



St. Edmund's Girls' School



Wyvern College

October 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Key Stage Three Ambitious Vocabulary

As part of their English homework, each year group have been given a list of 45 ambitious vocabulary words to learn for the year. Each week they are directed to learn five of the words and they are then tested on any of the words they have learnt so far during one of their English lessons. Once students have worked through the 45 words for their homework they will be directed to keep practising these words as these are the only ambitious vocabulary words we would like to students to learn over this academic year/

The spelling tests completed at the beginning of an English lesson are an example of low stakes testing; students will never be asked to call out their marks or to share them with anyone else in the class and we do not ask that students achieve a specific mark out of ten. The style of questioning for the spelling test is as follows:

1. What's another word for **kindness** beginning with b? Benevolence

Students are tested on five words and will be given a mark out of ten: a mark for spelling the word correctly and a mark for knowing the meaning of the word.

The words on the ambitious vocabulary list are challenging words and it is not the expectation that students achieve full marks on these every week. We are more interested in students knowing the meaning of the word as (if they know the meaning) they will be more likely to use it in their writing, not just in English but in other subjects too. When students feel confident with the meanings of the words, we hope that accurate spelling will follow. This approach is based on leading research focused on the benefits of exposing students to rich vocabulary ahead of adulthood, irrespective of their current reading and writing abilities.

There are several ways that students can practise their spellings from traditional methods such as 'look, cover, say, write, check' to using technology to help them.

As a department, we recommend using an app called Quizlet to help with practising the ambitious vocabulary. Students can go to Quizlet.com or download the app and search for StEdsVocab, where they will see an option to select the ambitious vocabulary for their year group. By selecting this students will be able to hear and see the words, play games, complete quizzes and use flashcards to help them practise their ambitious vocabulary. There is an option to create an account, which will store scores for games and quizzes and target specific words, but this is not a necessity and students can easily access everything Quizlet has to offer without an account. We recommend that students spend thirty minutes across a week practising their ambitious vocabulary.

If you have any questions regarding the ambitious vocabulary homework, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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