



Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy



May 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian

As you may be aware, the assessment of GCSE English Language and English Literature from 2015 changed so that it is now assessed as a linear examination. Essentially, this means that all students will sit their external examinations at the end of a two-year course without the option of controlled assessments or coursework. Additionally, all exam boards, including WJEC, have been instructed by Ofqual to make the courses and examinations more stringent, thus the 'new' GCSEs are arguably more challenging than they have ever been.

As a department, we have given careful consideration to this and believe it would benefit students greatly if they sat GCSE English Literature in May 2018. This means sitting the GCSE in Year 10 and taking GCSE English Language in June 2019 when students are in Year 11. We believe that by entering students early for GCSE English Literature it will allow teachers to focus lessons on one specification at a time thereby avoiding student confusion regarding both exams. GCSE English Literature has two papers totaling five separate units. Similarly, English Language has two papers totaling four separate units. Currently, this can cause confusion with students feeling overwhelmed by the structure of the exams as well as the content so by dealing with them separately it will help create clarity for students. Furthermore, sitting the exam early should alleviate the very real issue of students forgetting the set texts which are studied in Year 9 and 10 which would also make revision more straightforward.

Additionally, we also believe that this is the best route for our current Year 9 students because it will maximize their chances of obtaining the highest grade they are capable of in English Language which is the subject which is perceived by employers and higher institutes for learning as having the most importance. Students will be able to deal with each subject separately and focus on one at a time.

We trust you are in agreement with our decision and we welcome your continued support. However, should you wish to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact myself.

Yours sincerely

Mrs F Harrison
Curriculum Leader, English



BISHOP RAWSTORNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

(Reply slip – to be returned to your child’s English Teacher by Friday 5 May 2017)

Student: _____

Tutor: _____

I/We acknowledge receipt of the GCSE English Literature Examination taking place in May 2018.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: _____

Name: _____ (please print)

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