

Introduction

The ability to communicate effectively in writing and in speech is a vital life skill. The English curriculum at BMS includes speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the early years it secures access to other subjects; later it helps develop a platform for learning throughout life through its unique combination of creative, reflective and analytical components. We aim to furnish students with language skills and a love of literature that will enable them to succeed in life beyond the classroom. Pupils who are proficient in English are sensitive, value different perspectives and communicate their ideas effectively. Many students from BMS progress to study English at a higher level.

JUNIOR SCHOOL YEAR 3 AND 4

Pupils are introduced to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. They identify features, rehearse language styles and use these as a guide for their own writing.

Writing levels are tracked termly.

The basic principles of grammar and punctuation are taught.

Modern fiction is used in whole-class shared reading for discussion and as a stimulus for their own writing.

Pupils participate in formal and informal speaking and listening activities in the course of normal lessons. All have the opportunity to read to an audience.

All participate in designated drama lessons and in informal drama work in English lessons.

Theatrical performances are provided for all pupils at least annually where possible, either in house or at local theatres.



JUNIOR SCHOOL YEAR 5 AND 6

Writing levels are tracked termly.

The principles of grammar are revisited and extended; pupils are taught the full range of punctuation marks.

Pupils continue to develop higher level comprehension skills through oral, written and practical tasks.

Modern fiction is used in whole-class shared reading for discussion and stimulus for their own writing.

Pupils participate in formal and informal speaking and listening activities in the course of normal lessons. All have the opportunity to read to a large audience.

All participate in designated drama lessons and in informal drama work in English lessons. Year 6 pupils participate in a performance of a Shakespeare play.

All pupils are assessed in writing, reading comprehension and grammar at the end of the academic year.

SENIOR SCHOOL YEAR 7 AND 8

Pupils participate in an age-appropriate Independent Reading Scheme, from which they select books from our well-stocked library. Each pupil reads at least six novels independently each year.

Pupils take part in formal speaking and listening opportunities within the classroom.

Pupils revise formal letter writing, news writing and argument, with increasingly sophisticated use of formal language.

Pupils learn to plan and redraft their work, using ICT.

Principles of grammar are revisited.

At the end of the academic year unseen poetry is used to assess individual ability in responding to literature.



SENIOR SCHOOL YEAR 9 TO 11

Pupils study a syllabus in Year 9 which prepares them for the wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts they will encounter for GCSE and IGCSE exams in Year 11.

Essay-writing techniques are developed with an emphasis on structure, originality, interpretation and detailed discussion.

Pupils take part in formal speaking and listening opportunities within the classroom, developing presentation skills. A Spoken Language assessment forms part of the GCSE syllabus.

All pupils take GCSE/IGCSE in both Language and Literature.

Contributions to the Eagle magazine in the form of creative writing and production/trip reviews are particularly welcomed from this age group.

Theatre trips are organised to support the drama texts studied for IGCSE Literature.

SIXTH FORM

Students may study English Literature or English Language and Literature as an A Level.

Students are introduced to critical material and taught how to use this appropriately.

A Level students choose their own texts and topics for coursework in Year 13, encouraging an independent mode of study, supported by individual tutorials with the teacher.

An English reading circle is available for those wishing to extend their knowledge and understanding, particularly those who apply to study English at Oxbridge.

A Harpur Trust English Society brings together students from the three Trust schools for a range of lectures, talks, discussions and activities including theatre trips.

Residential and day trips are offered to suit the texts and topics studied.

Lecture days are used to develop students' awareness of HE approaches and to develop their skills in note-making.



TESTIMONIALS



Anna Charters OBM 2010 - 2012

“Having moved to Bedford Modern for Sixth Form I was immediately taken with the English department. From the vast range of literature on the curriculum, to the freedom to choose your own texts to study for coursework, it had something that appealed to every student. Between the engaging and challenging lessons, and the support from the fantastic staff, English quickly became my favourite subject.”

“I have no doubt that it is thanks to the incredible English department at BMS that I am currently training to become an English teacher with the Teach First Leadership Development Programme. I owe the whole department a very big thank you for everything they did!”



James Fulcher OBM 2003 - 2008

Producer/Director/Cameraman

James has worked as a producer and cameraman for major broadcasters across the globe. Filming has taken him to some of the world's most challenging and unpredictable environments.

“The ethos of the English Faculty is not just centred upon passing an exam, although the academic results that it achieves are exceptional; it is taught to prepare you for the real world. My studies within this inspiring environment prepared me with the creative confidence that meant, aged eighteen, I was able to leave school and immediately be offered and accept graduate level job opportunities.”

“Within five years of leaving Bedford Modern I had filmed in more than forty countries and worked for every one of the major broadcasters. I feel incredibly fortunate that I had the opportunities and guidance that were offered to me in the Sixth Form, as without them, I would not have achieved anywhere near the amount I have been able to since leaving BMS.”

Jeremy Irvine OBM 2000 - 2008 *Actor/Producer*

After graduating from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA), Jeremy's first major film role was in 2011 as the lead in Steven Spielberg's award-winning *War Horse*. Since then he has had leading roles in *The Railway Man*, *Great Expectations*, *Now Is Good*, *A Night In Old Mexico* and *The World Made Straight*. Jeremy's recent lead roles have been in *The Reach*, *Fallen*, *The Woman In Black: Angel of Death* and the upcoming *Stonewall* (2015).

“The English Faculty's creative legacy will always stay with me and inspire me. I use the skills taught to me in Film Studies on a daily basis both in front of and behind the camera. I can honestly say I wouldn't be doing what I am today without my teacher's expertise and infectious passion for film.”

