

SOMETHING MORE IN THE BSS ENGLISH CURRICULUM

Curriculums at BSS are designed to nurture not only intellectual and physical development but also the spiritual growth of students. This will be through:

Encouraging students to reflect on their experiences, beliefs and purpose and to contemplate the big Questions of Who am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose?

Highlighting extraordinary people, events, and discoveries that inspire awe or investigates how a sense of awe has led to breakthroughs and creativity.

Using art, music, literature, and nature to inspire awe, wonder, and spiritual insight.

Encouraging creative expression to connect with the inner self and the transcendent.

Fostering a sense of belonging and interconnectedness with others, nature, and the universe.

Encouraging self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and moral reasoning.

Promoting open-ended investigations rather than just seeking right answers.

Using hands-on activities, field trips and experiments to immerse students in learning and evoke wonder.

How does our curriculum do >Something More?

KS3 English:

- Extra-curricular activities and enrichment such as theatre trips to foster a love of Shakespeare and other playwrights through experiencing the beauty of performance and drama.

- ‘*A Kestrel for a Knave*’ novel - To foster an understanding of morality and debate with students regarding the treatment of children in the 1960s education system including moral issues pertaining to corporal punishment and its abuse, the disenfranchisement of working-class communities and disadvantage in general.
- To engage students in the controversial debate of religion vs science and the ethical issues surrounding the age of enlightenment. Students will consider what it means to be ‘other’ and the ways that the play ‘*Frankenstein*’ might inform us that differences can and should be celebrated rather than compounding prejudices.
- Across the poignant period of remembrance, students will hear the voices and the sacrifices of the soldier poets of WW1. Students will discuss the ways that war impacted both soldiers and those left at home, the conditions of the trenches that prompted such visceral responses to war and the way that comradeship, fraternity and prayer helped to mitigate against the horrors that were witnessed during that period.
- Discussions around the appreciation of nature, the human condition, humility, kindness and other Christian values which link contextually and conceptually to the poetry we cover in certain units: Year 7 – Poetry: When we were Young and Year 9 – Poetry: Conflict and Adversity.

KS4 English:

- Extra-curricular activities and enrichment such as theatre trips to foster a love of Shakespeare and other playwrights through experiencing the beauty of performance and drama. We aim to take students to performances of ‘*Macbeth*’.
- Asking ourselves about the deeply Christian values and principles inherent in ‘*A Christmas Carol*’ and how we might strive to live out those values ourselves as first espoused by Dickens.
- Through the poetry of Power and Conflict, we are searching for deeper meaning about what it is to be human in various contexts including the experiences on the most famous battlefields throughout the ages. To create an empathetic response to the suffering of those who have been directly involved in historical tragedies and societal prejudices.
- To enable students to understand and appreciate the perspectives of both modern and historical writers through first hand witness accounts of experiences that have shaped their lives and spiritual awakening.

KS5 English:

- Encouraging students to reflect on their experiences, beliefs and purpose and to contemplate the big Questions of Who am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose?

- Highlighting extraordinary people, events, and discoveries that inspire awe or investigating how a sense of awe has led to breakthroughs and creativity.
- Using art, music, literature, and nature to inspire awe, wonder, and spiritual insight.
- Lang/Lit: Use of *The Kite Runner* to inspire students to understand other cultures. The beautiful descriptions in all of the set texts inspire wonder.
- Lit: discussions based around the poetry in particular will enable students to gain spiritual insight.
- Encouraging creative expression to connect with the inner self and the transcendent.
- Lang/Lit: students are given the opportunity to write a fiction and non-fiction piece about a topic of their choice. We always encourage them to write from first hand experience for their non-fiction pieces. We have had wonderfully self-reflective pieces such as a student who has coped with his father's alcoholism, another where the candidate's mum died of cancer and another about her experiences living on the street, as the student and her mum had been homeless for a short time.
- Fostering a sense of belonging and interconnectedness with others, nature, and the universe.
- Lang/Lit: Again, coursework lends itself to this. Also, the set texts cover topics such as the class divide, racism and misogyny.
- Literature: students are encouraged to understand the experiences of characters in the set texts and the poems.
- Encouraging self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and moral reasoning.
- Lang/Lit: in the coursework, the students are asked to evaluate their own written work and reasons for it. They are also expected to understand whether anything is holding them back, as the titular character of *The Great Gatsby* is held back by his own views of his class and *Othello* is self-aware about the societal views on racism. If *The Whitsun Weddings* (Phillip Larkin) is taught instead of *Othello*, the students will get the opportunity to discuss a number of themes such as family, loneliness and old age and reflect on their own feelings about these. In *All My Sons*, the students have to assess the extent to which characters are to blame for the corruption that has occurred.
- Lit: *Othello* (set text) – self-reflection and discussion about prejudice, love and loyalty, the roles of men and women in society and how these have changed. *Streetcar Named Desire*/*The Handmaid's Tale*/Poetry by Duffy and Plath/*The Help* – themes such as misogyny, segregation, prejudice, class and family are discussed as part of these texts and students will be expected to reflect on their own views about these topics.
- Promoting open-ended investigations rather than just seeking right answers.
- Lang/Lit: We have debates about issues like abortion, euthanasia, racism and the death penalty. Students are encouraged to research topics in depth so that they can produce written responses that are credible. These can then be used for coursework, or to inform their understanding of the unseen non-fiction texts that they have to write about in the exams.
- Lit: again, research and debates about a range of themes and texts will help students to be informed about a range of topics.

