



3rd September 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

A warm welcome to Crawshaw Academy from the English Department. This academic year, your child will learn and develop a range of skills which will lead them towards their GCSE English Language and Literature qualifications in Year 11. We believe it is important that all our students are given the best opportunity to reach their potential and know that learning the skills for GCSE as early as possible will help them to do their best.

Our programme of study covers a broad range of topics from the modern American text “Wonder” to Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” with a variety of texts in between. Our Year 7 feedback is always positive, and our students really enjoy being in Year 7 and developing the skills they have learnt in Years 5 and 6.

In the English Department at Crawshaw, we have a Mastery Curriculum for the six broad skills we learn. Comprehension, Analysis, Comparison, Creative Writing, Technical Accuracy and Thematic Understanding are the broad areas we focus on to ensure success at GCSE and beyond. These skills allow students to explore new texts, make comparisons with similar texts, and develop their own creative and argumentative writing.

To assess these areas, we use the GCSE marking criteria. We then use the Doodle system of reporting mastery to students and parents. After each half-termly assessment, your child will be given a Doodle rating for the skill s/he has been assessed on. These are in the form of Red, Amber and Green grades at Levels 1 to 4 on the GCSE grading criteria. We have chosen to do this as a means of visually showing students where they are currently working at for a particular skill, and what they can do to make progress, and these reports will be stuck into their English book. Each half term, a different skill will be assessed.

Based on our understanding of the requirements for a Grade 5 and above in Year 11, we have devised a ‘Flight Path’ for our students which shows the level of mastery we would expect a typical student to have achieved by the end of Year 7.

Year 7 AO Flight Path:

A01: L2 I can make a statement about a text which is linked to the task. I can support my statements with references to parts of the text and make a comment about the reference.

A02: L2 I can make a comment about the effect of language/structure on the reader using a linked quotation and identifying techniques used by the author.

A03: L1 I can make a comment on obvious ideas or historical factors found in the text.

A04: L1 I can make a simple response showing my understanding of the techniques the writer uses, using some reference to the text. My response shows I understand the writing has an effect on the reader.

A05: L2 I can begin to match my writing to audience and purpose. I can write in paragraphs and choose vocabulary for effect.

A06: L2 I can write using basic punctuation most of the time. I try to use a variety of sentences and my spelling of complex words is correct.

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Our hope is that by mastering these skills at these levels, our Year 7 students will be on a successful path towards reaching Level 4 Year 11.

To help support your child on their path to success, we have created a Homework Takeaway which links the skills we're teaching to the texts we are studying. Your child will select a number of tasks across the time the topic is being studied and hand it in to their teacher by the date agreed. This task will need to be completed and then added to their English book. We have also begun using Bedrock Learning and your child will need to complete two 15-minute sessions online to improve vocabulary knowledge per week and a login will be provided in the first week of school. Every student will be given a Block where they will begin, and this Block will take one academic year to complete. We take homework seriously and know the benefits of working on a skill outside of a classroom environment. Therefore, rewards for excellent homework will be given in the form of postcards, Classcharts points or as part of a display. Homework is vital in embedding the skills we're teaching in the classroom, thus consequences for not completing homework will be recorded onto Classcharts as well. Your support in ensuring homework is completed to a high standard is much appreciated.

Reading will have been a part of everyday life at primary school and this will continue at Crawshaw Academy. Your child will be expected to read every day at school and every night at home. There will be a space in your child's planner for you to sign as evidence of this reading. Research shows that reading for 30 minutes every day improves vocabulary, imagination, spelling, creativity and general knowledge. To give your child the best opportunities in life, encourage them to read regularly. They will be given a scrapbook for their LRC lessons to record what they've read, and complete creative tasks based on the books they are reading. Included with this letter is our KS3 suggested reads. If you are struggling with what books your child might enjoy, please look to this for inspiration. Our library is open before and after school as well as break and lunchtimes for students to sit and read, and to borrow and return books.

I look forward to working closely with you and your child over the coming years to help them enjoy and progress at Crawshaw Academy.

I can be contacted via email (mellisa.dean@crawshawacademy.org.uk) with any queries or concerns regarding your child's academic development in English.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs M Dean,
KS3 Programme Leader - English