Communication Faculty Handbook

2023 - 2024

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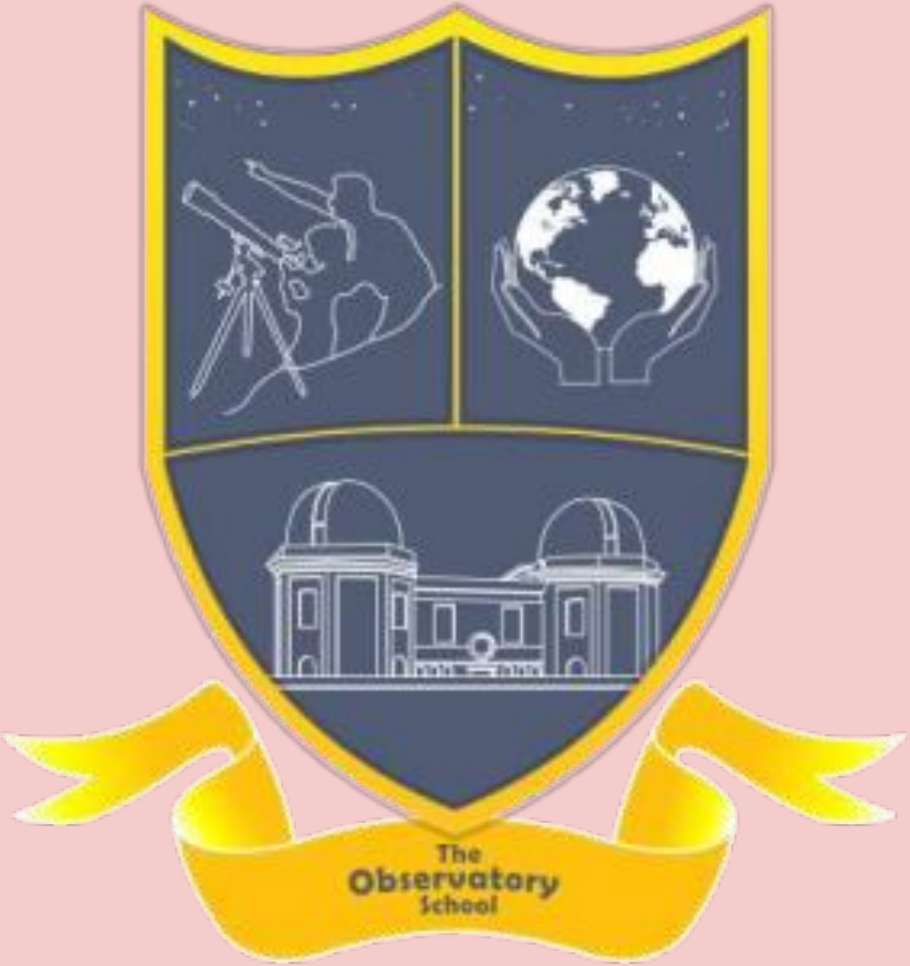
Introduction

The Communication faculty consists of the English and computing departments, as well as whole-school literacy provision. Each area has a specialist lead teacher, who oversees the teaching, learning and assessment within each subject. The subject specialists are supported by a key stage two link teacher who is responsible for the implementation in the primary years.



Communication Faculty Intent

We know that before joining The Observatory School students may have gaps in their skills due to barriers to learning or time missed from education. The Communication Faculty's intent is that all students will be able to close these gaps through individually targeted classroom teaching; systematic, synthetic phonics; embedded ICT learning; participating in whole-school reading and spelling programmes; and specialist interventions, where necessary.

The communication faculty works closely with all of the other faculties in the school. This ensures that data is available about individuals' reading, writing, and speaking and listening levels. The data provided by the communication faculty will inform all teaching and learning, across the school, to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all learners. Additionally, literacy and digital literacy skills are embedded into all subjects, so that students have plenty of opportunities to practice them in context.

While studying English and computing, students will improve their communication skills, such as: being able to express themselves convincingly; reading confidently; being able to navigate the digital world safely; developing the skills to use a computer effectively; and choosing their language to fit the context in speech and writing.

In Year 10 students will be placed into an academic or vocational pathway, which enables them to be working at the right level for their skills and knowledge. All departments within the faculty offer students the opportunity to achieve a range of formal qualifications, at the right level for their abilities and future aspirations.

Literacy Curriculum Intent

The Observatory School's values of enjoyment, responsibility and perseverance are at the core of our literacy teaching and learning. Our intention is that our pupils will enjoy their learning, because we use rigorous and on-going assessment to ensure that they are accessing the curriculum at the right level. Through individual target setting, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own progress and a comprehensive reward system teaches the value of perseverance.

We recognise that developing an effective literacy skill set (speaking, listening, reading, writing, and ICT skills) is fundamental to achieving a rich and fulfilling life. These skills are used every day to make sense of, and communicate with, the world around us. Therefore, at The Observatory School, we are committed to ensuring that our learners experience joined up, first-class literacy support across all subject areas and key stages.

