



ENGLISH

The English Department's mission is for all students to flourish in English. At Key Stage 3, students will follow the English Mastery Programme so that students graduate Year 9 as confident and literate readers and critical and accurate writers. By the end of Key Stage 3, they will **know more** about the foundational texts in literature, will be able to **remember more** about English Literature's social and historical context and will be able to **do more** creative and critical writing.

English Mastery is a traditional study of the English Literary canon. Students study the foundational texts of English Literature such as 'Oliver Twist' and 'The Tempest'. The defining messages of these texts, such as Dickens' desire for a fairer society, will support their future study of English and other subjects.

Students also study grammar and writing in isolation which enables students to gain the foundational knowledge from which creativity can emerge. Being able to use subordinate clauses accurately enables students to compose multi-faceted narratives, articles and essays in English and in other subjects.

Our curriculum is cumulative and integrated. All of the content and knowledge is connected so that students form a firm foundation of literary and linguistic knowledge that enables them to read and write accurately and critically.

At GCSE students study AQA GCSE English Language and Literature which builds on students' learning at Key Stage 3. Students continue to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Essentially, through our English Curriculum we wish our **students develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually through the texts they study and the activities they complete.**

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is a creative and highly inter-connected discipline. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high-quality mathematics education, therefore, provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject. In the Mathematics Curriculum Area each student is considered as an individual in his/her own right. Each student is monitored individually to ensure maximum progress.

At Hilbre, we have adopted a Mastery approach to the teaching of Mathematics. We believe students have mastered a particular topic when they can apply their knowledge in an unfamiliar context. Problem solving is at the heart of all lessons. Our curriculum has been carefully planned out so that students are constantly establishing links between different areas. Lessons are always building on prior knowledge. Challenge is evident for all abilities

using rich problem-solving tasks and through developing students' deep understanding and their ability to articulate and reason their learning.

At the end of the GCSE course in Year 11, all students will take an Edexcel examination at either Foundation or Higher tier depending on their attainment throughout the course.

SCIENCE

The teaching of Science places great emphasis on "How Science Works", as well as the theoretical content. We centre lessons on investigation, observation and deduction, as it is accepted that learning by experience provides experimental results, which in turn leads to first-hand knowledge.

Although Science is taught in primary schools, few of the students have laboratory experience when commencing at Hilbre. Students are introduced to experimental methods, which form the basis of their work in Years 7 and 8. We build on each student's earlier school experiences to extend the breadth and depth of their knowledge, develop their understanding and improve their skills. The Science course in Year 7 includes a description of human reproduction as part of the wider topic of reproduction in plants and animals.

Students have 6 x hour long lessons of Science per fortnight. At Key Stage 3 we follow AQA's "10 Big Ideas" scheme of work that introduces learners to the topics they will face at Key Stage 4, so that when they are taught these topics at Key Stage 4 in greater detail they already have some basic knowledge of them. Each Big Idea is taught in individual units at Key Stage 3. We also place great emphasis on self and peer assessment, so learners can take ownership of how to improve their own work.

In Year 9, our students begin a transition course which hybridises the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Programme of Study.

In Year 10, our most able students are encouraged and offered the opportunity to study towards Separate Sciences and class sizes are relatively small. The majority of students take up AQA Trilogy Science GCSE. Trilogy has two-thirds of the content of Separates Sciences so students earn two GCSEs. Key Stage 4 students taking GCSE qualifications are taught by specialist subject teachers. Year 11 sees a continuation of the Year 10 programme of study.

In Years 12 and 13, we offer A Level Biology, Chemistry and Physics. We also run Level 3 BTEC as part of our Post-16 courses and currently run Level 3 BTEC Applied Science and Level 3 BTEC in Animal Management.

We run many trips, visits and other Science related enrichment activities and will be building on this further in the future. Previously we have run trips to a variety of establishments and events such as a trip to the Sealife Centre and Cadbury's World, the Big Bang Fair in Birmingham, a Disneyland Paris trip for Separate Scientists and an informative trip to Manchester University, amongst others. We also aim to run a regular Science club for Y7 students.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

From September 2022, **ALL** students in Year 7 will study Spanish. In Year 8, the top 25% of students will be invited to study French as well as Spanish.

