Tuition, Medical and
Behaviour Support Service

Curriculum Policy

English

Reviewed: September 2018
Next Review: September 2019
Responsibility: Claire Vaughan
English is a pre-eminent world language; it is at the heart of our culture and is the language medium through which most of our pupils think and communicate.

Literacy skills are also crucial to pupils’ learning in other subjects across the curriculum and despite the pupils’ range of knowledge, skills, understanding and ability varying tremendously, all pupils are taught English and expected to take formal qualifications.

**Aims and objectives:**
The overarching aim for English at TMBSS is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

**Objectives:**
To enable pupils to
- read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding
- read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences using standard English appropriately
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate using Standard English effectively

**Methodology:**
The teaching of English needs to reflect the wide and varied special educational, medical and behavioural needs of all pupils in addition to the length of time that they will receive education with us.

All pupils will complete a series of baseline assessments to establish levels of attainment, reading and spelling ages, etc. and these will help to highlight specific areas for development, often due to significant gaps in education. Baseline assessments may also be used to identify pupils requiring access arrangements for future examinations and should be referred to the designated examinations assessment teacher for further testing.
Tests/assessments used:

Reading: Access Reading Test by Hodder Education

Spelling: Graded Word Spelling Test, by P.E. Vernon

Writing: Set tasks marked using APP guidelines and standardised in English Department meeting. Initial task is based around writing a film review and follow up task is an Eyewitness Account about the 1980 Mt St Helens eruption.

*This assessment in the process of being updated to a task in line with the GCSE English Language paper section B tasks and will be marked using the TMBSS flightpath descriptors for English.*

Pupils may be retested using the above assessments to judge progress made. All results are used to inform planning, Plan Do Reviews, decide on targeted interventions and to monitor progress, with data updated on TMBSS tracking data sheets on a termly basis according dates set by the SLT.

KS3
Pupils are unlikely to attend TMBSS for full key stages and so will not necessarily cover the full breadth of the National Curriculum.

They are also often taught as a ‘Key Stage Three cohort’ rather than in year groups and follow a three year rolling programme in line with the National Curriculum. Half-termly topics will be taught across all centres and will be underpinned by the development of literacy skills. These topics will be highly differentiated to accommodate the varied and complex needs of the pupils and to engage the interest of all learners.

All KS3 pupils will also be encouraged to complete the Bronze, Silver and Gold Reading Award schemes. Through reading, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know.

KS4
All pupils will be expected to work towards the completion of formal qualifications although this will be dependent upon their level of attainment, the proportion of the course that has been completed prior to attending TMBSS and the time remaining before the examination period on arrival. Pupils will be advised on the appropriate level of award.

The majority of current year 10 and 11 pupils will work towards the new AQA GCSE English Language qualification. There may be opportunities for Y11 students to also complete the AQA English Literature course, however, this will be dependent on their time constraints, level of attainment and prior study. This will be decided on an individual basis. Students that are full time from the beginning of Year 10 may also have the opportunity to study the AQA English Literature course.
Qualifications available include:

- OCR Entry Level Certificate in English at Entry Levels 1-3 (new specification)
- OCR Functional Skills English at levels 1 and 2
- AQA GCSE English Language
- AQA GCSE English Literature

Pupils may sit examinations though alternative exam boards in some circumstances.

Where possible, students will be entered for the GCSE qualification but may be required to sit additional qualifications to support.

Students considered ‘borderline’ in terms of attainment or those at risk of experiencing difficulties during the exam season may be required to complete additional or alternative qualifications outside the exam period. This is to alleviate some of the associated pressures of completing examinations and to serve as a ‘safety net’ qualification.

**Literacy Across the Curriculum.**

Skills taught to pupils in English underpin the learning of literacy across the curriculum and the development of literacy skills is a crucial element of the English programme.

Pupils are required to write in full sentences at all times with written tasks produced using a Talk - Model - Write approach. Careful attention is paid to the use of subject specific vocabulary, in particular, and pupils will have access to vocabulary boards, word mats or key word displays in all topics. Work is marked in accordance with the Service Marking Policy and pupils given Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time to allow this to have greater impact upon the learning and progress of all pupils. Literacy is also marked in accordance with the TMBSS Green Highlighter marking initiative.