



NOTTINGHAM GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM GUIDE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AQA

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

At least grade 7 in GCSE English.



COURSE OVERVIEW

The study of English Language at A level gives insights into the development and uses of both written and spoken English. To some extent, it calls upon your own existing knowledge and experiences. The course will encourage you to think about, and discuss, not only what people say and how they say it, but also our attitudes to the way people speak.

“English Language is great because you don’t only learn - you can apply it to life and notice things you didn’t before.”

Initially, students embark on an introductory unit, learning about key features of different approaches to the study of English Language, key concepts and methodologies including textual variations and representations linked to the individual and society. A wide variety of texts in both the written and the spoken mode are studied. This section of the course develops analytical skills as students discover how texts are shaped according to audience, purpose, genre and mode, taking the importance of context into account. The examination questions are text based and ask you to explore how language is being used to create meanings.

“The course has been really interesting and it’s impossible to get bored in the lessons.”

A wide and diverse range of written and spoken data is also studied to see how language changes over time, from 1600 to the present day, looking closely at the familiar topics of audience, purpose, genre and mode. Students examine the process of language change but also focus on social attitudes to and debates about language diversity and change. In particular, students draw on theories to support analysis of accent and dialect, social and occupational groups, ethnicity, class, age, gender, sexuality and

disability. We will look at electronic texts to see how the internet has affected language as well as the standardisation process which affects all language.

Children’s Language Development is a fascinating area of the course, looking at how children develop language and how they are able to understand and express themselves. Students study how children learn to speak, read and write using memories of personal experiences at Infant and Junior school before looking at research which informs our knowledge of child development and communication with children and infants. In the examination, students will be given data which allows for detailed reflection on how children learn language skills and communicate.

“English Language lessons provide plenty of opportunity for discussion. I would recommend the subject to anyone who wouldn’t mind analysing every piece of language they encounter in life, from how people speak to newspaper articles and adverts, etc.”

For the Language Discourses component, students consider the way people react to changes in our language and their attitudes to these changes in issues such as the way men and women communicate. Many of these texts will have been written for a non-specialist audience allowing for exploration into how texts are produced to convey views and opinions about language issues and how texts influence us. As well as writing an essay on a topic, the examination also asks students to produce a creative article based on ideas expressed in the text together with personal views.

The Language in Action coursework component allows students to demonstrate analytical and creative skills, selecting a topic of their choice to demonstrate personal strengths and areas

of interest (such as how men and women give directions or a comparison of stories written by children aged 6 to see how they are developing language skills). This comprises of a language investigation and piece of original writing (either to persuade, inform or tell a story) along with an accompanying commentary.

“The coursework is hugely enjoyable because I was able to choose a topic that really interested me, to write about languages in one of a whole range of forms.”

As well as the varied curriculum content we also offer opportunities to see lectures and exhibitions, work with the Junior pupils and take part in workshops with visiting authors.

THE SIXTH FORM AND BEYOND

This subject is particularly appropriate for anyone who is interested in language and attitudes to language, and the way in which we use words to influence each other. As well as being compelling in its own right, this subject offers transferable skills such as research, data collection and creating and redrafting writing. These make it a useful introduction to many courses and careers, such as studying Foreign Languages, Law, Journalism, Advertising, Psychology, Public Relations and Speech Therapy.

Whether you fancy being a speech writer, an advertising executive or just love language and would like to be a more persuasive communicator, this course will be invaluable.

Click here to watch the course introductory video from Second in English, Miss Emma Furness

In order to join us in the Sixth Form, we require an average of grade 6 across eight GCSE subjects, including English and Mathematics. See individual subjects for any specific requirements for study at A Level.

For detailed course information on all of the A Level subjects please visit the AQA, Edexcel or OCR websites.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the admissions process, please call 0115 935 4444 or email admissions@not.gdst.net



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