Literacy Curriculum Intent: SEMH

As an SEMH school, we recognise that our students can have a range of barriers to their literacy learning. To understand the nature of each individual pupil's literacy profile, there is a robust assessment system in place. On arrival at The Observatory School, students will undertake a range of baseline assessments, including the New Group Reading Test (NGRT), New Group Spelling Test (NGST), Star Reading Assessment (Renaissance Place) and a levelled writing piece (using APP levels modified to fit with the new curriculum). Pupils in Key Stage 2 and Year 7, as well as those identified as having significant gaps in literacy learning, will also undertake the KS1 phonics screener, to identify any gaps in their phonemic awareness. These baseline assessments will provide individualised targets that are shared in a pupil-friendly way and used across all curriculum subjects.

Literacy Curriculum Intent: Reading

At The Observatory School, we believe that reading, particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. With this in mind, reading for pleasure is promoted across the school. The Observatory School library is at the heart of the school and is stocked with a wide range of books, including a large selection of Hi-Lo fiction for struggling readers. All pupils have two library lessons a week and use Accelerated Reader to encourage reading for pleasure and ensure all students are reading at the right level to drive optimal progress; prizes are given out for achieving reading targets; and we offer opportunities to visit the theatre and take part in workshops by visiting children's authors. We aim to improve the reading capacity of all our pupils; to this end, the literacy lead offers regular parent workshops to explain how to read with young people at home and use Accelerated Reader. Pupils also have the opportunity to become library monitors and take on responsibility for maintaining the school's library and reading systems.

Our intention is to develop each students' potential, by having our most able students reading at or above their chronological age and by closing the gap for students who have barriers to their learning. We define 'closing the gap' as students making age-related progress that is greater than the amount of time between assessments.

Literacy Curriculum Intent: Writing

To fully prepare pupils for a successful future, writing skills are also fundamentally important. As such, pupils at The Observatory School will be taught to write in a variety of fiction and non-fiction styles. They will be supported to communicate clearly and imaginatively, as well as to adapt their form and language for different audiences and purposes. We understand that some pupils may have gaps in their learning with writing also and, to support these pupils, we utilise a 'Talk for Writing' model where pupils are provided with excellent examples of each writing style and encouraged to internalise the structures through repetition, talk, and learning writing frames.

Literacy Curriculum Intent: Intervention

For pupils working at significantly lower than age-related expectations, The Observatory School has a specialist literacy intervention teacher. Each of these students will have an individualised Literacy Education Plan that is shared with all staff. Depending upon the level of need, students will have access to age appropriate phonics systems and books at their interest and ability level. Every intervention session aims to be tailor made for each student. A visiting Speech and Language Therapist is also available to assess students, identify their specific needs, and advise about targeted interventions. Both of these services inform Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and targets, ensuring that all staff are aware of the needs and best strategies for these pupils.

Literacy Curriculum Intent: Other Skills

At The Observatory School we have high expectations for our students and this includes encouraging them to develop softer literacy skills, such as oracy, listening and ICT skills. These are taught explicitly in English and computing lessons; however, they are also embedded into other curriculum subjects. Pupils are supported to: develop excellent debating and presenting skills; become confident using the range of Office software; navigate the internet safely and competently; and listen for meaning in a range of circumstances. Additionally, we offer the National Literacy Trust's Represent programme. This is a new, research-driven literacy programme designed for girls aged 11 to 14 in alternative provision that uses engaging texts to support communication skills, resilience and wellbeing.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: Accelerated Reader

Our Accelerated Reader programme is designed to encourage a love of reading across the school. All pupils have access to The Observatory School library, which is stocked with a large selection of Hi-Lo books, in fiction and non-fiction. This means that all pupils can find books that are suitable to their age, interests and abilities. Every class is assigned two library lessons a week - where pupils read and take their quizzes on Accelerated Reader.

Reading for pleasure is promoted throughout school by all staff. There is an assembly every term on the benefits of reading and introducing new books to pupils. The school also hosts visiting children's authors, who are chosen based upon the most popular books being read in the library. Additionally, there is an extensive rewards system based on engagement with the Accelerated Reader programme. The system counts how many words pupils have read, over the course of a year, and how many quizzes they have taken and passed. Including both categories allows a celebration of pupils across the ability spectrum. Those pupils who are placed in the top ten for each of these competitions, get to go on a fun trip at the end of each term. The Friday Wall of Fame assembly also celebrates pupils who have achieved significant milestones.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: English Reading Spine

The Observatory School English curriculum contains an ambitious and diverse reading spine. Pupils are introduced to a range of fiction texts from across the literary canon; they will encounter books from a range of genres and different historical and cultural contexts. They are supported to engage with books that they may not have the opportunity or ability to read otherwise. Pupils will read books from Harry Potter to Shakespeare; news articles to gothic and dystopian fiction; and be introduced to poetry in its many forms.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: Intervention

The Observatory School recognises that many pupils will come to us with significant barriers to reading. These pupils are identified through rigorous assessment - pupils all take NGRT and Star Reading Assessments, which enables them to be split into four categories. The two intervention categories, as well as all of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 pupils, will also be tested on the KS1 phonics screener. The NGRT and Star Reading assessments will be taken at a further four points in the year, allowing pupils to move up the intervention groups and to catch any pupils who are in need of further assistance.

