



Specialist Leader of Education



Name:	Laura Newton
School:	St James School
Position	Assistant Headteacher
Phase:	Secondary
Specialism:	English

About Laura

I have been in my current role as Head of English and Assistant Headteacher at St James School since 2014. Within my role as Assistant Headteacher I have responsibility for marking and assessment and Literacy. I also play a key role in our quality assurance process, observing lessons from across all subjects to monitor the quality of teaching and learning as well as leading CPD on a variety of topics for NQTs. I have experience supporting teachers at all levels, from PGCE/NQT mentoring within my own school to supporting emerging and new leaders across the city as facilitator of Learning to Lead. I have also taken part in the Challenge Partner peer review process to support other schools.

As a Head of English, I am responsible for curriculum design, quality of teaching and learning, tracking and assessment procedures. My leadership is driven by the desire to ensure high quality learning takes place in every lesson at every level, and as a result I thoroughly believe that a consistent and thoughtful approach to Teaching and Learning is essential. In English, this also needs to be combined with a consistent approach to Literacy across the curriculum, something I have experience of within my own role. I also believe that to improve outcomes and results, collaboration and support between schools is essential. I have supported other schools, sharing the resources and approaches we have developed at St James, and delivered sessions on aspects of the curriculum to schools across the South West.

In my wider Leadership role I have developed an approach to whole school assessment in year 7 and 8, and supported other Leaders to develop their own criteria to reflect the school approach. Alongside this I have implemented a marking policy that has significantly improved the consistency of marking and assessment across the school and student engagement with the feedback.

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The role of the SLE

SLEs are outstanding middle and senior leaders and have a successful track record of school improvement. SLEs support leaders in other schools. They have excellent interpersonal skills, are able to work sensitively and collaboratively with others and have a commitment to outreach work. They understand what outstanding leadership practice in their area of specialism looks like and can help other leaders to achieve it in their own context. The SLE role is about developing other middle and senior leaders so that they have the skills to lead their own teams and improve practice in their own schools. This may be done through one-to-one peer coaching or facilitated group support and could involve a variety of activities, such as data analysis, coaching or joint action planning.