

Christ the King Catholic High School: English – Curriculum Overview 2026 - 2027



KEY STAGE 2		YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11
The English National Curriculum expects students at Key Stage 2 to read a wide range of age-appropriate texts fluently and accurately. Students should be able to read aloud with confidence, decode unfamiliar words, and demonstrate secure comprehension when reading both aloud and silently. They should summarise key ideas, retell stories in their own words, and read regularly for both pleasure and information. Students are also expected to infer meaning, including understanding unfamiliar vocabulary from context. In writing, students should be able to express ideas clearly and efficiently, using accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling with increasing control and ambition. Where students require additional support with decoding, a structured phonics programme should be in place. By the end of Year 6, students should be sufficiently fluent to access the Year 7 curriculum. They should understand audience and purpose, making appropriate choices in vocabulary and grammar. They should also begin to consciously control sentence structure and use increasingly precise, subject-specific and academic language.	TERM 1	Unit 1: Gothic Horror Writing Core knowledge: Gothic conventions, narrative structure, figurative language Core skills: Descriptive writing, creating atmosphere, building tension, sentence control Fast Read: Cirque du Freak Unit 2: Cirque du Freak Core knowledge: Narrative perspective, characterisation, themes, tension Core skills: Inference, analytical writing (P.E.E.), language analysis, writing for suspense Unit 3: A Midsummer Night's Dream Core knowledge: Shakespearean language, themes, character and plot Core skills: Reading challenging texts, analysis, oracy through performance, written response Unit 4: Poetry – Relationships & Identity Core knowledge: Poetic forms, structure, literary context Core skills: Analysis and comparison, identifying techniques, creative expression Unit 5: Advertising and Persuasive Writing Core knowledge: Persuasive techniques, audience and purpose, advert structure Core skills: Analytical writing, persuasive writing, adapting tone, presenting ideas Progression and Golden Thread: Students develop core knowledge of narrative, language, form, and audience, applying this through analytical and creative writing, building a foundation for KS3 and GCSE study. Students have a one-hour reading lesson every fortnight to develop fluency, vocabulary and reading for pleasure.	Fast Read: Animal Farm Unit 1: The Novel – Animal Farm Core knowledge: Allegory, power and corruption, revolution, propaganda, character symbolism Core skills: Inference and critical reading, analysing language and structure, developing analytical writing Unit 2: Non-Fiction – News & Media Core knowledge: Bias, viewpoint, fact vs opinion, media influence, article structure Core skills: Analysing non-fiction texts, evaluating credibility, writing for purpose and audience Unit 3: Shakespeare – Macbeth Core knowledge: Themes of ambition, power and morality, Shakespearean language, character development Core skills: Textual analysis, use of evidence, understanding dramatic methods, extended writing Unit 4: Spy Thrillers Core knowledge: Genre conventions, narrative structure, suspense and tension, character roles Core skills: Reading for inference, analysing structure, crafting engaging narratives Unit 5: Poetry – Nature & Place Core knowledge: Poetic forms, imagery, language techniques, comparison across poems Core skills: Analysing and comparing poetry, exploring writer's methods, expressing interpretations clearly Progression and Golden Thread: Students deepen understanding of theme, characterisation and structure across a range of texts. They analyse how writers construct meaning and apply this through extended writing, comparison, and evaluation of fiction and non-fiction. Students have a one-hour reading lesson every fortnight to embed reading habits and strengthen comprehension.	