

The Department

English at Freman College is a popular subject delivered by a well-qualified and high-profile department. The department has its own, well-resourced teaching block, including two class sets of netbooks and a generous departmental budget.

There is a strongly collaborative and supportive approach within the department with all teachers contributing to, and benefiting from, the development of shared schemes and resources. This makes it a particularly welcoming environment for teachers who enjoy sharing best practice and working together. All members of the department teach across the age and ability range with A Level teaching forming a considerable proportion of each teacher's timetable.

The curriculum

Year 9

There are nine classes, each of which has six lessons of English per cycle. Three classes are made up of more able linguists, who take Latin. The remaining six classes are of mixed ability. Key Stage 3 is the remit of our middle schools and our focus in Year 9 is on developing the skills required for GCSE. The department has detailed curriculum planning in place with fully resourced schemes of work, providing a foundation for GCSE study.

Key Stage 4

There are ten teaching groups in each year; two blocks of five classes which are set by ability. Class sizes are small and each has eight lessons per cycle. Students are following the new 9-1 GCSE curriculum with Eduqas for Language and AQA for Literature. Language and Literature are taught through integrated skills-based schemes which are built around a core Literature text and which encourage cross-fertilisation between Language and Literature. Students are actively supported to understand the Language and Literature assessment objectives just as they are facilitated to exploit commonalities across the Language and Literature curricula.

Progress is significantly above national average for both boys and girls and places the department within the upper quartile nationally. As a Hertfordshire school, the College benefits from significant support from the Hertfordshire Education Service and the department staff have a broad range of examining and moderating expertise at GCSE which is shared with colleagues regularly.

Sixth Form

In both the Lower and Upper Sixth there are normally three groups. We follow the OCR specification for English Literature and in September 2016 introduced the OCR English Language course. Take-up for both subjects is high. A Level classes have eight or nine lessons per cycle, split between two teachers and close collaboration with teaching colleagues is encouraged. As for GCSE, shared schemes and resources are available and regular shared planning and standardising of work is conducted. Both English courses are among the most popular of our A Level subjects and the department has achieved consistently strong results. Again, strong links with exam boards and a wealth of examining expertise inform the department's teaching and planning.

Additional information

The college has a well-stocked Library run by an enthusiastic and very capable Librarian. She works closely with English subject leaders in our partner middle schools to run the Rib Valley Book Award, which involves Year 9 Literacy Leaders from Freman working with Year 8 students to run a project similar to shadowing the Carnegie Book Award.

The English Department also run theatre trips, sometimes in collaboration with the Drama department. All members of the department contribute substantially to the wider life of the college.