The Observatory School has three levels of intervention: Blue (on watch); Yellow (read aloud); and Red (extended intervention). The first group are tackled through quality-first teaching and careful monitoring of their reading habits by their form teacher. The communication department TA3 delivers oracy-based comprehension interventions to the Yellow group; and a specialist literacy HLTA delivers phonics-based interventions to those that need it.

The Observatory School uses Little Wandle systematic, synthetic phonics and matches it with a range of older-reader decodable books.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: CLA Enrichment

The Observatory School recognises that looked-after pupils often have many gaps in and barriers to their education. They may not be working at levels appropriate to their abilities, even through they do not flag up as needing intervention. To address this issue, there are several after-school enrichment groups, primarily aimed at looked-after children, but open to others also. These groups are run by the communication faculty TA3 and HLTA. They are oracy-based literacy interventions targeting secondary pupils who have been unable to have their needs met in mainstream education. One is based around representation of their voice in fiction, and the other around football. The National Literacy Trust provides these interventions and they are incredibly popular; as well as, proven to help pupils make above-average progress in their overall literacy levels.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: Disciplinary Literacy

Our school recognises the importance of reading across the curriculum and in context; every teacher is a teacher of reading. All subjects develop disciplinary reading in their classrooms, including providing model texts and scaffolding reading, writing, and structured speaking tasks.

There has been a great drive in promoting wider reading in all subjects of the curriculum; departments have suggested subject specific books which are available in the library. Accelerated Reader provides opportunities for pupils to read books from different disciplines within each year group. This enables pupils to Read Like a Geographer, Scientist, Linguist, Historian, Mathematician.

Literacy Curriculum Implementation: Tier 2 and Tier 3 Vocabulary

Alongside promoting reading for pleasure, The Observatory School recognises the importance of developing a good vocabulary. Many pupils who join us do not have a firm understanding of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary - which are academic and subject-specialist words.

Vocabulary learning is tackled through detailed vocabulary progression plans for both Tier 2 vocabulary and within each subject specialism. All pupils will learn a 'Word of the Week', which are academic words needed to achieve more at school. They are also taught vocabulary explicitly in all of their subjects; as subject-specific words are better learned in context.

Literacy Curriculum Impact

As we establish our literacy policy with enthusiasm and conviction, we aim to secure a considerable increase in pupils' reading diet and exposure to new vocabulary. This will also help realise our ambition for all pupils to leave The Observatory School fully literate.

Pupils will:

- have access to age-appropriate books they can read independently
- enjoy books that they may not be able to read themselves.
- be exposed to complex sentence structures and vocabulary that can help to build background knowledge.
- become readers as writers.
- show a passion for books and literature.

Literacy Curriculum Impact

Our intent and implementation will result in some key factors of success:

- Our pupils' progress will be reflected in the NGRT and Star Reading data
- Early readers and those at risk of not accessing the curriculum make rapid progress in their reading and as a result begin to flourish academically and pastorally across subjects.
- There is a positive and vibrant book culture in the school.
- Reading habits are well developed and pupils regard reading as an enjoyable activity that brings happiness.
- All pupils have a personal reading book that they read for pleasure in their classroom.
- Reading deficits are closed.
- There is evidence of improved progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils understand the value of reading to learn.
- Pupils report positively about reading and the impact on their emotional wellbeing and happiness.
- Reading underpins the whole-school curriculum and is promoted within every subject area. This helps pupils to hone their reading skills including information retrieval.

English Curriculum Intent

The intention within English is to provide the opportunity for students to achieve their potential in English and to enable access to the entire curriculum. We support students to achieve academic qualifications such as GCSE English Language and Literature, along with the literacy tools to be successful in their lives after school. Students following a vocational pathway will be able to gain Entry level and Functional skills qualifications in English.

We provide an exciting and challenging topic-based programme of study, tailored to meet each student's needs in reading, writing, speaking and listening. We encourage the development of skills by promoting a passion for learning, engaging interest, and by building self-esteem through continuous progress and success.

