



A warm welcome from the English
Department



Miss Starkie
Head of Department

“Hi! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Miss Starkie and I was new to St Benedict's last September; everybody is very welcoming so I’m sure you’ll all settle in as quickly as I did. I hope you’re all having a brilliant summer and are looking forward to starting year 7. I can’t wait to meet you all (briefly!) before I leave to have a baby! I’ll be checking in on you all whilst I’m gone and look forward to teaching you at some point in your time at the school.”

- ❖ **Advice-** Embrace anything you find challenging because it means you’re learning and improving!
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *Ghost Boys*
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘Still I Rise’ by Maya Angelou
- ❖ **Favourite Topic**– Such a hard choice! I think I’ll go with...Power and Conflict Poetry!
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Decadent



Miss Penrice
Second in Department

“Hi future year 7s! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Miss Penrice and I am also quite new to the St. Benedict’s team! (I started in September 2019). I’m sure you will all love it as much as I do and will make lots of new friends. I hope you all have a great summer, keep safe and I look forward to meeting and hopefully teaching some of you in September!”

Advice- Don’t be scared to participate and get involved in your classes and in any new activities or groups. Don’t be scared of getting things wrong, because getting things wrong is all part of learning!

- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *A Thousand Splendid Suns*
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *One of us is Lying*
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘Out of the Blue’ by Simon Armitage
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Modern Novels, especially *Lord of the Flies!*
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Cherish





“Hi! Welcome to St Benedict’s. My name is Ms Whelan and I have taught here for the last two years. It really is great here and you will feel at home as soon as you step through the doors!

Look after yourself over summer – read, run around and recuperate. There will be plenty of challenges ahead, so make the most of them. It is such an exciting time for you – enjoy every second of it and always try your best!”

- ❖ **Advice** – Don’t be a sheep (George Orwell shows us this in *Animal Farm*). Carve out your own path.
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book** - *Gone*
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Any scheme where we read a novel!
- ❖ **Favourite Word** - Translucent
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘Ode to a Nightingale’ by John Keats

Ms Whelan
Second in Department



Mrs Bishop
English Teacher & Senior
Leadership

“Hi! Looking forward to meeting you all. Can’t wait for you all to start at St Benedict’s. I have been here for 6 years now and I love English! I have 5 grandchildren, who make me smile and keep me busy. See you in September!”

- ❖ **Advice-** Be prepared and organised! Be curious about the world around you, that is how you will learn.
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell*
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *The Book Thief*
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘Ark’ by Simon Armitage
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Crime writing
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Anthropomorphism



Mrs Bragg
English
Teacher

“Hi Year 7. I’m Mrs Bragg and I’ve worked at St Benedict’s for almost 20 years because I love it so much and I’ve never wanted to work anywhere else. I hope you’re all having a lovely summer and are looking forward to starting in September. I’m sure you are excited and maybe a little bit nervous too. Don’t worry though. You’ll settle in in no time at all.”

- ❖ **Advice-** Try your best and remember to ask for help if you are stuck.
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – To Kill a Mockingbird
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *The Book Thief*
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘Sonnet 43’ by Elizabeth Barrett Browning
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Child Language Acquisition at A Level
- ❖ **Favourite Word** - ninja



Mrs Murray
English and PE
Teacher

“Hi! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Mrs Murray and I am really looking forward to meeting you all. You won’t see me until the end of year 7 as I am due to have a baby in August! By then I will be really excited to hear all about how you have settled in and what you have learnt so far. I hope you embrace your first year at St. Benedict’s, taking every opportunity to get involved in everything our school has to offer.”

- ❖ **Advice** – Do things that make you happy!
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – The Little Coffee Shop of Kabul
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book** – Divergent
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Dystopian writing
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘A Poison Tree’ by William Blake
- ❖ **Favourite word** – Whimsical



**Mrs Fox
English
Teacher**

“Hi year 7! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Mrs Fox and I’ve been at St Benedict’s quite a long time now, in fact, I’ve been teaching English here for 10 years! I may have taught some of your brothers and sisters. We’re all really looking forward to welcoming you to St Benedict’s in September.”

❖ **Advice-** Work hard and try your best in everything that you do in life. Don’t be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone. And read lots!