French and Spanish are now popular options for GCSE. All students are encouraged to opt for a language, particularly dual linguists, but it is not yet compulsory for all.

In Year 11, students have more 1:1 attention and extra practice sessions are held after school to support students in preparation for the final exam. This has proved beneficial to students and is reflected in the GCSE pass rate.

The development of listening and reading skills are given high priority and students will be encouraged to undertake homework tasks on Doodle, using BBC 'bitesize' or using language apps, such as 'duolingo' and 'memrise'.

At A Level, students are taught in small teaching groups and they benefit from having more intensive sessions with their teachers as well as a bespoke conversation class with a native speaker, when possible. Contact with native speakers is made a priority in the Modern Foreign Languages Department and this is encouraged at all levels by working with native speakers and PGCE students.

Language trips abroad have proved very successful in motivating students by enabling them to practise their language skills in an authentic setting. This has also led to an increase in the number of students opting for languages at Key Stage 4 and some even continuing to A Level.

GEOGRAPHY

The study of Geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places. It helps young people make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world. It explains where places are, how places and landscapes are formed, how people and their environment interact and how a diverse range of economies, societies and environments are interconnected.

The key concepts that underpin the study of Geography are an understanding of:

1. Place
2. Space
3. Scale
4. Interdependence
5. Physical and human processes
6. Environmental interaction and sustainable development.
7. Cultural understanding and diversity

Students learn through the processes of geographical enquiry, fieldwork, use of maps, photographs, ICT, graphs, model making and problem solving. Recent fieldwork has included visits to Manchester, Wales and further afield to Iceland. There is a strong emphasis on learning about current events on a local, regional and global scale.

Assessment is carried out through regular tests and homework, at the end of which a grade is awarded.

HISTORY

In History at Key Stage 3, we aim to foster a curiosity, interest and enthusiasm for the past. Students find out about the history of their community, Britain, Europe and the world.

In order for students to deepen and broaden their knowledge, understanding and skills, a range of historical concepts and processes underpin teaching and learning in History lessons:

- Chronology
- Cultural, ethnic and religious diversity
- Change and continuity
- Cause and consequence
- Significance
- Interpretation
- Historical enquiry
- Using evidence
- Communicating about the past

Students have the opportunity to organise and communicate their learning in a variety of forms such as cartoon strips, poetry, extended writing, projects, group work, role play, use of drama and ICT.

The past is studied from a variety of stimuli and sources and have included visiting theatre companies and educational visits, such as Chester, the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, Quarry Bank Mill and the Imperial War Museum in Manchester.

Assessment of students is undertaken through regular knowledge tests, source assessments and written assignments.

Students are encouraged to continue with this subject at GCSE and A Level.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The curriculum in Religious Education is constantly evolving in order to provide a learning experience which is interesting, varied and relevant to the lives and experiences of our students.

In Years 7 and 8 students currently examine the key beliefs and practices of 5 world religions, namely Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. In Year 9 students undertake an introduction to Philosophy and Ethics. Each unit of work is assessed by a combination of mid-term and end of unit assessment tasks which help to develop our students as independent learners as they research, select and present information relevant to the topic. A range of teaching and learning styles are used within the Department and students are encouraged to examine their own views and the views of others in debate, discussion and written work. At the end of Key Stage 3 students are assessed in terms of their knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills in Religious Education. The RE curriculum continues to evolve and change to embrace new ideas and practices.

GCSE Religious Studies is also offered as an option, following the OCR Examination Board. This continues to be a popular and successful course. All Key Stage 4 students will continue to follow a varied and interesting exploration of ethical and moral issues in their statutory RE time.