English Curriculum Map: Key Stage 3 - Y7

KS2 Knowledge and Skills

Year 7	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Topic	Holes or Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	Poetry	The Zoo	David Walliams: Boy in a Dress	Introduction to Shakespeare: Midsummer Night's Dream	
Knowledge	Pupils will learn how to read, understand, and respond to text by reading a whole text. They will develop good reading comprehension skills through shared and independent reading – learning to develop the metacognitive skills needed for good reading.	Pupils will explore many types of poems through the ages. Students will study poets such as Zephaniah, Blake, Wordsworth and Shakespeare while learning the basics of poetry analysis. The unit will end with an essay style question based on one of the poems studied.	The topic will be introduced using illustrations/photos of animals in zoos to stimulate discussion about zoos and ethics. Pupils will practise skills in debating, presenting and transfer those skills to writing persuasively.	Pupils will build on the reading skills learned in Autumn 1 by studying a whole text. They will gain an understanding of character development and language choices. Pupils will develop their group discussion skills and be introduced to different forms of non-fiction writing, inspired by the text.	Pupils will be immersed in the world of Shakespeare, learning about the Elizabethan era and life and times of the playwright before studying A Midsummer Night's Dream. Pupils will begin to understand key Shakespearean methods and grow familiar with the language and style within his poetry.	
Skills	Reading: Identify and understand the main points, ideas and details in texts; Use knowledge of punctuation to aid understanding of straightforward texts Writing: write a letter using Word; write a review of the book, learning to maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response; using textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate their interpretations.	Pupils will learn to explain, comment on, and analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings, effects, and influence reader, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate to support their views.	Pupils will use model texts to infer meaning from pictures and distinguish between fact and opinion. They will develop their speaking skills by delivering a formal presentation, where they make an argument and use spoken Standard English effectively. They will develop their listening skills by responding appropriately to others' presentations, including asking relevant questions and giving feedback. Pupils will then create a piece of persuasive writing, using the AFORREST persuasive language features.	Reading skills: understanding vocabulary, retrieval, inference, summary skills, prediction, language choices, and comparisons. Writing: write various forms of non-fiction, inspired by the text (including: diary writing, summarising, instructions, etc. Pupils will review and build on their ability to read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate their interpretations.	Pupils will learn to analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate; as well as, show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written. While reading the texts. pupils will explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views Use appropriate phrases, registers and adapt contributions to take account of audience, purpose and medium	
Vocabulary	Adjective, simile, metaphor, synonym, antonym, first person, characterisation, yours sincerely/faithfully, critical style, references, quotations	Infer, deduce, personification, verbs, figurative language, literal meaning, viewpoint, stanza, interpretation	Present, formal language, standard English, argument, persuasive language, alliteration, facts, opinion, rhetorical questions, repetition, emotive language, statistics, triples	Summarise, Instructions, adjectives, First, Second, third person, ellipses , Inference, Imperative, synonym, Commentary, Prediction	Plot, Elizabethan, theme, conflict, narrative, genre, comedy, folklore, theme, monologue, iambic pentameter, structure, form, perspective, proof reading, social and historical context, irony, wordplay, satire, audience, recount	

Key Knowledge Transfer to Year 8 Shakespeare topic

English Curriculum Map: Key Stage 3 - Y8

Knowledge and skills learned from studying whole texts to be developed into knowledge about structural features of texts (language choices, structure and form). Pupils will learn how to analyse language in more depth.

Year 8	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1 / Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Topic	Gothic Literature	The Loch Ness Monster	Dystopian Fiction	Advertising	Historical Fiction or Shakespeare (Othello)
Knowledge	Pupils will read and explore the key ideas within gothic literature (character, atmosphere, and themes), drawing upon their understanding of plot and character from Year 7 to develop an appreciation for the structure of a text. They will be introduced to several modern and historical narratives and poems. They will learn how to compare and contrast language used in different texts, periods, and forms.	Building on the knowledge and skills learned in Year 7's Zoo unit, This topic will be review and extend pupils' knowledge of persuasive speech and writing, and forming arguments. Pupils will form an opinion, based on 'evidence'. They will read eye witness accounts and write their own. Pupils will look at both sides of the argument and be supported to take part in a small-group debate; before learning how to write a balanced argument in a formal style.	Through a selection of extracts, pupils will build an understanding of the dystopian genre. Pupils will then study a full novel, ('Final Girl' Tim Collins BL 4.4; 'Paradise' Tim Collins BL 4.7; 'The Giver' by Lois Lowry BL 5.7), identifying the features which are synonymous with the genre and developing a good understanding of character. Non-fiction extracts will complement the study of genre and allow pupils to delve deeper into a writer's intention through the lens of social and political issues.	Pupils will review their knowledge of persuasive writing techniques, by analysing the features used in advertisements: looking at the advertising techniques used both on screen and in print and discuss how effective these are in a number of examples. They will compare magazines of different genres and create a magazine article that develops their skills in writing for an audience.	Pupils will read and explore the key ideas within the novel, drawing upon their understanding of plot and character from Year 7 to develop an appreciation for the structure of a text. (White Bird: A Wonder Story BL 3.5) (Number the Stars BL 4.5) (The Book Thief BL 5.1) Studying a text will be used to embed an understanding of the relationship between text and context
Skills	Focus on the textual features (language, structure, form) that are used to create meaning and effects for different audiences and purposes. Pupils will develop their critical and fictional writing skills, by focusing on sentence-level work. Pupils will be encouraged to annotate extracts to help them write good, analytical responses that include relevant subject terminology.	Pupils will develop their speaking and listening skills by being given scaffolds to help them take part in a group debate. They will explicitly learn to express opinions and argument; turn taking; follow, understand, and respond appropriately to discussions; and use appropriate language registers. They will then develop these skills into writing balanced arguments.	Pupils will develop their reading and responding to texts skills. They will focus on understanding meaning; selecting appropriate textual evidence; and referencing contexts and methods. Pupils will develop their written responses to texts through looking at the writer's use of language and structure.	Pupils will review persuasive writing techniques and sensory descriptions, by analysing how they are used in advertisements. They will further their discussion and debate skills by expressing opinions backed by evidence. Pupils will then develop their understanding of the structure of article writing by focusing on the paragraph and structural level of writing texts.	Pupils will develop their skills in reading for meaning; selecting appropriate textual evidence; showing an awareness of a writer's use of language and structure; and explaining how the text fits into its context. Pupils will develop their understanding of historical texts in context, developed in Year 7's Shakespeare unit. They will focus on key themes in context.
Vocabulary	Gothic, writer's craft, setting, atmosphere, foreshadowing, foreboding, epigraph, structure, analyse, extract, modern, pathetic fallacy, annotate, digital media. Narrative, literary devices, dramatic,	Balanced argument, formal language, informal language, debate, evidence, sentence openers, signposting, turn taking, interjection, rhetoric	Dystopian, utopia, dystopian conventions, sensory detail, juxtaposition, descriptive writing, common features, skimming, scanning, reading for meaning, mood, propaganda	Introduction, main body, conclusion, advertisement, sensory detail, alliteration, telegraphic writing, expert opinion/endorsement, word play, rhetorical questions, emotive language, imperatives, hyperbole, fact and statistics, direct address, humour	Key themes, historical fiction, quotation, genre, context, structure, setting description, sensory detail, adjectives, adverbs

