

Maplewell Hall School



English Policy

Policy Created	September 2017
Governing Body Committee	
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Maplewell Hall School English Policy



Aims:

Maplewell wants the best for every student. We believe all students can, in the right classroom environment and through the right address of their learning needs, achieve exceptionally well in English. Staff are committed to fuelling every student with the best 'value added' from their original starting points throughout their years at Maplewell so that they can perform to their very best in their KS4 tests and beyond. At Maplewell, we want our students to be fully prepared and equipped for adult life.

This high aspiration for student success is achieved through a dedicated department who are committed to baselining students at the point of entry in order to ascertain their correct levels of function and moving them rapidly on through high level Quality First Teaching. Baselining is completed by a variety of assessments facilitated to ensure accuracy of grading.

1. Assessing students' Reading Age and correlating this in line with our English Mastery assessment system.
2. Assessing students' Spelling Age and correlating this in line with our English Mastery assessment system.
3. A reading comprehension test that provides students' true levels of functioning in accordance with our Mastery assessment system.
4. A writing test that, again, correlates student performance in line with our Mastery assessment system.
5. Committed and correct Teacher assessment over students' first half term to ensure all formal testing is professionally agreed with.

These above methods of assessment are subject to rigorous and robust moderation by English teaching staff so as to ensure assessment grading is agreed by all professionals in this field and marking is consistent within the English department.

Teaching and learning

Maplewell's English curriculum is up-to-date, fully responds to the National Curriculum of 2014 and provides all students, at every level, rich access to the curriculum path their starting points direct them.

KS3 students baselined at a Launch Level typically follow a path that takes them to Entry Level qualification at KS4. This will ensure that they are GCSE ready for KS5 (or Level 1 Functional Skills English if that is the tract they wish to follow at College). KS3 students, baselined at Prep 1 or above, will follow a pathway throughout years 7, 8 and 9 that ensures they are GCSE ready for the start of KS4.

Teachers of these students, dependent on their identified pathway, plan and prepare with resources accordingly so as to achieve the very best performance from their students and ensure they achieve or exceed their targets. This is achieved by subject teachers providing students with clear success criteria. Teachers' questioning promotes independent and critical thinking in all students to ensure their good progress.

Within the English department, we encourage rapid student progression. In this respect, we will, if moderation of work provides the evidence, move students to classes reflecting their ability.

Reading

From the outset, all teaching is focused on ensuring students acquire the necessary skills for success at KS4. This requires students' comprehension skills to be at the fore of teaching using the mastery targets in conjunction with the English assessment foci. Students with lower Reading Ages who may struggle in accessing a whole text, are taught to skim and scan a text to identify key words to support their understanding.

All students entering Maplewell Hall School are taught to use the PEE structure when responding to texts; ensuring they can confidently state their opinion, identify language techniques used, the intended effect on the reader and be able to explain how these support their understanding.

Writing

Following on from the above, students are taught to apply their knowledge of writers' craft to their own work by using a range of punctuation and sentence forms for intended effect. Additionally, all students should aspire to use a sophisticated vocabulary and a variety of language techniques.

Differentiation

As implied above, the English department expects all students to aspire to the highest level they can so they are successful at KS4 and beyond. To bring about effective results for all, teachers differentiate work using the Mastery criteria or KS4/5 exam marking criteria as targets for individuals to aim for.

Differentiation focuses on successful outcomes rather than heavily supported in-class activities. The result of this is all students being best placed to develop independent skills to support their progression through the curriculum.

This is further supported by wave 1 and 2 interventions evident in teachers' planning.

Assessment

Assessment is an ongoing process in English. Teachers provide very clear success criteria for students to follow so they understand how they can achieve well. Students are regularly encouraged to self-assess their work in light of the success criteria so their understanding of the skills needed to fulfil potential is consolidated. This is also achieved through the regular use of peer-assessment. Throughout each unit of work, teachers provide students with a wealth of verbal feedback and regularly mark books; making clear to students 'What Went Well' and providing an 'Even Better If' improvement focus. Teachers are required to make a summative assessment of students' attainment, matched against the mastery system or KS4 exam marking criteria, each half term – the marking of these assessments is in line with Maplewell's marking policy.

Department resources

All teachers play an active part in the creation and maintenance of SoW and store these within the shared English area. This ensures a supportive, cohesive and inclusive department.