



## ENGLISH STATEMENT of INTENT

### English Statement of Intent

Studying English at the Arbour Academy is a window into the world. By exploring language and literature, our young people will gain a rich understanding of the world in which they live, and be equipped with the communication skills they need to thrive. Whenever they join us in their educational journeys, our aim is to support our students to develop into confident readers, writers and communicators and to leave us having achieved the best possible English qualifications.

### Our Offer

Greater exposure to the arts and cultural learning not only improves students' academic achievements, it also boosts health and wellbeing. Therefore providing opportunities for learning outside of the classroom is integral to our English curriculum at both Key Stage Three and Four.

Each half term there will be at least one visit related to our English topic. Visits linked to literature topics have included: Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London; Charles Dickens' House in London; the Bronte Parsonage in Haworth and Elizabeth Gaskell's House in Manchester, Manchester Poetry Library. In addition, students will engage with visiting speakers; theatre trips and specialised days such as World Book Day and National Poetry Day.

As a department, we have forged close links with outside arts and media organisations such as the Lowry, Reform Radio and Salford Art Gallery with whom our students have worked on various creative literacy projects. We hope these experiences will have a lasting impact on our students and develop a deeper understanding and enjoyment of English.

**Reading:** The development of reading skills and the promotion of reading for pleasure is at the heart of our curriculum. Our teachers are passionate advocates for reading and are continuously looking for interesting ways to engage our students. World Book Day is always a huge celebration in our academy and students can engage with a variety of fun and innovative activities. In December, we celebrate the lovely

Icelandic tradition of 'Jolabokaflokkur' – giving a book as gift on Christmas Eve. We have two timetabled reading lessons a week and in addition, we use Bedrock, an online reading programme, to develop functional reading skills and vocabulary knowledge.

In English lessons, students will have the opportunity to study an interesting range of fiction and non-fiction texts from different periods, genres and cultures.

**Writing:** Students are encouraged to see writing as a vehicle for self-expression and creativity, across both key stages. Opportunities are provided to enter national writing competitions and to write for the school newsletter. Functional writing is purposeful and linked to the 'real world' such as writing letters to elderly residents in care homes. Our staff are trained in therapeutic writing and we encourage students to explore their feelings through journaling.

Students will learn how to write for a variety of purposes and forms and will be taught the spelling, punctuation and grammatical skills necessary to become successful writers.

**Speaking and Listening:** Across both key stages, we place the development of speaking and listening skills at the core of our curriculum, as many of our young people find this form of communication particularly challenging. Games for talking are embedded in our lessons and regular opportunities are provided for our students to practise their oracy skills through a range of activities: making films, drama and role-play, group debates and individual talks. Recently our year 11s produced pod-casts with Reform Radio, an independent radio station in Manchester, to deliver the speaking and listening element of their English Language GCSE.

**At Key Stage Three,** students will follow a curriculum planned around core themes, which is also imaginatively planned to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. We are flexible in our approach, adapting and tailoring our topics to the needs and interests of the pupils, in order help them reengage with school and learning. The key elements of reading, writing, oracy and textual analysis are at the heart of all our English lessons.

**At KS4** students are offered different learning pathways according to their needs, ability and at which point they arrive during the academic year. We have high expectations and ensure that all of our pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education post 16, whether this be academic or vocational. Students follow the syllabus for AQA English Language GCSE and many students also study GCSE English Literature. Even if students are not entered for GCSE Literature, we ensure that they are taught language skills through exposure to quality literature.

Students will also have the opportunity to study Functional Skills in English at Level 1 or 2, if this is the appropriate qualification for their needs.

