

Lisnagarvey High School

Warren Gardens
Lisburn
BT28 1HN



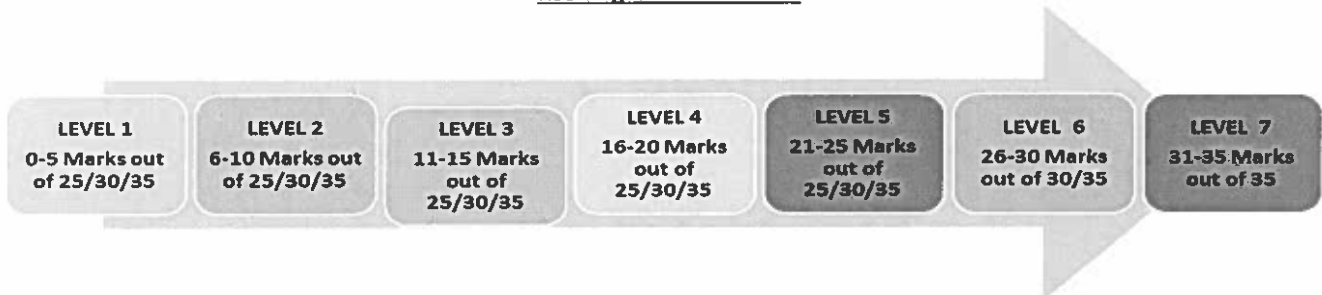
School Values
Mutual Respect
Success for All
Meeting the Needs of Individuals
Caring and Responsible

Principal – Jim Sheerin

Ref JS/LM/CB *SPS*

29 August 2024

KS3 English Information



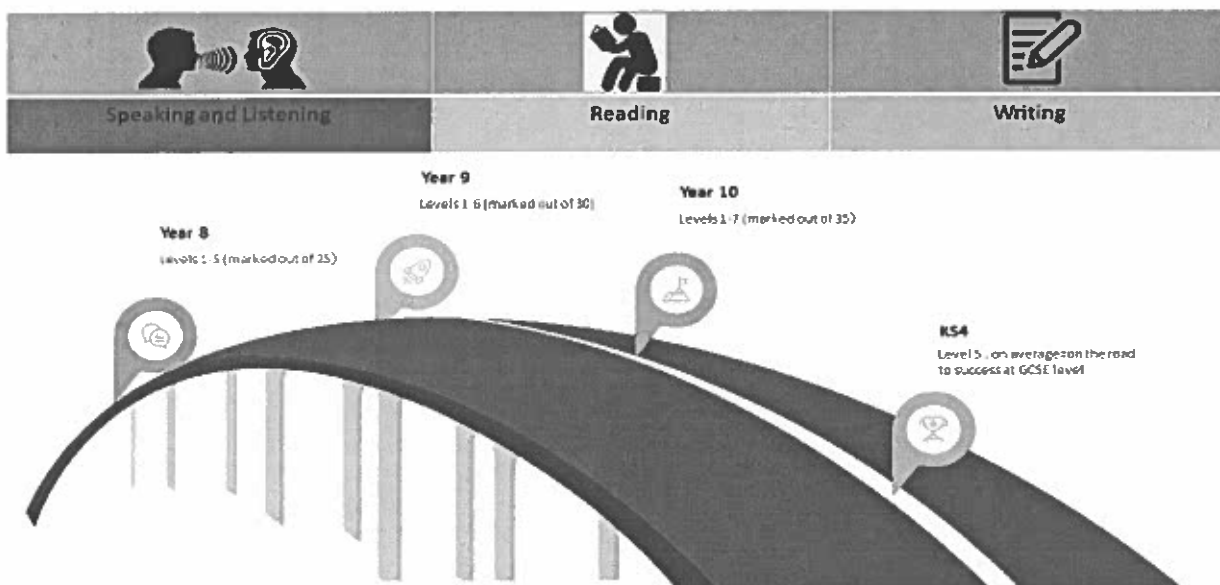
As a department, we are constantly striving to develop and enhance teaching and learning so that all learners engage in a rich, varied and purposeful curriculum- as well as reaching their full potential. As such, we follow a scheme of continuous assessment, as well as the more formal assessments in December and May. At Lisnagarvey, the English Department has a system of 'levelling' pupils from 1-7. This mirrors the cross-curricular Levels for Communication.

