



Pittville School
Cheltenham

Albert Road, Cheltenham, GL52 3JD
telephone 01242 524787
fax 01242 228750
email achieve@pittville.glocus.sch.uk
website www.pittville.glocus.sch.uk

Headteacher Richard Gilpin

21st September 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: YEAR 10 GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE 2019

As you know, the new style GCSE English language and GCSE English literature qualifications have now been running for three years. Both these two qualifications have 100% exam content. In 2018 when Year 11 students reached the end of their academic year they sat two examinations for GCSE English language and two exams for GCSE English literature, four exams in all; seven and a half hours of exams.

After much consultation, lengthy consideration of the courses and evaluation of this year's Literature results, we have decided that all students in year 10 will sit their GCSE English literature exams at the end of their year 10 year, in May 2019. We believe that this will enable students to concentrate fully on just two exams in year 10 (GCSE English literature) and then only two exams for English at the end of year 11 (GCSE English language). This will benefit students by allowing them to manage the vast amount of information they need for four exams into two 'manageable chunks'.

In 2018 all Year 10 students sat their GCSE English literature at the end of year 10. As a result, over 60% of the cohort gained a GCSE grade 4 or above, with 13% of the year group gaining the top grades, 7, 8 or 9.

As the literature exams are 'closed book', this presents a key issue for our students. We feel that after a full year concentrating on literature texts only, students will be ready to sit the exam in May 2019 rather than retain this information for another year, revisiting key texts throughout year 11.

In their English lessons in Year 9 students have not only been introduced to the key reading and writing skills for GCSE but they have already studied 'An Inspector Calls', one of their set texts for GCSE literature and have already begun analysing some of the poetry from the exam anthology. Students have been assessed after each unit of work under strict exam conditions to mimic the expectations of the exam. Students have also been exposed to exemplar materials and the marking criteria for the literature GCSE questions too.

By sitting the Literature examination in May 2019, our students can fully focus on the second English qualification GCSE English language, starting this at the end of year 10 and continuing in year 11. This will allow students to solely concentrate on GCSE language skills without having to revisit the literature set texts in their last important year at Pittville. Year 11 is a difficult intense year for any student and we believe by taking away some of this stress by reducing the number of exams they sit, will also benefit pupils.

You may also be aware that both GCSE English literature and GCSE English language are now subjects that no longer have foundation or higher tiers. Therefore all Year 10 groups have the opportunity to gain the best grade they can whatever group they belong to. Please be assured we will be doing everything we can to maximise your child's potential and help them gain the best grade they can.

Finally, should you like to find out more information about the literature course or ask any questions, we will be holding a GCSE 'drop in' literature forum for year 10 parents on *Tuesday 2nd October from 5:30pm to 6:00pm in Room 3.*

Yours faithfully

Louise Davies (Mrs)
Head of Communications Faculty

