

# English

“We’ll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.”

Thus spoke Hamlet to his friend Horatio and this quotation epitomises the work of the English Department at St. Andrew’s where our pupils are challenged and encouraged to drink deeply from the well of life to prepare them for the future.

Each pupil is helped to achieve his or her full potential in a fun, friendly and stimulating environment. An exciting and motivational ethos abounds in which pupils are eager to come to their English lessons, are enthusiastic throughout them, and are left thirsting for the next one.

A child-centred approach is fundamental to our success and a range of appropriate teaching strategies is employed to appeal to pupils’ individual learning styles. Regular use is made of the Information Technology suite as well as interactive whiteboards. Differentiated worksheets are utilised throughout the curriculum and the provision of specialist subject teachers in the main school facilitates continuity and progression. Extensive use is made of the beautiful surroundings of the school and it is not unusual throughout the seasons to find pupils and their teachers outside with individual whiteboards creating poems for a regional anthology or letter writing competition. Internal competitions such as the Creative Writing Competition offer the opportunity for every child to see their work in print and to foster a sense of pride and self-fulfilment for each pupil.

Considerable emphasis is also placed upon the twin pillars of speaking and listening as these are considered as essential preparation for life. The department runs a number of activities some of which are listed below. Against strong opposition from nine local prep schools, our pupils presented some dynamic speeches and won the inaugural Prep Schools’ Public Speaking Competition run by Bradfield College. Drama is seen as inextricably linked to the English curriculum and there is an annual production staged by the C.E candidates for the whole school as well as a biennial Junior Department production. There are regular opportunities for all pupils to be involved in oral activities including role play, group work and individual speeches. The aim is to help pupils develop the necessary confidence to enjoy taking part in regular class discussions as well as more formal public speaking tasks.

All pupils have a weekly reading period where their progress is monitored by their English teacher. In addition to this, pupils are invited to take part in an annual Readathon event designed to promote children’s reading as well as raising over one thousand five hundred pounds each year for various charities.

The fiction library has recently been redeveloped to include an electronic registration system and a range of contemporary texts. This facility will be further enhanced with the imminent introduction of a resources centre.



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## English Department Activities (A few examples)

- Public Speaking competition
- Poetry Recital Competition (alternates with above)
- Fifth and Sixth form debate
- Sixth form leavers' production
- Whole School Creative Writing Competition
- Regular Drama trips to local theatres
- Annual Readathon event
- Letter writing/hand writing competition
- Entries into regional poetry writing competition
- Balloon debates
- Sixth form drama workshops
- Class assemblies
- Whole school book days
- Visits by children's writers and authors
- Creative writing workshops