We also offer the opportunity to participate in a trip to Poland to visit the Krakow Ghetto, Auschwitz and the Schindler Factory Museum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The philosophy of the department, in summary, is that through the iterative processes of 'design, make and evaluate', students gain a sound education in technology whichever the medium they are working in. This can be thought of as a series of stages - the perceived need for a product, the design stage, the use of practical skills to work safely with equipment and materials in producing a product, and the evaluation of the finished article.

Students learn to recognise needs, wants and opportunities within society and respond to these by producing a range of ideas and products. It encourages creative thinking, independence of thought, perseverance, the development of craft skills and the ability to offer a critical evaluation of their work.

It encourages students to think about safety and the need for discipline in what can be a potentially dangerous environment.

The study of Design and Technology enhances the quality of students' learning through developing attitudes of cooperation and collaboration.

Students learn about our technological heritage and about influence of technology in society.

At Hilbre, students initially build on prior learning from primary school, which have been laid in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. For the majority of students, there is a significant change in the learning environment in which Design and Technology is taught. The use of specialised rooms and equipment enables a greater depth of learning that many students will not have experienced in primary school.

Students initially develop their skills in a number of **Focussed Practical Tasks (FPTs)** and some initial **Design and Make Activities/projects (DMAs)**. FPTs and DMAs initially are more closed design brief during the first few projects. This is to develop their skills further for more challenging activities in secondary school. As the curriculum progresses, key elements of the Design and Technology curriculum are revisited to help secure key subject knowledge.

In Key Stages 4 and 5, students will be equipped with a wide range of experience, FPTs and DMAs become more challenging, open and independent in nature. Students learn a number of key theory principles; mathematical skills; develop knowledge of careers and industries; etc. Students then finally apply their subject knowledge and their problem solving skills independently for their NEA and examinations in Year 11.

At Hilbre, we are offering the following courses:

- AQA Design and Technology.
- OCR Cambridge National Level 1/2 in Engineering Design.

At Key Stage 5, students can choose from the following AS/A Level and vocational courses:

- AQA Design and Technology (3D Design).

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

We believe that learning how to cook is a crucial life skill. We hope to inspire a lifelong interest in food and healthy eating, and to equip students with the skills they need to feed themselves and others throughout their life. Students learn a wide range of practical skills and develop their confidence to cook independently.

Over the three years, Key Stage 3 students will be taught to:-

- understand and apply the principles of nutrition and health;
- cook a repertoire of predominantly savoury dishes so that they are able to feed themselves and others a healthy and varied diet;
- become competent in a range of cooking techniques (for example, selecting and preparing ingredients; using utensils and electrical equipment; applying heat in different ways; using awareness of taste, texture and smell to decide how to season dishes and combine ingredients; adapting and using their own recipes);
- understand the source, seasonality and characteristics of a broad range of ingredients.

Assessment will be continual and will include practical work and theoretical knowledge.

Food Preparation is offered as an option choice at Key Stage 4 when we study the AQA Food Preparation and Nutrition course; this allows students to develop the skills taught in Key Stage 3 and produce much more complex dishes.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY and COMPUTING

Information Technology (IT) is taught to students as a separate subject. Each student will have experience in using computers to produce letters on a word processor, compile collections of information on a database and interrogate it, produce graphs and charts using spreadsheet software. They will use a variety of commercial software to edit digital graphics and will be taught how to use the Internet safely, including e-mail. Students will also learn about computer systems and will gain experience of basic computer programming in a range of languages.

The content of IT lessons will be a mixture of topics relevant to the students as well as relate to other curriculum subjects so that the students can see how IT can integrate in other areas. They will also begin to experience the use of IT in Maths, English, Science, Humanities, Technology and Art. In Key Stage 4, students can choose to study Computer Science GCSE or Vocational Award in ICT. The school is equipped with 3 networked computer rooms plus another 100 computer systems and 5 banks of laptops, all on a wireless network.

ART and DESIGN

The aim of the Art and Design Department is to encourage students to look at, become aware of and appreciate the changing world in which they live. This aim will be realised through both practical work and art appreciation.