Key Knowledge Transfer from Year 7 and to Year 9's Shakespeare topic

English Curriculum Map: Key Stage 3 - Y9

Learning from Years 7 and 8 will be consolidated and extended in Year 9, in preparation for transitioning onto Key Stage 4. There will be a focus on deepening knowledge of text – structure, language, and context. As well as, improving writing skills. Scaffolding will be slowly removed from previously learned work and more independence encouraged, through writing skills processes.

Year 9	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Topic	Heroes - Robert Cormier or Pig-Heart Boy Malorie Blackman	Modern Drama: Blood Brothers	Stories Through Time: Greek Myths		Shakespearian Tragedy: Romeo and Juliet	Hidden Voices
Knowledge	Pupils will study a whole text and use this to be introduced to exam questions in Key Stage 4. They will deepen their understanding of the writer's use of language to effect readers; as well as, looking at key themes of heroism. Pupils will learn how to annotate extracts, pull out factual information, and write well-structured answers to language analysis questions.	Pupils will study the modern Willy Russell drama Blood Brothers, building upon their understanding of dramatic convention; their studying Shakespeare plays in Years 7 and 8 preparing them for their study of modern play An Inspector Calls in Year 10. Pupils will explore in more depth the contexts that underpin meaning in a text, tracking character development throughout, and securing an understanding of stagecraft.	Pupils will read a variety of Greek myths, before studying one in more depth. They will deepen their ability to read for meaning and refer to text in answers. They will use Talk4Writing strategies to understand the structure of Greek myths and mythical stories, before writing their own. Throughout this unit, pupils will expand on their understanding of the structures, language, and conventions of different nonfiction texts, including reports, newspaper articles, and information leaflets. They will learn to prioritise and order information, as well as the correct format and language for each text type. This topic will also link to the art unit, where pupils will learn about different art genres throughout history and do an in-depth study of Titian's 'Bacchus and Ariadne' to accompany the myth being studied here.		Pupils will enhance their prior learning of Shakespeare throughout KS3 by studying the genre of tragedy, identifying and analysing the features within a number of extracts from different tragic plays. Pupils will study Romeo and Juliet as their main text, honing their essay writing skills to explore themes within a play.	Pupils will study a range of literary texts under the theme of 'Hidden Voices', appreciating the role language and literature plays in the world and how it can be a tool for societal change. Pupils will simultaneously learn the art of rhetoric, allowing them to use powerful language in a spoken language presentation
Skills	Pupils will focus on deeper understanding of text, developing their summarising skills to enhance reading for meaning. Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references They will develop their ability to communicate clearly and effectively; organise information and ideas; and develop their writing skills from planning, structuring, to editing effectively.	The focus here will be on evaluating texts critically, with appropriate textual references, with written responses to the text. Pupils will learn to match their writing styles to audiences and ensure they are writing an appropriate length. The will learn to structure their writing well, using planning, paragraph level work, and editing skills. Their writing should begin to develop a personal voice and style.	Pupils will develop their writing skills by learning to plan their work; to build interesting characters; to build tension; how to write a good ending; and how to edit their work effectively. Building on the speaking skills pupils learned in Year 7 and 8, pupils will learn to create and sustain a role. They will also use speech to underpin their writing. Working at the word level, pupils will learn to use powerful verbs to add description and excitement to their writing. They will also improve their writing at the sentence level by varying the length of sentences to create tension and drama. Boxing up and analysing the underlying structure of Greek Myths will enable pupils to improve their paragraphing also.		Pupils will develop their reading response skills, by being supported to have thoughtful and detailed understandings of the meaning of texts. They will review and deepen their ability to select appropriate textual references and comment on language choices with a detailed exploration of their meaning and structure. Pupils' writing will be developed by looking at writing models for good answers.	Pupils will develop their speaking and listening skills, in preparation for GCSE and functional skills. They will learn to speak with confidence, using specific structure, effective vocabulary, and good intonation and emphasis. They will learn about rhetoric and how it is used in speeches; learning to apply the techniques to their own.
Vocabulary	Summarise, simile, quotation marks, referencing, direct quote, contrast, opening, theme, heroism	Foreshadowing; Repetition; Cyclical; Pivotal; Superstition; Violence; Fate; Tragedy; Authorial intent; motif	Aetiological; Allusion; Archetypal; Epic; Heroism; Hubris; Moral; Myth; Nemesis; Psychological		Tragedy, Elizabethan, chivalry, feud; prologue, iambic pentameter; patriarchy; Sonnet; verse; Foreshadow; prophetic; Fate	Prejudice; Discrimination; Metaphor; Racism; Stereotype; Foreshadowing; Rhetorical appeals; Ethos; Pathos; Logos

