

English Policy – Westbridge Academy

Haven Plus Highly Complex Pathway

Origins of the Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 English programme of study is rooted in the National Curriculum and reflects our commitment to delivering a high-quality, inclusive education within our Alternative Provision setting. It is designed to ensure that all students have access to a broad, challenging curriculum that mirrors the standards and expectations of mainstream education. The curriculum aims to complement the learning provided by students' home schools while preparing them for successful progression into post-16 education, training, or employment. Progress in Reading, Writing, and Speaking & Listening is assessed against the core knowledge and skills outlined in our curriculum framework. We expect that all students will be working towards a GCSE-level qualification in English Language, as determined by their home school.

Our pupils come from a variety of home schools, resulting in them being entered for examinations across a wide range of exam boards. In recognition of this diversity, we have carefully designed our curriculum with reference to the National Curriculum, rather than aligning with any single exam board. This approach allows us to deliver a broad and balanced programme that focuses on developing key knowledge and skills essential for success across all specifications. Our curriculum is intentionally structured to identify and address gaps in learning, ensuring that pupils are well-prepared and equipped with the foundational understanding needed to achieve their best possible outcomes in their GCSE examinations. As such, we do not focus on the study of specific set texts for English Literature, since these vary significantly between exam boards. Instead, our curriculum is solely focused on best supporting students in preparing for the English Language exam, prioritising the development of transferable reading, writing, and communication skills that are central to success in this qualification and in future life learning.

At Westbridge Academy, English at Key Stage 4 is delivered in a way that is responsive to the individual needs of our cohort. Our Alternative Provision setting allows teachers the flexibility to adapt the curriculum, guiding students through the assessment objectives in a manner that supports their personal progression. A thematic and concentric approach is encouraged, enabling students to revisit and deepen their understanding of key concepts over time. By engaging with both modern texts and works from the Literary Heritage, students are supported in meeting the Reading assessment objectives. These texts also serve as a foundation for developing Writing and Speaking & Listening skills, ensuring a cohesive and purposeful learning experience that prepares students for their examinations.

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Through our Key Stage 4 English curriculum, we aim to foster a deep appreciation for the English language and the rich literary heritage from the world around them. By nurturing a passion for reading, writing, and speaking, we strive to broaden students' horizons and empower them to become culturally aware, emotionally literate, socially engaged, and spiritually reflective individuals. Our curriculum is designed not only to prepare students for academic success but also to support their development as thoughtful, articulate members of society who value the power of language in shaping their identity and understanding the world around them.

Content and Sequencing

The fundamental areas of our English curriculum include explicit vocabulary instruction, reading fluency, with a particular emphasis on prosody, and reading comprehension. Writing, encompassing grammar and syntax, along with speaking and listening, are also essential strands that are seamlessly integrated throughout every unit. Learning objectives are derived from the National Curriculum and are carefully sequenced to support the progressive development of skills, while also providing regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning. This approach helps embed and secure knowledge over time. The curriculum is structured within a literature-based model anchored by a thematic literature spine, ensuring coherence, progression, and meaningful opportunities for cultural enrichment. Texts are thoughtfully selected to engage students and reflect their lived experiences, while also broadening their perspectives. While our intent is to deliver coverage of the National Curriculum, adaptations are made where necessary to meet the individual needs of pupils, particularly those on fractional placements. Instruction is tailored through the use of scaffolding, modelling, and effective task design, drawing on principles from cognitive science (e.g., Rosenshine; Fiorella & Mayer), to ensure that all lessons are accessible, stimulating, and appropriately challenging for every learner.

It is important to note that this policy is written to reflect the fractional curriculum offer of this pathway. Dependent on a student's prior educational experiences, refinements or adaptations may be made to the curriculum content using the programmes of study to ensure it remains appropriate and responsive to their individual needs and circumstances.

Overview of units of study: Table

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	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	Unit 1 – Language Paper 2 Reading and Writing Preparation & Speaking: Significant Voices & Unit 2 – Language Paper 1 Reading and Writing: Genre Studies - Gothic/Dystopian	Unit 3 – Language Paper 1 Language Skills through GCSE Literature Content: War Poetry & Unit 4 – Language Paper 2 Reading and Writing Non-Fiction: Save Our Seas – Environmental Issues	Unit 5 – Language Paper 1 Reading and Writing Preparation (Descriptive & Narrative Writing) & Unit 6 Language Skills through GCSE Literature Content: Women in Shakespeare
Year 2	Unit 7 – Language Paper 2 Reading and Writing (Rise of Technology) & Unit 8 - Language Papers 1 & 2 Skills	Unit 9 – Language Papers 1 & 2 Skills (through 19 th Century Society Literature - A Christmas Carol, Jekyll and Hyde) & Unit 10 – Language Paper 2 Travel & Other Cultures	Unit 11 – Language Paper 1 Reading and Writing: Genre Studies – Crime/Mystery & Unit 12 – Unseen Poetry Reading and Writing Poetic Techniques

Assessment and Outcomes

Formative assessment is embedded throughout all aspects of English teaching. Teachers continuously monitor students' progress in reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, writing, and speaking and listening through a range of classroom activities, discussions, and observations. These ongoing assessments provide immediate feedback and inform responsive teaching. In addition, half-termly summative assessments can be implemented using bespoke tasks that are closely aligned with the unit's learning objectives. These assessments not only inform future planning but also help identify areas for targeted intervention or extension. Progress is tracked systematically, and assessment data is used diagnostically to support reintegration, personalised support, and sustained progression. The intended outcomes of the curriculum extend beyond measurable literacy gains to include enhanced confidence, creativity, cultural awareness, and self-expression. Assessment data is used both to evaluate individual student progress and to inform broader curriculum development and instructional practice.

English and the Wider Curriculum

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Our English curriculum is designed not only to develop literacy and communication skills but also to enrich pupils' understanding of the world around them, preparing them for life beyond education. Through carefully selected texts and thematic units, we embed British Values, such as democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance, into classroom discussions and literary analysis. SMSC development is woven throughout the curriculum, encouraging students to reflect on moral dilemmas, explore diverse cultural perspectives, engage in meaningful social dialogue, and consider spiritual themes within literature. By exposing pupils to a wide range of voices and genres, we actively build their cultural capital, equipping them with the knowledge, empathy, and critical thinking skills needed to navigate and contribute to modern society with confidence and integrity.

Careers Education in English

Careers education is meaningfully embedded throughout the English curriculum to help students make connections between their learning and the world of work. This is achieved through:

- Exposure to a range of texts and genres that reflect different career paths, industries, and real-world communication styles (e.g. journalism, advertising, etc).
- Development of key employability skills such as communication, critical thinking, analysis, presentation, and collaboration—skills that are essential across all career sectors.
- Writing for purpose and audience, including tasks such as formal letters, speeches, and persuasive writing, which mirror real-world applications.
- Speaking and listening activities that build confidence in public speaking, interview techniques, and professional dialogue.
- Literature spine that explores themes of ambition, identity, and societal roles, encouraging students to reflect on their own aspirations and values.
- Targeted support to help students understand how English skills apply to specific vocational pathways, including media, law, education, publishing, and business.