

Statement of Intent - English

In KS3, pupils are building on the core knowledge, skills and understanding gained in KS2 and we are always looking to form a deeper connection with our feeder schools, so that we can build on prior learning. Our two year KS3 focuses primarily on oracy, debate and higher-order thinking skills. Our aim for pupils at this stage in their school journey is to strive to be confident speakers, writers, readers and thinkers. We believe that these essential life skills come from reading excellent literature. We aim for all pupils to grow through reading that promotes empathy and humanity. Our aim is for pupils to be able to discuss difficult themes, such as grief (as presented in the *novel A Monster Calls*) and prejudice (*Noughts and Crosses*). We want pupils to engage with Shakespearean metaphoric language, which is why we read the whole of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*, and we also want pupils to have a grasp of the wider world in context, which is why they read *Of Mice and Men*. Pupils would have studied a rich, diverse and engaging range of texts by the end of KS3, which not only prepares them for KS4 but also the wider world, where they can grasp plenty of opportunities as resilient and courageous individuals.

By the time pupils enter Year 9 and KS4, we want all pupils to understand their place in the modern world by looking at literature from the past, the present and considering the future. GCSE English Literature is the study of how writers communicate their ideas about the world, and how readers might respond to these ideas. It aims to grow a critical understanding of the ways in which literary texts are a reflection of, and exploration of, the human condition, the study of which develops empathic understanding of human nature. High-quality English literature is writing which displays recognisable literary qualities and, although shaped by particular contexts, transcends them and speaks about the universality of the human condition. When pupils read the three key literature texts: *Macbeth*, *A Christmas Carol* and *An Inspector Calls* we want them to understand how humanity has explored deeper themes throughout differing time periods. Through analysis of these texts, pupils will gain an understanding of the world and will have a firm grasp of concepts such as poverty, Capitalism, Communism, Socialism, Individualism and societal norms. Whilst there is a focus on British texts, we also want pupils to understand the world around them through poetry from different cultures, issues based learning (such as gun control in the US) and debate embedded throughout the curriculum. By the end of the curriculum, we aim for all pupils to have an understanding of how Shakespeare, Dickens and Priestley work in a continuum narrative of not just British culture but inclusive of cultures from all around the world. This means an understanding of how the world was in the context of those writers and how the stories they tell are relevant to us today.

At KS5, we prepare pupils for a more independent, critically-minded approach to education. Building on their successes at GCSE, we aim to instil belief that progress from this point is all about the courageous and self-starting exploration of new ideas and concepts. We want pupils to go further with their understanding of both British context in terms of the Gothic – *Dracula*, *the Bloody Chamber* – and look at American society with *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. These are complex texts that require a huge amount of research skills and independent thought to access, which is what we aim to foster at A Level. Whilst we will make a wealth of resources available to pupils, the emphasis is on them learning to make critical and evaluative decisions about material for themselves, embracing opportunities to expand their own horizons. At this stage, our aim is that pupils are confident and skilled enough to present their own interpretations, based on scholarship, so that they can critique the texts at the appropriate level. In lessons, we will help pupils to bring their knowledge to the table in respectful and positive discussions with their peers, building relationships between these scholars of literature so that they may support each other on their journey through the great works of fiction that they are privileged to study. This combination of independence of thought and generosity of intellect we hope will allow them to communicate and succeed after Sixth Form, whatever subject or career they wish to pursue.

By the end of their English journey at Dagenham Park we want pupils to be successful in communication, to have grown in their understanding of the world around them and have the belief in their abilities and how they can have a positive impact on the world. They will have a love of literature, eager to find out more about what people think from different cultures and be able to express their thoughts and feelings in a coherent, engaging and productive manner.