Unit 1: The Power of Speech Core Knowledge: Persuasive language, rhetoric, speech structure, historical context, audience and purpose Core Skills: Analysing speeches, crafting persuasive arguments, structuring speeches, confident oracy and delivery Unit 2: Power and Conflict Core Knowledge: Power dynamics, conflict, social justice, thematic development, character and context Core Skills: Critical reading, analysing themes across texts, evaluating ideas, developing analytical responses Unit 3: Non-Fiction Reading & Writing Core Knowledge: Text types, viewpoint and perspective, language and structure, comparison Core Skills: Evaluating non-fiction, comparing ideas, analysing writer's methods, transactional writing Unit 4: Power & Conflict Poetry Core Knowledge: Poetic forms, themes of war and conflict, voice, context and literary heritage Core Skills: Analysing and comparing poems, interpreting language and structure, developing informed responses Unit 5: Suburbia Core Knowledge: Social commentary, environment, audience and purpose, non-fiction forms Core Skills: Writing for different purposes, crafting viewpoint writing, analysing real-world issues, adapting tone and structure Progression and Golden Thread: Students consolidate knowledge of context, perspective and thematic development across a range of texts. They analyse rhetoric, social commentary and poetic voice, applying this through comparison, argument, and extended writing. Students have a one-hour reading lesson every fortnight to enhance critical reading and analytical skills.	Unit 1: Romeo and Juliet Core Knowledge: Tragedy, Shakespearean context, characterisation, themes, poetic structure Core Skills: Analysing language and structure, interpreting character and theme, using evidence in extended responses Fast Read: A Christmas Carol Unit 2: A Christmas Carol Core Knowledge: Victorian context, social class and responsibility, narrative methods, writer's purpose Core Skills: Analytical reading, exploring context, evaluating themes, structured essay writing Unit 3: Component 1 – Narrative Writing Core Knowledge: Narrative structure, tone, character creation, descriptive techniques Core Skills: Crafting engaging narratives, controlling structure, developing style and vocabulary, accurate technical writing Unit 4: Component 1 – Reading Fiction Core Knowledge: Narrative voice, mood and setting, language and structure, characterisation Core Skills: Close analysis of unseen fiction, interpreting writer's methods, selecting and embedding evidence Unit 5: Poetry Anthology – War, Conflict & Nature Core Knowledge: Poetic form, theme, voice, language and context Core Skills: Analysing and comparing poems, evaluating methods, writing comparative responses Progression and Golden Thread: Students secure knowledge of GCSE texts, language forms and assessment requirements. They apply this through analytical, comparative and narrative writing, developing confident and structured responses aligned to exam expectations. One lesson per fortnight is interleaved to revisit and reinforce prior knowledge and skills.	Unit 1: Component 2 – Comparing Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing Core Knowledge: Non-fiction text types, comparison, language analysis, audience and purpose Core Skills: Evaluating viewpoints, comparing texts, analysing language and structure, transactional writing Unit 2: Poetry Anthology – Love & Relationships Core Knowledge: Poetic form, voice, theme, language and context Core Skills: Comparing poems, analysing writer's methods, constructing comparative essays Fast Read: Blood Brothers Unit 3: Blood Brothers Core Knowledge: Social and historical context, genre of drama, characterisation, themes Core Skills: Analysing dramatic methods, exploring context, using evidence, extended analytical writing Unit 4: Unseen Poetry Core Knowledge: Poetic techniques, structure, theme, language Core Skills: Analysing unseen texts, interpreting meaning, selecting evidence, responding critically Unit 5: Revision Block Core Knowledge: Key texts, language forms, exam requirements Core Skills: Retrieval and recall, exam technique, timed responses, refining analytical and comparative writing Progression and Golden Thread: Students consolidate literary and linguistic knowledge to develop confident, precise and independent responses. They apply their understanding of texts, form and context through analysis, comparison and unseen interpretation in preparation for GCSE examinations.
	TERM 2					
	TERM 3					

