



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Head Master: Dr S D Smallwood BSc (Hons) PhD NPQH

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Dear Parents

I'd like to update you with news of developments in the English Department in terms of how we teach, assess and encourage the boys. Many of these developments also address feedback from the *Keep, Grow and Learn* questionnaire that we sent out to parents and boys late in the last academic year.

Key Stage Three

'Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar' books have now been issued and are in use with all KS3 classes. These were partly a result of parents' wishes to see these technical areas addressed in a more explicit way in regular lessons, and we fully support this.

We are currently trialling new ways of marking termly assessments, and improving how boys respond. Our new 'marking codes' enable us to cover ground more quickly in terms of pointing out what pupils are achieving, and tie in well with the extra SPaG work that we've been incorporating into Schemes of Work. The students' response to this feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The codes can be seen below.

BWS English Department – Marking Codes

Accuracy Codes

A1	Spelling
A2	Case (capitals/ lower)
A3	Apostrophe
A4	Comma / splice
A5	Semi-colon
A6	Colon
A7	Punctuation of direct speech / quotations
A8	Question mark
A9	Exclamation mark
A10	Grammatical
A11	Tenses
A12	paragraphing / new paragraph

Reading Codes

R1	Supporting quotation
R3	Quotation length
R4	Embedding quotations
R5	Detail / depth of analysis
R6	Integrating research
R7	Using specific terminology
R8	Referring to RANGE of techniques
R9	Referring to context
R10	Referring to structure
R11	Inference / understanding of writer
R12	Comparing texts / comparative terminology
R13	Linking to other / wider areas of the text
R14	Effect on reader / audience / evaluative

Writing Codes

W1	Use of Standard English
W2	Choice of word / vocabulary
W3	Linguistic device
W4	Sentence length
W5	Sentence style / flow / clarity / fragment
W6	Discourse marker
W7	Links between paragraphs
W8	Paragraphing for effect
W9	Planning / structuring the whole
W10	Style suited to purpose
W11	Opening / ending
W12	Handwriting / presentation

What these codes indicate:

- **errors**
- **areas in need of improvement***
- **what you have done well***

They will be used for:

- **Close-marking one area of an essay**
- **Marking the whole essay**
- **Indicating TARGETS**

** This should be made clear. For example, a circling of an error or a wavy line under a sentence would indicate negative; ticks beside a code, or a straight line with ticks indicates positive.*



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Boys work with these to analyse areas in which they need to improve. Teachers also record two or more targets at the end of each assessment, and generic targets are copied across to the top of new assessments by pupils. We are giving more lesson time over to boys reflecting on work in a meaningful and practical way in order to give them more responsibility for their own learning.

Key Stage Four

Boys in Year 10 have also been issued with their SPaG books, and are being taught these skills in a more explicit way, and on a regular basis. Early signs are positive, and boys are also enjoying the new AQA GCSE '9-1' courses that we have embarked upon. Classes are assessed termly across the year group, and we work very closely with assessment objectives to set key targets for improvement. Groups are currently studying *An Inspector Calls*, and will be moving on to study a poetry anthology, non-fiction extracts, and *Jekyll and Hyde* later in the year.

Year 11 are now moving into a more intense period of exam preparation in what is the last year of iGCSE English. We will be issuing them Revision Guides, which were written and produced on-site, at some point during next term.

We also welcome back Mrs. Ward, who is taking over Miss Salway's classes, as Miss Salway takes on her new SENCO role.

A Level

We recently enjoyed a very well-attended recruitment evening for current Year 11s, and have run taster sessions to encourage more boys to take up Literature at this level. Our current Year 12s are very enthusiastic and bursting with potential! This year, we have seen the successful trial of using the *Edmodo* app to improve communication between teacher and students beyond lesson time; and we have experimented with new lesson formats working, again, around assessment objectives and practical criticism for the OCR specification.

Extra Curricular

This year has seen Ms. Williams spear-heading no less than three Reading Groups – one for each of the Key Stages! These run through the week, and numbers are growing rapidly. She is also implementing a Book Exchange to encourage wider reading. Children's writer Jonathan Stroud visited to talk to Years 7 and 8 recently, and we plan more visits from writers later in the year. I am also aiming to launch a Writers' Club for older students in January.

As well as the visit of the Propeller Theatre company in February 2016 for Year 7, we also have theatre trips planned for Years 12/13 (*The Tempest* at The Globe), Year 10 (*An Inspector Calls* at the Mayflower), and I'm currently looking into a trip to see Kenneth Branagh's *Romeo and Juliet* with Year 9.



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I'm sure you'll agree that it's a very exciting time for the English Department; we hope that your son gets all he can from our programmes of study. If there's anything related to this or anything else regarding teaching and learning in English that you'd like to discuss with me, please don't hesitate to contact me at cje@bws.wilts.sch.uk.

We wish you a pleasant Christmas break and all the very best for 2016!

Yours sincerely

Craig Ennew
Head of English