Art students are taught in mixed ability groups. At Key Stage 4, students follow the AQA GCSE Art and Design course and at Key Stage 5 they follow the AQA Art, Craft and Design A Level.

It is often thought that great works of art are the result of the artist's innate talent rather than learnt ability. Successful works of art are, however, the result of a hard-earned mastery of a formal language. It is the teaching of this (visual) language that we emphasise.

Throughout all our courses, emphasis is placed on gaining information from direct observation. Using observation as a starting point, students are then encouraged to develop their ideas in a wide range of media; drawing, sculpture, collage, painting, printmaking and so on.

Students will also be required to view and respond to the works of artists, craftspeople and designers from different ages and cultures. Students will be encouraged to find practical links between the works that they see and their own work.

Art makes students look at things anew - even mundane, ordinary aspects of the world can be used to inspire a creative response - there are no answers in the back of the book!

Display of work from all years is on-going and quality work and effort in both classroom and homework will be rewarded.

We hope that during their Key Stage 3 Art lessons, students will not only acquire practical skills for successful use in GCSE and A Level examinations, but also a more lasting enjoyment of the subject, an appreciation of the wide world of art and design and an understanding of its role and importance within the realm of the "Arts" as a whole.

MUSIC

The Music Department is housed in a music suite with practice rooms and a recording studio.

Years 7 and 8 have music lessons weekly in mixed form groups of up to 28. Music is taught in a very practical way giving students the opportunity to play and experience music.

GCSE students follow the AQA syllabus. Take up for GCSE is high and results are frequently excellent. We record compositions using professional recording equipment and some examples can be found on the school website.

In the 6th Form, we offer the RSL Level 3 in Music performance and A Level music. Students take advantage of our digital recording equipment and music specific computers. We currently run Sibelius, Cubase, and Acid Pro software and have a 16 track digital recording desk.

We currently offer instrumental tuition in the following areas:

- Brass, Woodwind, Drums/Percussion, Guitar, Keyboard and Singing

Students have the opportunity to start tuition in Year 7 and sometimes later.

Extra-curricular activities

There are many opportunities to get involved in music making at Hilbre. We offer:

- Choir;
- School band;
- Shows - Legally Blonde, Sister Act, Jesus Christ Superstar, Fame, Return to the Forbidden Planet, Little Shop of Horrors, We Will Rock You, Grease, Fame, The Wizard of Oz and Annie.

We seek to inspire students with visits from professional musicians, arrangers, composers and also people involved in the music industry. Previously we have seen Jeff Rich (former drummer from Status Quo), Simon Duffy (industry professional, Tri-tone Music) and Steve Parry (arranger for ITVs The Voice and Orchestrator for 'The Band' Musical) visit and share their skills, experience and knowledge with our students.

We regularly perform out of school; the 6th Form previously played at the turning on of the West Kirby lights and organised a charity concert at West Kirby Arts Centre. Musical interests are encouraged and students regularly use our facilities to form their own bands. Concerts and musical productions are an integral part of school life.

DRAMA

Drama is a popular subject at Hilbre and we offer a wide range of opportunities for students of all ages in which to get involved. All Key Stage 3 students study Drama each week, and learn skills such as improvisation, team work, theatre design and script work. Drama is an extremely popular choice at GCSE and 6th Form. The majority of students gained 6-9 grades in GCSE in previous years and we gain outstanding marks in 6th Form for the RSL Level 3 Diploma in Acting. All 6th Form students who have studied acting have received Distinction* or Distinction and many former students have continued their studies in the Performing Arts in university and drama school. Hilbre alumni have secured successful careers, for example as theatre company directors ('Punch Drunk'), film camera work, film actors, battle scene choreographers and even playing lead roles in touring West End productions.

Drama lessons include a wide range of activities, such as mask work, devising, Greek Theatre, set design and script writing. Students will investigate different theatre styles in order to deepen their knowledge of the subject and develop the quality of their work.

