**Smithycroft Secondary School - National 4 English**

***Parent/Carer Guide - Supporting your Child in the Senior Phase***

**Aims of the Course:**

This course will help your child to develop their skills in the areas of Reading, Writing, Talking and Listening– all important skills for learning, life and work.

**Qualifications:**

Successful completion of the course will mean that your child will achieve a ‘National 4 English’ award. Successful completion of the Units will also mean that your child will receive a ‘National 4 Literacy’ qualification.

**Pathways: Employment or Further Study**

An English course will always aim to develop a learner’s communication skills (Reading, Writing, Talking and Listening). These skills are obviously seen to be essential by all employers and many (almost all) university and college courses require a qualification in English.

**How the Course is Structured:**

The course is made up of two units and an ‘Added Value Unit’. The Units will be assessed as either pass or fail by the class teacher. Pupils are not required to sit a final exam at National 4.

**What your child will be doing in class:**

* Reading and listening to a range of literature
* Reading and listening to a range of non-fiction texts
* Analysing texts that they have read or have listened to
* Writing a range of essays including: creative, personal, discursive and critical essays
* Presenting to classmates on a variety of topics, both individually and as part of a group
* Researching a topic of their choice

**Commonly Asked Questions:**

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| **Q**: What is the equivalent of a National 4 in the old exam system?  **A**: *A pass at National 4 would be the equivalent of a Standard Grade General Grade 4 or Intermediate 1 Grade C*  **Q**: Can my child still sit Higher (National 6) in S5?  **A**: *We would expect your child to sit National 5 in S5 and then, if successful in this, Higher may be an option in S6.*  **Q**: What will happen if they are struggling with the course?  **A**: *If your child is struggling with the course and it looks unlikely that they will be able to pass, National 3 English is an option as well as picking up some discrete National 4 Units.* |

**Summary of N4 Course**

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| Unit 1 | **Unit 2** | **Added Value Unit: Research Project** |
| **Reading for Analysis and Evaluation**: To pass this unit, learners have to*: read* a written text and answer a range of questions AND *listen* to a spoken text and answer a range of questions. | **Creation and Production:** To pass this unit, learners have to: write an essay (300 words minimum) and complete a solo talk or group discussion | This is an independent research project which will highlight your child’s skills in reading, writing, talking and listening.  Your child will research a topic of their choice and evaluate the sources they use to gather the information. They will present their evaluations in the form of either a report or a presentation. They will be required to orally answer questions about their chosen topic. |

**How can I help?**

* *Share your opinions and read through newspapers/ quality journalism*
* *Ensure that they read at night*
* *Watch the news with your child*
* *Talk to them about the texts they are studying in class, ask them to summarise the main events, tell you about the characters/ themes/ settings*
* *Ask to see their work*
* *Ask to see their writing. Help them to proof read it for them looking for any technical errors*
* *Ensure they have included a bibliography and word count in any discursive writing*
* *Many revision guides and study guides have been published- buy these if you wish*
* *Please check the school website for a list of these / speak to teachers*
* *Clear their room of any distractions while they are studying: phones, games consoles, TVs*
* *Encourage them to attend Supported Study in school*
* *Encourage use of the SQA Website (especially the candidate guides)*