❖ **Favourite Book(s):** *The Wolf Hall Trilogy* by Hilary Mantel

❖ **Favourite YA Book:** *Anthony Horowitz Horror* by Anthony Horowitz

❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach:** *Anything to do with the gothic genre*

❖ **Favourite Poem:** *The Lady of Shalott* by Alfred Lord Tennyson

❖ **Favourite Word-** *Rambunctious!*

Have a lovely summer holiday everyone!





Mr. Habberjam
English Teacher

“Hello! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Mr. Habberjam and will be starting at St Benedict's myself this year. I’m sure that we will all find our feet quickly and enjoy our time together. I hope you’re all staying safe and enjoying your summer and are looking forward to starting in September. Remember that you are on your own journey, but to stop and embrace new opportunities on the way as you never know where they could take you.”

- ❖ **Advice-** You always climb a mountain in your head and with a first step!
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *Lord of the Rings* ~ a classic!
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *Harry Potter*...
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Shakespeare’s “Macbeth”...blood , betrayal, murder and justice!
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Serendipity
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ by WB Yeats



Mrs Freestone
English Teacher

“Hello and welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Mrs Freestone and I teach English. I was new to St Benedict’s this year and also had to learn my way around the new building. I also had new things to learn as I’ve taught books for the first time and I’ve really enjoyed them, so I know you will too. I hope you’re excited to join us in September, see you soon!”

- ❖ **Advice-** Make sure that you talk to the other students that you don’t know, you may be in lessons with them for the next seven years!
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** – *Porphyria’s Lover* by Robert Browning
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Poetry
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Bombastic



Mr North
English
Teacher

"I'm a new teacher, starting at St Benedict's in September. I love teaching.

I used to be a farmer and a writer... I still am sometimes!

I hope we can make it a really great first year at St Benedict's for everybody!"

- ❖ **Advice** - Don't worry about anything!
- ❖ **Favourite Book** - *Going Solo* by Roald Dahl
- ❖ **Favourite Poem** - 'The Thought Fox' by Ted Hughes
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** - Everything!
- ❖ **Favourite Word** - Universe



“Hi! Welcome to St Benedict’s. I’m Mrs Young and I’ve been working at St Benedict’s for 7 years now and I still enjoy it! As well as being an English teacher, I’m also the Head of Year for Year 7. I know that you will all be so excited (and a little nervous, no doubt) for starting in September, but trust me when I say it’s going to be great! Just like Miss Starkie and Mrs Murray, I too will be leaving to have a baby, but I will be keeping up-to-date with how you are doing whilst I’m gone. You’re going to really love English here at St Benedict’s, if it’s not already your favourite subject, it certainly will be one of your favourites by the end of Year 7.”

Advice- If you’re not sure about something, no matter how small it may seem, make sure you speak up and ask your teacher. Don’t sit there and struggle. Us teachers have many superpowers but unfortunately mind reading isn’t one of them!

Favourite Book - *The Lord of the Ring* – JRR Tolkien

Favourite YA Book - *One of Us is Lying* – Karen M McManus

Favourite Poem – ‘The Road Not Taken’ by Robert Frost

Favourite Topic to Teach - I love them all! But teaching Jekyll & Hyde at GCSE is up there with the best.

Favourite Word – Soliloquy is a fun word to say

Mrs Young
English Teacher & Head of Year 7



Miss Thompson
English Teacher

Hi everyone.

Hope you and your families have remained safe and well. I'm sure that you are all looking forward to starting a new chapter at St. Benedict's.

I'm Miss Thompson and I will be new in September too! Well, new to this building – I taught in the old school and I'm thrilled to return. I know the English Department well, and it's amazing! There's lots of stimulating and challenging stuff in store for you. Exciting times ahead for us all, so I look forward to seeing you in September. Enjoy your summer.

- ❖ **Advice-** “You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” (Dr. Seuss)
- ❖ **Favourite Book** – The Goldfinch
- ❖ **Favourite YA Book-** *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night*
- ❖ **Favourite poem** - *The Road Not Taken*, by Robert Frost
- ❖ **Favourite Topic to Teach** – Poetry
- ❖ **Favourite Word-** Ubiquitous