Students of all ages are invited to take part in Drama visits, and trips are frequently organised. We are taking 90 students from Key Stage 3 to London to watch two west productions and experience drama workshops with professional actors in Pineapple Studios this term. Other trips are to local theatres such as The Playhouse, The Lowry and The Empire.

There are many opportunities for extra-curricular activities for students of all ages. A weekly Drama Club is held for Year 7 and 8 students. Years 7 to 13 are also invited to take part in our school musical productions as an actor, musician, dancer, designer or technical assistant. Recent performances have included 'Legally Blonde', '9 to 5', 'Sister Act' and

‘The Boy in the Dress’. Both Drama studios are always busy and productive with different students rehearsing most evenings and lunchtimes.

SPORT

OVERALL AIM

To enable all students to achieve their full potential by catering for their intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs, so that they may, when they leave school, become active participants in society and responsible contributors to it, capable of achieving as much independence as possible.

AIMS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education has much to offer in the development and enrichment of the 'whole' person. "Not to have a substantial provision for Physical Education in the curriculum would deny students their entitlement to a broad, balanced, progressive and enjoyable education" (B.A.A.L.P.E.). It is primarily a practical subject and it is better placed than most to cater for the physical needs of children. Students learn best through their experience of movement, although observation is an important aspect of this development, which should lead to enhanced performance, greater knowledge, understanding and a sense of achievement.

This subject, however, is not solely concerned with the physical. It can also contribute to the intellectual, social and emotional needs of children.

The Physical Education facilities at Hilbre are excellent with a sports hall, gymnasium, netball courts, tennis courts, extensive playing fields and a fitness suite. All students will take part in a wide range of sporting activities in the first 2 years, leading to increased specialisation starting in Years 9, 10 and 11.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 students are taught from gymnastics, athletics, games, dance and fitness in mixed sex groups.

Students also have the chance of running the lesson as a Young Sports Leader. In Years 9, 10 and 11, students can opt for a GCSE Physical Education course, which is in addition to compulsory core PE. In Core PE in Years 10 and 11 students are in the same sex groups and participate in games, fitness and trampolining. There has been some input from outside in the past to help with coaching.

Over the past few years there have been teams representing the school in soccer, rugby, badminton, netball, cross country, athletics, basketball, cricket, golf, swimming, indoor athletics, Boccia, trampolining and gymnastics. The Subject Area also runs a very competitive inter-house tournament throughout the year, culminating in Sports Day.

Should you have any queries regarding any of the above information, or relating to the ordering of kit, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the PE staff, in school at any time. Please see the school website for a detailed list of PE kit.

RELATIONSHIPS and SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It enables students to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It also covers contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex. This helps students to understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

In line with legal requirements, parents/legal guardians are entitled to withdraw their child/ward from Sex Education lessons. This matter should be discussed with the child's Head of Year or Jane Whisker, Deputy Headteacher who has overall responsibility for the school curriculum. Apart from in exceptional circumstances, we respect the request to withdraw a child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, we would make arrangements to provide the child with Sex Education during one of those terms. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL and HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

PSHE, RSE and Health Education are key areas of study for students in society today. In this programme of study, students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to keep them safe and healthy in many aspects of life in the twenty-first century. Engagement in the PSHE curriculum will ensure students are equipped with the tools to manage their academic and personal lives; to live safely both on and offline; and to be safe and healthy in their relationships with others.

The PSHE curriculum will increase students' knowledge and understanding of their own personal development, behaviour and wellbeing and will impact positively upon their individual academic and non-academic outcomes. Through the age-appropriate study of topic areas such as drugs and alcohol; intimate relationships and sexual activity; bullying; mental wellbeing; and careers education, this curriculum fosters wellbeing, develops self-esteem, resilience and character and raises aspirations. PSHE allows opportunities for students to reflect on their own experiences and how they are developing. It enables students to understand and responsibly manage a wider range of relationships as they mature and to show respect for the diversity of, and differences between, people. It also encourages belief in their ability to succeed and enables students to take responsibility for their learning and future choice of courses and career.