Pupils will be split into academic and vocational pathways, depending upon their level at the end of Year 9. Pupils will have developed the skills needed to progress onto GCSE or functional skills qualifications in Key Stage 4.

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
1. Keeping the topic the main thing	Students will remember what they think about. Seductive details can derail a student's thoughts and reduce learning.	Try to avoid activities that build engagement through entertainment. The content should be king. Keep explanations short and clear with examples and modelling.
2. Present new material in small steps	Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory proposes long-term memory has limitless capacity, but working memory is limited to four or five objects. This means that any new learning must be broken down into small, manageable chunks. The main objective here is to break new learning down into key chunks, and to rehearse these chunks to aid long-term retention.	Only present small amounts of new material at any time, and then assist students as they practise this material. **Whole-class texts:** plan four to five key points to focus on in the reading lesson and give the questions to pupils before reading. Encourage individual exploration of texts by creating open response questions also. **Repeat new vocabulary/terms regularly:** Ensure that key terms are repeated throughout the lesson and form part of retrieval practice in future lessons. **Rehearse new learning at the end of every lesson:** clear any notes on the board and use retrieval practices to elicit new information.

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
3. Good use of questioning for AfL, understanding and retrieval	Questions are powerful classroom tools that serve two basic functions: to help students practise new knowledge and to help the teacher determine what their students have learnt and if any further instruction/re-capping is needed. As Didau (2016) explains, testing has several significant benefits: • retrieval aids later retention • testing causes students to learn more for the next study episode • testing improves transfer: the processes of applying learning to new situations and of knowledge to new contexts • testing helps with retrieval of material not tested.	Use a large number of questions and check the responses of all students. Use factual and process questioning **Factual questions**: Use factual questions to ensure key, foundational knowledge is secured. Who steals Desdemona's handkerchief? What is a complex sentence? What is an adverb? Who says "unsex me here"? Who sings "Tell me it's not true"? Factual questions should be employed across all topic areas, key stages, and ability range in English; as well as, used as tools for differentiation, with increasing levels of challenge. This is building the skills for the low tariff questions in GCSE English language, such as 'Look at lines 1-20 of the source text. List five things we learn about X' **Process questions:** asking for evidence in support of an idea about a text – a quotation, with an explanation of how that quotation supports the claim, or some comment about the effect of the writer's use of language. These questions prepare pupils for the assessment objectives for GCSE English literature – AO1 Understanding, and AO2 Writer's techniques. **Combination questions:** a combination of factual and process questions. You could, for example, present students with quotations from Macbeth and ask them to identify the speaker (factual), and then to explain what that quotation means (process).

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
4. Provide Models	Providing students with models and worked examples can help them learn to solve problems faster. It enables pupils to see the process of constructing responses to questions and tasks; as well as, providing cognitive support. Providing worked examples and high-quality models also helps to avoid cognitive overload by allowing pupils to focus on the steps involved in reading, writing, etc	**Planning:** model effective planning for writing. Use questioning to produce shared knowledge and model how to build an effective plan from the information. Many methods of planning can be used, as long as pupils develop the idea that planning should be a swift process. **Writing:** use shared writing - where effective writing is produced as a group and written onto the board. Model how to use planning to structure sentences, paragraphs, and different forms of text. Shared writing can be done by eliciting words and sentences from the class or by the teacher writing and using think aloud techniques to share their thinking. **Reading:** Use think alouds to help pupils develop the metacognitive processes vital to effective reading. **Tasks:** Model understanding and answering English questions; demonstrate techniques such as, , identifying the function words and being clear about what they entail; annotating extracts (in preparation for Section A questions in GCSE papers) **Model answers:** use models of exam answers - provide sample student responses with an examiner's commentary and marks. incorporate this into lessons by, for example, asking students to think of ways to improve a sample answer