As Communication is so important for future life and has such a strong link to English, all exams and mark schemes used by the English Department take into account the requirements for Communication, as well as those of the English syllabus.

This method helps us to track pupils' progress more clearly in the lead-up to the final Key Stage assessments in Year 10, in preparation for KS4/GCSE.

*** NOTE:** Pupils are assessed separately for the three areas of English: Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening, so each element is just as important as the other. All of these elements are also assessed separately at GCSE, so it is in pupils' best interests to develop their skills in each area.

Communication Skills Bridge at KS3



Similar to the Levels for Communication, the mode of assessment in English tracks learners between Years 8-10, on a continuum of Levels 1-7. We have included a visual on the previous page. We would be grateful if you could keep these in a safe place, for your reference.

- In Year 8, we expect pupils to achieve between Levels 1-4, so pupils' work is marked out of 25.
- In Year 9, some pupils access Level 5, so pupils' work is marked out of 30.
- In Year 10, some pupils access the very highest level (7), so pupils' work is marked out of 35, which is the very top of Level 7.

Speaking and Listening tasks involve: small group discussions and debates, group drama tasks and individual presentations. Each of these tasks are present at GCSE and account for a large proportion of the final GCSE grade therefore all tasks are compulsory as we must ensure pupils not only fulfil the curriculum at Key Stage Three, but that they are also fully prepared for the demands of GCSE in Year 11.

Reading tasks involve: reading a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts such as articles, blogs, short stories, poems and novels and writing extended responses to questions about these texts. Responses involve pupils showing their ability to analyse and to show awareness of hidden meaning in texts they read.

Writing tasks involve: planning and writing a variety of personal, creative and persuasive writing tasks such as essays, short stories, letters and blogs. Most of these will require students to develop paragraphs fully and to write at least 5 paragraphs for each piece. The accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar is very important in this area in particular.

It is worth noting that the nature of the continuum means that, when we convert their marks out of 20/25/35 to percentages, these percentages may seem lower, until they reach the higher levels, later in the Key Stage. Furthermore, as English is a skills-based (rather than knowledge-based) subject, percentages do tend to be lower than subjects that focus on knowledge. In this respect, when examining your child's results, it is important to focus on the level (rather than the percentage).

For example: an able pupil, aiming for A*-C at G.C.S.E., should be aiming to be on Level 5, at the very least, by the end of KS3 (Year 10). The level they achieve when complete the Key Stage (end of Year 10) is very much dependant on the level at which they begin the Key Stage, when they leave primary school and come to us in Year 8. In other words, we can only meet individual students where they are, when they begin their career at Lisnagarvey; however we do all we can to meet needs of individuals and support them in progressing as much as possible. Nevertheless, in our experience, if a pupil is working well in class and at home, and has good attendance, they should rise by at least one level during the Key Stage.

Pupils' progress is constantly tracked through our own record-keeping, but also by pupils themselves through **Personal Progress Tracker** sheets. These have been designed to help students be mindful of their level in each element of English, as well as their specific targets for improvement in these areas. All teachers of English will provide time, at least once a month, for pupils to update their Tracker Sheets. Evidence of their level of attainment will also be stored in folders in school. Finally, we hope that the information communicated is clear and helpful.

Finally, pupils are streamed separately for English. This means that their English class may differ from their form class. This enables the English Department to move students more freely, as and when required. It is imperative to trust that these movements are only ever made at the professional and expert discretion of English teachers, for the benefit of students involved. Movements made for English do not impact streaming for other subjects or for form class.

It should also be noted that pupils' books will be held to a high standard of presentation. If work fails to meet this standard, pupils will be required to rewrite it in full.

In keeping with the Northern Ireland Curriculum, throughout KS3, pupils will be required to do a short individual presentation in front of the class at various points throughout each academic year. As this is also a key element of the GCSE curriculum, this is mandatory and the only pupils exempt from this will be those with an official medical note from their doctor.

Mrs L Murray

Mrs L. Murray
Head of English