

### **Overview of Key Stage 3 English at Fir Vale School**

The Key Stage 3 English course at Fir Vale School aims to build on and develop the skills pupils have acquired at Key Stage 2. It also encourages pupils to engage in reading and writing for pleasure, as well as promoting the value of excellent literacy skills for life beyond school. Finally, it is designed to prepare pupils for the demands of Key Stage 4 English and the GCSE course.

In Years 7 and 8, students study a novel, poetry and drama together with a range of media and non-fiction texts, and an exploration of Shakespeare – his works and his world. Learners are given the opportunity to read widely and independently, thus encouraging an appreciation of literature. All Year 7 pupils have regular timetabled lessons in the library, to encourage them to maintain and develop positive reading habits. Pupils are grouped according to ability, to enable support to be most effectively targeted towards those pupils most in need of it, and they are given the chance to improve their speaking and listening skills through individual, pair and group work. Pupils' work is regularly assessed, and each half-term pupils are tested on each of the key areas of reading, writing and speaking/listening. From these assessments, specific personal targets are generated for each pupil; in the case of writing, they will then work on these targets by selecting and completing relevant tasks in specially targeted activity booklets, alongside their regular units of work. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their progress in the subject, with the support and guidance of their teachers.

In year 9, students study a novel, poetry, a Shakespearian play, and a range of media and non-fiction texts. Learners are given the opportunity to read widely and independently, thus encouraging an appreciation of literature. In the second half of the year, pupils complete a unit of work focussing on 'English at the business end', exploring how the literacy skills learnt in the classroom will be valuable in the world of work. Visiting speakers from a range of businesses and professions come into classes to share their experiences of using English in their careers. The pupils themselves then undertake some of the tasks these business people and professionals are faced with every day, with a view to understanding the importance of English in almost every occupation. Arrangements for grouping, assessment and target-setting in Year 9 continue the patterns established in Years 7 and 8.