



For more information, please contact:

Tess McGivney
Varndean College
Surrenden Road
Brighton, BN1 6WQ.

Tel: 01273 508011 ext.401
E-mail: tem@varndean.ac.uk



English GCSE at Varndean College



You will be taught English Language GCSE (AQA syllabus) in small groups at Vardean College. All students are entered for a universal exam. (There is no Higher or Foundation Tier).

Aims of GCSE English course

- To enhance your reading and comprehension abilities
- To work on your creative writing skills of narration/description/persuasion
- To improve your overall technical accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- To cultivate positive, confident learners/communicators
- To help prepare you for A Level courses and/or work which require good literacy and communication

Reading and Writing Skills

Our aim is for you to become more confident and competent writers on this course: to improve your sentence-structure, widen your vocabulary, enhance your accuracy and to read with greater understanding. In order to do so, we would like you to read a wide variety of texts with us and keep an online reading log. This approach is one way we can help you to achieve a Grade 4 or higher, which will make you both more employable and/or help you to do higher level courses in future. *Please note that we do occasionally ask students to engage with and explore difficult topics and texts during the course.*

Key Units in the GCSE Course

1. Paper 1: A written exam	2. Paper 2: A written exam	3. Speaking and Listening assessment
(1 hour/45 minutes)	(1 hour/45 minutes)	(5 minutes)
50% of GCSE/ 80 marks	50% of GCSE/ 80 marks	<i>Essential component, but not included as part of the final grade and for most students will be carried forward from school</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: 4 comprehension questions on a literary fiction text • Section B: One narrative/descriptive writing task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: 4 comprehension questions analysing and comparing 19th and 20th/21st Century non-fiction texts. • Section B: Writing an opinion piece to persuade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short spoken presentation



We have devised 5 key themes that we will work on to practise and develop good literacy skills throughout the course, ready for the 100% final exams in the summer:

1. **Childhood**
2. **Celebration**
3. **Conflict**
4. **Crime**
5. **Cruising/Catastrophe**

As we work through these 5 modules, you will practise:

- Creative and persuasive writing: about places, people and situations both real and fictional, developing short stories, newspaper articles, letters and memoirs.
- Reading: short novels, stories and extracts from both fiction and non-fiction
- Analysing and comparing texts from a variety of authors, in the form of comprehension exercises, short answers and essays