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
5. Give sufficient practice on each part before moving on	Guided practice is important because pupils need sufficient rehearsal to commit new material to memory. Information-processing research states that pupils need to spend time rephrasing, elaborating, and summarising new material in order to store it in long-term memory.	There are two elements to sufficient practice – summarising and guided practice. **Summarising:** pupils can be asked to summarise events in a chapter or elements of how a character is presented. Combining this with repetition can be an effective rehearsal tool (using retrieval practices). **Guided practice:** supervise pupils as they practise new steps,by walking the room and providing high-quality, corrective verbal feedback - either to the individual or to the whole class to address common errors or misconceptions.
6. Frequently check for understanding, by eliciting responses from all students	Checking for student understanding at each point can help students learn the material with fewer errors. There are many strategies for checking for understanding, but the underlying principle should be that misunderstandings are spotted early and corrected swiftly.	**Questioning:** Ask a lot of questions throughout teaching and learning and check the understanding of all pupils (using MWB, cold calling, etc) **Summarising:** Ask pupils to summarise or repeat information to check for understanding. Other pupils can be asked whether they agreed with the answer or not. Effective summarising prepares pupils for the reading elements of GCSE English Literature and Language, as well as Functional Skills reading papers. **Thinking aloud:** ask pupils to 'think aloud' as they plan - ask students to talk through their planning process. Prepare pupils for this by modelling your own planning process by 'thinking aloud' as you write on the board.

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
7. Provide appropriate scaffolding that is removed over time	Differentiation should not mean designing different tasks for different ability groups. The use of appropriate scaffolds should be in place to help all students to experience success with new material, as well as support lower-ability pupils to produce excellent work. Scaffolds should be carefully planned and removed, slowly, over time. Scaffolds are more effective than traditional differentiation and counter the soft bigotry of low expectations for SEND pupils.	Have the same expectations for all pupils, but provide the tools to achieve them. **Use back chaining as scaffolding:** An example of this might look like the following: Giving writing frames, where pupils enter a few words; moving to sentence starters within a given paragraph structure; moving to suggested sentence starters and paragraphing completed by pupil; to removing the scaffold completely and allowing students to write paragraphs within the agreed structure. **Provide models for pupils to check their writing against:** effective models should be provided for all types of writing. They can be used to teach writing, as well as providing opportunities for self- and peer-review.
8. Provide opportunities for extensive independent practice	Overlearning, particularly for SEND pupils, is needed to become fluent in a skill. Automaticity is vital for progress, as it enables the use of the working memory on application and development.	English learning should be practised as often as possible - including cross-curricular use of reading, writing and speaking skills in KS 2/3. In KS4 planning responses to the writing tasks for GCSE English Language and functional skills should be extensively practised. Having modelled this, present students with a bank of writing tasks to practise with. Teachers should oversee this practising, as it is essential to ensure that errors are not being repeated.

English Curriculum Implementation: Principles for English Instruction

Principle	Rationale	Guidance
9. Regular retrieval practice	Reviewing previously taught material helps to encode it into students' long-term memories. It takes advantage of the testing effect, spaced practice and interleaving. The simple act of testing students during the teaching phase helps them to retain the information more permanently.	Most lessons should start with a simple low-stakes quiz on prior content. Teachers should review and reteach areas of common weakness. The most effective strategies, in terms of knowledge retention, are likely to be forms of retrieval practice, such as quizzes, 'cold calling' question-and-answer sessions, MWBs and so on.
10. Teach writing consistently across the school		

English Curriculum Implementation: English Lesson Routines

Part of the Lesson	Name of Routine	Description	Rationale
Start of the lesson	**Be respectful**	Teacher stands at the doorway and welcomes students to class. Students who are in class already, the teacher uses 3, 2, 1 countdown technique.	It creates a calm start and signals to pupils that a lesson is starting. 3,2,1 is used to set high-expectations for behaviour and deal with any issues before teaching and learning begins.
	Check in	Teacher completes 1-5 emotional regulation check in. Strategies offered	Pupils are reminded to be mindful of their emotional regulation and strategies. Any issues are dealt with at the start of the lesson and all pupils helped to be ready to learn.
	Be ready	Class monitors or TA gets the books and equipment ready for the lesson.	Once the lesson has been calmed, giving equipment out should be done in a way that does not disrupt the class.
	Do now starter	This task should be in a similar format each time and be used for retrieval practice.	As students start the lesson, they know what they will have to do without being told. This gives the teacher time to complete tasks, such as registers, giving out resources, etc.

English Curriculum Implementation: English Lesson Routines

Part of the Lesson	Name of Routine	Description	Rationale
Initial Teaching	**Signal, pause, insist**	An explicit and consistent routine to establish silence. Use a verbal (and visual)signal for silence (referencing school rules and count down with praise), followed by waiting for silence.	Students need to be clear about what they are expected to do. Creating routines and clarity about expectations form an important part of relentless routines and enables familiarity and consistency across the school.
	Questioning: Repeat new learning regularly	When new material is being presented, use questioning techniques that ensure all pupils are thinking - such as, MWB or cold calling.	MWB: use ensures all pupils are engaged with the question and provides immediate AfL. Cold calling: by not addressing pupils by name until after the question, all students must think of an answer. Follow this up with a 'no opt out' policy - where any student who says they do not know, move to another pupil, and then go back to the original pupil and ask them to repeat the answer. Adding no opt out ensures pupils are held accountable and get several chances to embed the correct answer.
	Brighten Lines	Make the beginning/end of activities crisp and clear	When changing activities, it is vital that there are clear boundaries of when one task stops and the next one begins. Before the students are allowed to begin the task, ensure that you tell them what they are to do; how long they have to do it; and how you will check completion. Before setting a task, always use questions to check that students can repeat the instructions back to you. Spending one minute brightening the lines means you don't spend five minutes re-explaining everything.