Cultural Capital: The English curriculum at Christ the King Catholic High School is designed to broaden students' cultural capital through the study of diverse texts, themes and contexts. Students develop a deeper understanding of literature while gaining insight into different perspectives and experiences. Alignment with the Eduqas GCSE specification ensures students engage with meaningful and relevant material, equipping them with the cultural knowledge and awareness needed for academic success and active participation in modern society.

Extra-Curricular: The English Department offers a range of enriching opportunities, including author visits, theatre trips, writing competitions and literacy initiatives. These experiences enhance the curriculum, supporting students to become confident, independent learners with strong communication and critical thinking skills, preparing them for further study and future careers.

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ENRICHMENT & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

CAREERS EDUCATION

YEAR 7	In Year 7, we foster a love of reading through our Book Buzz launch. Students choose from a wide range of titles, ensuring accessibility and engagement for all, and each student receives a book to keep. Across Key Stage 3, students take part in a range of enriching activities designed to develop literacy and promote a love of reading and writing:	These units link specifically to careers in marketing and advertising. Students begin to make links between English and future careers through exposure to a range of literary genres and creative opportunities. Study of Gothic fiction encourages interest in careers such as writing and publishing. Engagement with <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>, including performance, introduces pathways into acting, directing and the creative industries. Units on rhetoric and persuasive writing also support awareness of careers in marketing, advertising and media.
YEAR 8	• Reading Activities: Students engage in regular reading opportunities to build confidence, explore new genres and develop independent reading habits. • Young Writers: Students participate in writing competitions, providing a platform to develop creativity and showcase their work.	Students explore a range of texts across different forms and purposes, developing an understanding of how language is used in real-world contexts. This supports awareness of careers in journalism, media and communications. The study and performance of <i>Macbeth</i> further strengthen links to careers in theatre, performance and the creative arts.
YEAR 9	• Media Literacy and Fake News: In Year 8, students explore how information is presented and manipulated, creating their own news reports to develop critical thinking and media awareness. • Author Visits: Visiting authors, such as Tom Palmer, offer insight into the writing process and inspire students to engage more deeply with literature. These opportunities enrich students' learning and support their development as confident, reflective readers and writers.	Students engage with complex social and political themes through speech and non-fiction units. They develop skills in argument, analysis and evaluation, supporting pathways into careers such as law, politics, journalism and activism. The curriculum encourages students to think critically about society and their role within it.
YEAR 10	Year 10 students undertake training to become Reading Buddies, supporting younger students with lower reading ages. This develops their own literacy skills while fostering responsibility, leadership and mentoring.	Students apply their skills in more structured and purposeful ways, supporting preparation for future education and careers. The study of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> reinforces opportunities in the creative arts, including acting, directing and playwriting. Non-fiction reading and writing units link directly to careers in journalism, media, public relations and digital content creation. Students also develop leadership and communication skills through roles such as Reading Buddies, fostering responsibility and mentorship.
YEAR 11	In Year 11, students are supported in preparing for their next steps through college and careers workshops. These focus on key employability skills, including CV writing, job applications and personal statements, ensuring students are well-prepared for further education or employment. The English curriculum promotes independence, critical thinking and effective communication, equipping students for life beyond school. Students also benefit from theatre trips to productions such as <i>Blood Brothers</i> and <i>A Christmas Carol</i>, enriching their understanding of texts and exposing them to storytelling beyond the classroom.	Students refine their analytical and communication skills, preparing for post-16 pathways. Through the study of GCSE texts, students explore themes such as social responsibility, inequality and morality, supporting interest in careers such as law, politics, charity work and public service. Continued engagement with non-fiction and transactional writing strengthens links to careers in journalism, marketing, media and communications. Students are also supported through workshops focused on employability skills, including CV writing, applications and personal statements.
LITERACY & NUMERACY	At Christ the King Catholic High School, the English curriculum develops core literacy skills - reading, writing and oracy - from Key Stage 3 onwards. Students engage with a diverse range of texts to promote critical reading and discussion, alongside explicit teaching of reading strategies and vocabulary, including skimming and scanning. Beyond the classroom, students benefit from author visits, theatre trips, writing competitions and national literacy initiatives. Integrated numeracy further supports confidence and exam readiness. Overall, the curriculum equips students to become articulate, thoughtful readers, writers and critical thinkers, prepared for further study and future employment.	CATHOLIC ETHOS At Christ the King, our English curriculum is thoughtfully designed to cater to the diverse needs of our students, embracing the Catholic ethos. Through the study of English language and literature, we aim to foster expressive readers, creative writers, and effective communicators, aligning with our commitment to a well-rounded education. Our inclusive approach ensures flexibility and high expectations for all, recognising the unique value of English education in exploring diverse perspectives while staying true to our Catholic identity.