 7 through war poetry and the influence of context in Year 8 to comparative work and exploring identity in Year 9. Our texts explore universal themes: identity, conflict and the environment.

In reading, students begin with comprehension and simple inference and progress to deep diving key word choices, identifying the writer's perspective and thinking about how writers are influenced by historical and social contexts. They learn to construct analytical paragraphs which they will continue to develop in their study of GCSE. We work closely with our librarian to make sure each term provides opportunities for students to visit our library, nurturing their love of reading and encouraging wider reading around the topic being studied.

Key Stage 4
At Key Stage 4, students follow the AQA English Language and English Literature syllabi, studying a wide range of literature texts from Dickens and Shakespeare to more contemporary poetry. Students are taught to question and interpret a range of themes and ideas in each text and use these to inform their analytical writing. In terms of language, students regularly rehearse the skills that they will need in the final examinations. This is done through careful question walkthroughs and independent practice.

Allocated Curriculum Time:

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Lessons per fortnight	8	8	8	8	8

Year 7 Programme of Study

Term	Curriculum Foci	Formal Assessment
1	**"The Secret at the Heart of My School"** Students will ● Explore engaging and exciting texts from the fantasy genre; ● Use these texts as inspiration for their own writing and investigate; the possibilities for fantastical stories set in their own school. **Myths and Legends** Students will ● Experience a wide range of stories from across the world; ● Consider how authors build character; ● Continue to build their knowledge of how stories are shaped and organised; ● Produce their own stories, building character and creating vivid, interesting tales.	**Foundational writing profile.** **Writing Assessment:** A fantasy story
2	**Roots of English** Students will ● Explore the roots of language and etymology of words; ● Discover how English became a worldwide language; ● Widen understanding of vocabulary and relationships between words; ● Be able to adapt register in different situations and speak with confidence.	**Speaking Assessment:** Etymology
3	**A Novel Study – *October, October*** Students will ● Consider the author's intentions and messages; ● Explore characterisation and narrative voice; ● Build their skills annotating extracts; ● Begin to learn how to structure an analytical paragraph.	**Reading assessment:** How does Katya Balen present October's experiences on her first day at school?
4	**Nature Poetry** Students will ● Read a diverse selection of poetry; ● Begin to understand how to identify rhyme, rhythm and other aural effects in poetry; ● Understand poetry as a distinct form, including the importance of line endings and extended figurative devices.	**Reading assessment:** Analysing a poem
5	**Your Planet Needs You** Students will ● Analyse persuasive methods in a variety of engaging texts; ● Craft their own non-fiction writing in recognisable forms; ● Develop their oracy skills.	**Year 7 exams (see below)**
6	**A Midsummer Night's Dream** Students will ● Analyse language choices and dramatic techniques; ● Develop their understanding of the context of Shakespeare's writing; ● Develop their oracy skills through dramatic performances.	**Oral presentations:** A scene from the play
Year 7 Exams – Term 5 **Reading: Unseen Fiction (45 minutes)** **Writing: Persuasive Letter (45 minutes)**		

Year 8 Programme of Study

Term	Curriculum Foci	Formal Assessment
1	**Great Expectations - a novel study** Students will ● Enjoy and experience a 19th Century text; ● Analyse and explore Dickens choices in crafting a classic novel; ● Learn how to write longer pieces of writing about an author's choices.	**Reading Assessment:** How does Dickens present Pip's thoughts and feelings about the characters he encounters and the experiences he has?
2	**Crime and Non-Fiction Writing** Students will ● read and analyse a range of texts from the 19th Century onwards; ● craft their own editorials through a study of journalistic conventions; ● build their understanding of how attitudes to crime and punishment have changed over time.	**Writing Assessment:** An editorial on an aspect of crime
3	**Poetry of the First World War** Students will: ● Read and analyse war poems from a range of perspectives; ● Consolidate and add to their knowledge of poetic terms and develop annotation skills; ● Appreciate the importance of context in shaping poems.	**Reading Assessment:** "The poetry of the First World War presents that conflict as heroic, noble and glorious." *To what extent do you agree?*
4	**Exploring the Gothic** Students will ● respond to a range of 19th Century literary texts; ● understand the gothic genre and its context; ● describe character and setting using a range of descriptive methods; ● use varied and ambitious vocabulary.	**Writing Assessment:** The opening of a gothic short story
5	**Coram Boy** - a play study Students will: ● Consider how writers, directors and actors make choices to inform drama; ● Read a challenging play script and consider the 18th century society it reveals; ● Develop their oracy skills through performance.	**End of Year Reading Exam**
6	**Futuristic Fiction** **Students will:** ● Craft their own science-fiction stories; ● Explore a range of carefully chosen fiction; ● Develop their understanding of the dystopian genre.	**End of Year writing Exam**
Year 8 Exams – Term 5 **Reading: Unseen Fiction (45 minutes)** **Writing: Creative Writing (45 minutes)**		

