



English Curriculum Intent

The overall intent of the English curriculum at Irlam and Cadishead Academy is to develop skilled and knowledgeable literary critics who can engage with challenging texts; we want students to have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum, one that cultivates a love of reading, writing and oracy. Our aim is to give students access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts so that we can help the young people we serve develop cultural capital. We want to remove barriers for our students so that they can achieve their full potential in school and beyond. Our English curriculum will give our students the opportunity to:

- Read with confidence, fluency and prosody.
- Read challenging texts and use reading strategies to decode meaning.
- Demonstrate a level of mastery in reading, writing and oracy.
- Enjoy a wide range of literature.
- Write with sophistication, accuracy and creativity.
- Write in different forms and for different audiences and purposes.
- Understand and develop their repertoire of vocabulary.
- Produce excellent work that they are proud of – work that SHINES.
- Develop their oracy skills through speaking and listening activities.
- Develop students' character and encourage individuality and expression so that they feel confident enough to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community.

At ICA we believe that our curriculum is a powerful tool in developing the Individual and that what we chose to place on our curriculum carries a great level of value. As Christine Counsell states in 'Taking Curriculum Seriously: 'curriculum is all about power. Decisions about what knowledge to teach is an exercise of power and therefore a weighty ethical responsibility'. At ICA we want to teach content that is engaging and, as Zoe Enser outlines in her blog 'The Great English Debate', 'every text that we decide to include in our curriculum suggests a value judgement is being placed on it. Simply by being taught we are sending a powerful message to our students and by asking: 'Why this? Why here? Why now?' we are offering an education that creates curiosity and enlightenment.

Our curriculum develops pupils' essential skills and knowledge in all aspects of communication, whilst also fostering a love of reading and writing for pleasure. Our ultimate aim is for our students to leave us with a secure understanding of how to read efficiently and critically, write fluently and purposefully, and speak confidently to give them the best chances of success in further education and in all aspects of life. The curriculum is designed to equip pupils with the set of skills and knowledge that will give them the best chances of success in their future study, whilst also holistically developing pupils' communication skills to prepare them for life beyond school. Our English curriculum aims to promote the intellectual, emotional, social, and cultural development of pupils by giving them the chance to experience a multitude of different perspectives and voices, along with the opportunity to experiment with their voice. Students' reading and literacy skills are developed by studying a sequence of schemes of work that have been carefully designed to continuously interleave both knowledge and skills. Our curriculum is thematic and develops the depth and nuance of knowledge over time.

Through our schemes of learning, we explicitly teach challenging Tier 2 vocabulary to equip students with the vocabulary needed to engage with sophisticated texts in future study and outside of school.



Principles

Entitlement: All students will study a wide range of high-quality, challenging texts and writing forms including plays, non-fiction, novels, and poetry from the Elizabethan era to the present day.

Coherence: The curriculum is carefully sequenced according to themes, ideas, and concepts whilst introducing a variety of literary genres and forms, including different writing forms. For example, in year 7 students will look at the representation of gender throughout the ages and consider the role of men and women over time, this will then be enhanced when they look at the theme of respectability in Jekyll and Hyde in year 8 and patriarchy in Romeo and Juliet in year 9.

Mastery: We want our students to be able to link new knowledge to previously taught content and understand the different ways they connect. This is achieved through 'Retrieval Practice' activities at the start of lessons and the embedding of 'core knowledge' over time. The aim is that students understand a key foundation of knowledge thoroughly before exploring more complex ideas.

Adaptability: All students study the same texts and engage with similar resources. However, teachers adapt lessons according to the specific needs of their class. This ensures that the 'core knowledge' remains at the centre of each lesson whilst also ensuring that different needs are catered for.

Representation: All students will encounter texts which offer both a mirror and a window to the rich and multi-layered experiences of the world we live in, they will be exposed to texts that will represent themselves and others. They will be able to see both themselves in their learning, and also explore other cultures and the world as a whole.

Education with character: Through the curriculum, students are given many opportunities to share, reflect and learn about each other's lives whilst recognising common shared experiences. In Key Stage 3 students study the changing roles of women within society. For example, students are given the opportunity to discuss the subjugation of women within a patriarchal society in texts such as 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'I am Malala' and 'The Crucible'.