English Curriculum Implementation: English Lesson Routines

Part of the Lesson	Name of Routine	Description	Rationale
During the task	**Tracking not watching**	Be deliberate about how you look around your classroom. Decide what you're looking for and remain disciplined about it.	You need to make the most of your time monitoring pupils. This is important for checking progress, helping struggling pupils, and preparing targeted follow-up discussion and tasks
	Circulate	Once the task is set, move to a place where you can see every pupil. Circulate in a way that enables you to keep a full view.	This enables teachers to view the room and judge the level of success, instead of moving to each struggling pupil individually before realising the majority do not understand. If lots of pupils are struggling, stop and reframe the task. If most are on task, start to circulate. Once you have helped a pupil, continue to circulate and ensure pupils are on task.
	Keep your face to class	You need to be able to see all the pupils at all times. If helping one student, ensure you angle your body so that you are still facing the class with a glance.	Pupils need to know that they can be seen and will more easily drift off task if you have your back to them or appear engaged in your own task. This links in with circulating and tracking not watching. It also enables you to effectively apply the school's behaviour policy and **deal with incident when they first come up.**
	Mid-class check in	Teacher completes 1-5 emotional regulation check in. Strategies offered	Pupils are reminded to be mindful of their emotional regulation and strategies. Any issues are dealt with at the start of the lesson and all pupils helped to be ready to learn.

English Curriculum Implementation: English Lesson Routines

Part of the Lesson	Name of Routine	Description	Rationale
End of lesson	**Packing away**	This will essentially be the opposite of your start of lesson routine. It must always be consistent and taught to pupils explicitly so that they know what to expect.	Relentless routines **some blurb about them** . This is also about clarity and standards - the two drivers of improved performance and effective behaviour management. Some questions to think about: How do you want the books stored? Where do you want the equipment put away? Do you have a clear desk policy or will pupils need certain resources for their next lessons?
	Rewards	Ensure that the class is sitting down and silent. Finish the lesson by praising good mindsets, attainment, and behaviour, using Class Dojo, Sleuth and any individual rewards (raffle tickets, etc).	Completing rewards in this way enabled the class to be regulated after tidying up. This gives pupils the best chance of continuing their emotional regulation into their next lesson. It also allows for reinforcing school standards and praising pupils for effort, understanding and values (such as perseverance).
	Orderly dismissal	Get the students to transition to the next activity in a calm and orderly fashion.	Ensure that you have a routine for this part of the lesson and insist on it being followed. This will help to maintain regulation and good behaviour around the school.

English Curriculum Impact

Computing Curriculum Intent

Develop learner's knowledge, skills and understanding through key computational concepts and experience. The KS3 curriculum has been designed to ensure learners have sufficient knowledge to stay safe online and use computers safely in life. The KS3 curriculum also provides a focus on developing resilient learners who are able to recover from mistakes and effectively solve problems. The topics at KS3 give a basis of knowledge, skills and understanding to allow students to progress onto appropriate computing and ICT based courses according to the individual needs of the student.

At Key Stage 4 the curriculum has vocational and academic strands. The academic strand will develop the mind-set of a computer scientist built upon the foundations laid at KS3. Learners have the opportunity to develop their capability, creativity and knowledge in computer science. The vocational strand will prepare them to be able to use computing and ICT skills to maximize their potential in the working world.

Computing Curriculum Map

Computing Curriculum Implementation

In Computing we implement this through the delivery of a high quality of education which places developing the computing concepts at the forefront of planning. Each scheme of learning is prefaced by its own intent, implementation and impact rationale, underpinned by a deep understanding of the computational concepts. In the schemes of learning assessment is a meaningful vehicle for learning, of learning and as learning to ensure we make a profound positive difference to all students. Various quality assurance activities are undertaken to rigorously ensure that the implementation of the computing curriculum has maximum impact.

Computing Curriculum Impact

The Computing curriculum at The Observatory School will make a profound, positive impact to the outcomes of all student. Students will be equipped with traits that reflect resilient learners. We will know that this is true as we are delivering a high standard of education, quality assured through qualitative and quantitative measures such as:

Attainment and Achievement outcomes

Observing lessons and scrutinising planning

Student voice

Destination data

Attendance data

Behaviour data

Qualifications

English	Computing
Functional Skills English: Level 1 and Level 2 AQA GCSE English Literature AQA GCSE English Language	European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) GCSE Computer Science