

11 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are so pleased that your child has elected to study A-level English Language, and look forward to working with him or her on this demanding and rewarding course.

Part of the interest in studying the English Language is that we study language as it is used in real life and in everyday communication, as well as the values that are embedded in our use of language. As such, we sometimes discuss taboo language, such as expletives, and the representation of different social groups. This is always done academically and taboo or offensive language is only used when it is being analysed or discussed; it is never used gratuitously or casually. If any student would prefer not to say particular words, this is of course their choice although they should still listen to and partake in the discussion as far as they feel able. If any of the content of the class discussions makes a student uncomfortable, I would urge him or her to speak to the class teacher or another member of staff so that this can be addressed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to mention the use of data in English Language lessons. Because we study real language in use, students sometimes collect data themselves, for example by using a mobile phone to record a conversation between their friends or family. During lessons we will teach the students about appropriate, ethical and legal use of such data, but I would just like to reinforce now that any recordings should be treated confidentially and deleted when they are no longer needed. Students must not of course record anyone without their explicit consent.

If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to contact me or another member of the English Language A-level team.

Yours sincerely,

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