



# Gordon's School

## English Department

### Introduction

The English Department consists of six full-time teachers, including the Head of Department. The Department teaches in its own building across six dedicated classrooms. All pupils are entered for English Language and English Literature at GCSE with many pupils opting to continue these subjects post-16.

### GCSE/ A Level Courses

We use the exam board AQA at GCSE, teaching English Language (8700) and English Literature (8702). Our set texts for English Literature are: *Macbeth*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *An Inspector Calls* and 'Power and Conflict' Poetry.

At A Level, we follow AQA's Specification A for English Literature ('Love through the Ages' and 'Literature of the First World War'). Our set texts include: *Othello*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Regeneration*, *Scars upon my Heart: Women's Poetry from the First World War* and AQA's 'Pre-1900 Love Poetry' Anthology. Students produce an 'Independent Study' for coursework, based on their own wider reading of two texts.

We teach AQA's A Level English Language specification, and Media Studies (also AQA).

### Examination results

Examination results in the English Department have been consistently high for a number of years. In 2016, 98% of GCSE English Language grades were A\*-C with 42% of students being awarded an A\* or A, while 97% obtained grades A\*-C for GCSE English Literature with 45% of students being awarded an A\* or A.

At A Level, 80% gained A\*-B grades in English Literature, with 55% achieving A\*-B grades in English Language. These results reflect the academic nature of the Department and the high expectations placed upon both our staff and students.

## Extra-curricular activities

Each year, the English Department runs a wide range of enrichment activities. To support A Level English Literature, students take part in a residential trip to Dorset as part of their study of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Students visit Thomas Hardy's Birthplace Cottage and Max Gate, alongside sites in the novel such as: the New Forest, Shaftesbury and Stonehenge. We have organized other literary visits like a *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* Trip to London.

The English Department organizes regular theatre trips for texts on our courses, including this year: *Doctor Faustus* and *An Inspector Calls*, while a visiting theatre company recently performed *Macbeth* in our school chapel. We also take part in various Enrichment Week activities with drama workshops, where Year 8 students have worked on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We have organized author visits like a recent day when teenage fiction writer William Hussey was in school, exploring the Gothic genre. Members of the English Department also run a range of public speaking and debating activities, which include entry to high-profile national competitions.

The English Department is an associate member of The Prince's Teaching Institute and a member of the department is currently working on a research project in collaboration with this body.