What is English?
English is the study of language and literature and the ways in which they shape our understanding of ourselves, others and the world around us. Through reading, writing, speaking and listening, students learn to interpret meaning, evaluate ideas and communicate clearly and precisely. English enables students to encounter diverse perspectives across different cultures, periods and contexts, whilst developing empathy, creativity and critical thinking. As a subject, it equips students with the literacy skills and cultural knowledge that underpin success across the curriculum and beyond school.
Why do we teach English at Hasmonean?
At Hasmonean, we believe that through studying English students can become thoughtful, articulate and intellectually curious young women. Through engaging with a rich and challenging literary heritage alongside modern writers, students develop confidence in expressing their own ideas and responding critically to those of others. Our curriculum encourages students to become independent thinkers who can analyse, question and evaluate with sophistication. We aim to foster a lifelong appreciation of reading and literature while developing the communication skills necessary for higher education, employment and active participation in society. The study of English also provides opportunities for students to explore moral, social and cultural issues, encouraging reflection on values, identity and responsibility within local, national and global communities.
How do we teach English at Key Stage 3?
At Key Stage 3, students follow a broad and ambitious curriculum that develops the core skills of reading, writing and oracy while introducing them to a wide range of literary genres, periods and perspectives. Students study novels, plays, poetry and non-fiction texts from different historical contexts and cultures. They are taught to analyse writers' methods, explore themes and contexts, and construct increasingly sophisticated interpretations of texts. Alongside this, students develop their own writing across a range of forms, purposes and audiences, including creative, persuasive and analytical writing. Vocabulary development and grammatical accuracy are embedded throughout the curriculum to ensure students become confident and precise communicators. Regular opportunities for discussions and presentations support the development of spoken language skills and enable students to articulate ideas effectively. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is carefully sequenced to build the knowledge and skills required for success at GCSE and beyond while fostering enjoyment of reading and intellectual curiosity.
How do we teach English at Key Stage 4? (include details of the exam board)
At Key Stage 4, students study AQA GCSE in English Language and English Literature. The GCSE English Language course develops students' ability to read critically, evaluate viewpoints and communicate effectively through both creative and transactional writing. Students are taught to analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and to adapt their own writing for different audiences, purposes and forms. Spoken language skills continue to be developed through the Spoken Language Endorsement. The GCSE English Literature course enables students to engage deeply with a range of literary texts. Students study Macbeth, A Christmas Carol, An Inspector Calls and the AQA Power and Conflict poetry, developing their ability to construct informed and well-supported interpretations while considering historical and social contexts.

Teaching at Key Stage 4 combines explicit instruction in subject knowledge with regular opportunities for retrieval, practice and feedback. Students develop examination techniques alongside the analytical and writing skills that will support future study across all subjects.
How do we teach English at Key Stage 5? (include details of the exam board)
At Key Stage 5, students follow the OCR A Level English Literature specification, which encourages independent, critical and conceptual engagement with literature. Students study a range of texts across genres and periods, making connections between literary works and the contexts in which they were produced and received. They are encouraged to explore multiple interpretations, engage with critical viewpoints and develop sophisticated, evidence-based arguments. The course develops students' skills in close textual analysis, comparative study and academic writing, preparing them for the demands of higher education. Students also undertake independent coursework, allowing them to pursue individual interests and develop the research and organisational skills required for university study and professional life. Through the study of OCR English Literature, students become confident readers, thoughtful critics and effective communicators who are able to engage with complex ideas and articulate nuanced responses with clarity and precision.