Year 9 Programme of Study

Term	Curriculum Foci	Formal Assessment
1	**The Woman in Black** Students will ● Study how Susan Hill uses language to create a gothic atmosphere and build tension; ● Study how the author structures the text to engage the reader.	**Reading Assessment:** How does Hill use settings to create a sense of threat and danger?
2	**Rights and Rhetoric** Students will ● Consider how speakers across time have persuaded a variety of audiences; ● Analyse writers' use of rhetorical devices; ● Develop their own oracy skills, focusing on the mastery of the verbal, vocal and visual when speaking.	**Writing Assessment:** Students write their own persuasive speech.
3	**Small Island – Andrea Levy** Students will: ● Consider the language choices and dramatic choices of a playwright; ● Explore how relationships change and develop over the course of a play; ● Explore the context of the Windrush Generation.	**Reading Assessment:** How does Andrea Levy present the relationship between Hortense and Gilbert in *Small Island*?
4	**The Poetry of Identity** Students will: ● Read and analyse a wide range of poems from different times and places; ● Deepen their understanding of writers' choices of language and structure; ● Explore mature themes such as loss, heartbreak, memory, place and war.	**Reading Assessment:** Comparing a theme of the student's choice across two poems.
5	**Romeo and Juliet** Students will: ● Students revise their knowledge of drama from Years 7 and 8; ● Learn the dramatic form of the tragedy and its conventions; ● Revisit Shakespeare's use of sonnet form; ● Consider the development of a character throughout the play.	**Reading Assessment:** How is Romeo presented as a character with strong feelings?
6	**Spoken Language endorsement** Students will ● Plan, write and deliver a speech on a topic of their own choice for their GCSE Spoken Language endorsement.	**End of Year writing exam.** **Spoken Language Presentation**
Year 9 Exam – Term 6 Writing: Persuasive Speech		

Year 10 GCSEs in English Language and English Literature Programme of Study
Exam Board: AQA
Exam Specification: Language 8700 and Literature 8702

Term	Curriculum Foci	Formal Assessment
1	**The World of Fiction + Poetry Cluster** Students will: ● identify and interpret information; ● explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure; ● evaluate texts critically using appropriate references; ● study a group of poems in the "Power and Conflict" cluster.	**Assessment:** English Language Paper 1 Section A
2	**A Christmas Carol** Students will: ● trace development of theme, character and plot across the novella; ● consider contextual influences upon the text; ● understand the writer's intention; ● learn how to respond to an exam question.	**Assessment:** English Literature Paper 1 Section B: 19th Century novel
3	**Exploration in Creative Writing + Poetry Cluster** Students will: ● study a range of texts, noting the devices used by the writer in terms of language and structure; ● use these language and structural methods in their own writing. ● Study a group of poems in the "Power and Conflict" cluster.	**Assessment:** English Language Paper 1 Section B
4	**Macbeth** Students will: ● learn about the context of the 1600s; ● explore Shakespeare's language; ● explore characterisation, setting and structure; ● use and analyse quotations; ● learn how to plan exam responses.	
5	**Concluding Macbeth and the Anthology** Students will: ● complete their study of Macbeth and continue developing the skills mentioned above; ● complete their study of the Power and Conflict poems; ● Begin to prepare for the Year 10 mock exams	**Assessment:** English Literature Paper 1 Section A: Shakespeare
6	**Consolidating Year 10 and Unseen Poetry** Students will: ● develop revision skills and prepare for their mock examination; ● analyse a range of unseen poems using skills gained through anthology study.	**Assessment:** English Language Paper 1 English Literature Paper 1

Year 11 GCSEs in English Language and English Literature Programme of Study
Exam Board: AQA
Exam Specification: Language 8700 and Literature 8702

Term	Curriculum Foci	Formal Assessment
1	**Poetry Anthology** Students will revise key themes from the Power and Conflict anthology. **The World of Non-Fiction** Students will: ● identify and interpret information; ● explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure; ● evaluate texts critically using appropriate references;	**Assessment:** Poetry anthology question
2	**An Inspector Calls** Students will: ● understand the plot and characterisation of the play; ● explore the thematic concerns and social context of the play; ● analyse the language and techniques in the play.	**Assessment:** **Mock exams:** Language Paper 2 Literature Paper 1
3	**Completion of An Inspector Calls + Poetry Revision** Students will: ● revise knowledge about poetic form and methods; ● analyse a range of unseen poems using skills gained through anthology study;	**Assessment:** An Inspector Calls
4	**Revision run-in**	**Assessment**: **Mock exams:** Language Paper 1 Literature Paper 2
5	**Revision run-in**	**Final examinations**

Final GCSE Assessment Structure:

English Language

Component	Weighting (%)	Content	Proposed Examination Date
Paper 1 (1 hour 45)	50%	**Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (Fiction)** ● Students respond to an unseen fiction extract in Section A. ● Students write their own piece of description or narrative writing in Section B.	May/June Year 11
Paper 2 (1 hour 45)	50%	**Viewpoints and Perspectives (Non-Fiction)** ● Students respond to two unseen non-fiction extracts in Section A; ● Students write their own article, letter or speech, persuading the reader of their point of view.	May/June Year 11

Please see exam board websites for up to date information:
AQA | English | GCSE | GCSE English Language

English Literature

Component	Weighting (%)	Content	Proposed Examination Date
Paper 1 (1 hour 45)	40%	**Exam:** ● Shakespeare - Macbeth ● 10th Century Text – A Christmas Carol	May/June Year 11
Paper 2 (2 hours 15)	60%	**Exam:** ● Modern prose – An Inspector Calls ● Poetry Anthology – Power and Conflict ● Unseen Poetry	May/June Year 11

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AQA | English | GCSE | GCSE English Literature