

Ofsted: What Outstanding looks like in English

Achievement	Teaching	Curriculum	Leadership
<p>Pupils show high levels of achievement in the different areas of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and exhibit very positive attitudes towards the subject. They express their ideas fluently and imaginatively in both writing and speaking. They are very keen readers and show a mature understanding of a wide range of challenging texts, both traditional and contemporary. Their writing shows a high degree of technical accuracy and they write effectively across a range of genres, frequently showing creativity in their ideas and choice of language. Pupils have a mature understanding of the differences between written and spoken language. They speak confidently and with maturity, using Standard English very effectively when required. They have learnt to be effective independent learners, able to think for themselves and to provide leadership, while also being sensitive to the needs of others.</p>	<p>Teachers make imaginative use of a wide range of resources, including moving image texts, in order to address pupils' needs in reading, writing, speaking and listening. They make English highly relevant to the needs of their pupils and the world beyond school. Teachers demonstrate high standards in their own use of language and they model the processes of reading and writing powerfully to help pupils make real progress in their own work. They have a detailed knowledge of texts and use this well to extend pupils' independent reading. Pupils are fully engaged through active and innovative classroom approaches including well planned drama activities, group and class discussions. Teachers have a very good understanding of the English language, including differences between talk and writing, and address these issues directly in lessons. The technical features of language are very well taught. Teachers use ICT imaginatively to enhance pupils' learning in the different areas of English. They take every opportunity to encourage pupils to work independently and homework tasks significantly enhance pupils' learning. Systematic approaches to marking, target setting and feedback challenge all pupils to improve work in reading, speaking and listening, as well as writing.</p>	<p>The curriculum is distinctive, innovative and planned very well to meet pupils' needs in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Imaginative approaches, experience of a wide range of challenging texts, and clear focus on basic literacy skills ensure a rich curriculum that enables pupils to make very good progress across the different areas of English. The curriculum is continuously reviewed and improved in the light of national developments. Key aspects such as poetry, drama and media work are fully integrated into the curriculum and help to provide a rich and varied programme for pupils. Schemes of work build clearly towards productive outcomes for pupils involving real audiences and purposes; this helps pupils to appreciate the importance of English to their lives outside school. Independent learning and wide reading are very well promoted. The curriculum builds systematically on technological developments in communications and pupils have regular opportunities to use ICT, including analysing and producing media texts. Pupils' learning is very well enhanced by enrichment activities such as theatre and cinema visits, drama workshops, reading groups, and opportunities for writers to work with pupils in school.</p>	<p>Subject leaders inspire pupils and colleagues through a passionate commitment to the subject, strongly held views about the nature of English and very good subject knowledge. They are very well informed about developments in the subject nationally and use this to improve the curriculum and teaching. Innovation and creativity are encouraged. All staff work very well together because there is a strong shared purpose and commitment to the same goals. Provision for pupils is reviewed collaboratively and good practice is routinely and effectively shared. Subject responsibilities are well delegated and all members of the team, including NQTs, have very good opportunities to contribute to developments. Subject leaders make thoughtful and thorough use of a wide range of evidence, including the response of pupils, to review the impact of work across reading, writing, speaking and listening. As a result, self-evaluation is rigorous and effective, leading to well targeted support for all staff. Subject plans identify very clearly how teaching is to be further improved. The very good quality of its work means that the English department has a very high profile in the life of the school and is at the cutting edge of initiatives locally or nationally.</p>