



English Language

Room: LRC

What the Students Say

“Independent learning; independent work; cool teachers - what more could you want?”
“In English Language A Level, you explore concepts such as teen language, language and gender and the fascinating idea of language change, which means that language never stands still”.

What Is This Course About?

Perhaps the most important point to recognise is that A Level English Language is very different from GCSE English Language.

Language is all around us: on social media, in the news, in family arguments, in every job or classroom discussion, every day-to-day encounter. Learn all the reasons for our language choices, including learning how to get your own way in any argument! We study and analyse language in a wide variety of contexts and support our study by exploring the theoretical ideas underpinning language. All the language we study is non-fiction, and whilst most of our study centres on the recent past, we also examine texts from the past. Students' favourite part of the course varies from person to person – many students enjoy studying child language acquisition (how children learn to first use language and the theories about how and why), many enjoy exploring the influence of social media in Language and Social Groups, and all students seem to enjoy the debate over whether male and female language is different in Language and Gender. One thing is certain; the course is diverse and interesting. You will also get the opportunity to be creative and write about your opinions on language issues in newspapers and other media.

What Will I Learn?

You will learn to look at language in a new light! The specific topics of study are: Meanings and Representation, Language and Gender; Language and Social Groups, Language and Occupation, Language and Region including accent and dialect, language change, World English and Child Language Acquisition. We examine different ways in which language is used and ideas surrounding this use. There will be new terminology to learn and apply and writers to consider and debate. For example, in World English we learn how English has become a truly global language and about the different varieties around the world from Singapore to Canada. When studying Child Language Acquisition, we examine whether children learn language through imitation or whether they (we) are born with a knowledge of language learning and we learn how children go from babbling to being fluent users of language. In Language and Social Groups, we analyse the rise of Multi-Cultural London English among young people and how Twitter is affecting language use. These are just four sub-topics in a rich and varied curriculum.



In Year 13, you will be conducting an investigation into an area of language which interests you for coursework. You may want to examine how different people adopt a different persona on Twitter or analyse the lyrics of a particular genre of music or evaluate the effectiveness of a political or advertising campaign, for example. The scope for your own choice is truly vast! You will also write a piece of creative writing such as a short story, a sports report, travel writing or a fashion spread.

Where Will It Take Me?

English Language A Level is a very highly regarded qualification which could lead onto a university course or apprenticeship in any area. Because English Language has no direct link to an occupation, taking this subject allows you to keep your options open. Former students have gone onto degrees in medicine, modern foreign languages, criminology, media, teaching, social work, accountancy and more. At sixteen, you do not always know what you want to do as a career, and sometimes our choices change. English Language is a vibrant and interesting course, which allows you to focus on your studies while you consider career pathways, and while you study, you are learning about the most important tool that human beings have – communication. It is a suitable entry for a wide range of careers, and particularly important for any profession where communication is essential, such as business, retail, advertising, law and teaching. By the end of the course, you will be an expert in using and understanding language, which is essential in our ever-changing world. The coursework element of the course allows you to demonstrate a proficiency in independent learning which all tertiary courses demand.

What Other Opportunities Exist Outside of Class?

We have two subject reps who are looking to explore new opportunities. The initiative will be with the student body, but we are always receptive to possibilities involving conferences and visits outside of school.