SCHOOL VISION

We believe that all young people should be as independent as they can be, irrespective of starting point. We will develop the essential skills of communication, employability skills as well as emotional wellbeing. We want our pupils to be global citizens and contribute and be part of their community (local/national & international). We want our pupils to be happy, confident, healthy, safe and have their voices heard. We aim to prepare our pupils for life beyond Hill Top School.

INTENT:

It is our intent that our English and functional communication curriculum, will give pupils the skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening that they will need, when they leave Hill Top, either for their next step of education, or to be as independent as they can be. We understand that our curriculum needs to encompass all elements of communication to meet the needs of all our pupils. We want pupils to develop a love of reading, through their own engagement with books and stories, as well as a variety of texts from a range of genres. We also hope pupils will develop their ability to express themselves confidently, verbally or in a way that is appropriate to them and support them to develop their language skills by acquiring and using new vocabulary, as well as applying this to several audiences or range of purposes. We intend for pupils to develop their writing skills, including developing their fine motor skills, and helping them understand the grammatical conventions in writing, including appropriate grammar and spelling and use these skills in a range of ways that can apply to the real world. Wherever possible, we would aim for our pupils to achieve some accreditation in English.

IMPLEMENTATION:

For pupils on the semi-formal and formal pathway, English is taught as a discreet lesson, daily. For pupils who are accessing our informal pathway, they will access English through non- subject specific learning, including a class sensory story. There is also a separate reading session accessed each day.

Reading: The teaching of reading allows pupils to develop their access to all areas of the world, and other subjects. Developing pupils reading skills, as well as a love of reading, is a priority in school. Pupils on the informal and semi-formal curriculum who are at the early stages of reading, use the DfE approved Twinkl reading scheme, as well as the decodable Rhino readers books. Pupils on the formal pathway use Toe by Toe books and the Dockside reading scheme, as this scheme is more engaging and age appropriate than some of the other early reading schemes, however there is an expectation for teachers and teaching assistants to supplement this by phonics specific teaching as needed. Pupils also use Lexia intervention regularly to allow them targeted intervention related to their own needs, in an engaging way. Pupils on the formal pathway will explore texts that are related to a theme in the curriculum, these have been chosen to show progression in difficulty, across the years. Pupils in the semi-formal and informal pathway, will share texts as sensory stories or individual work, linked to a topic. When reading we also explore comprehension with discussions and follow up tasks, to make sure that what has been read has been understood.

Writing: Pupils are given opportunities for extended writing across each topic and opportunities to revisit their writing skills to show progress. On the formal pathway, pupils are taught spelling and grammar as part of a starter opportunity in each lesson and then active marking reinforces this throughout lessons. There is an expectation their writing pieces will show an increase of more complex features and vocabulary as their time in school progresses. Pupils are given opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences. Pupils on the informal and semi-formal curriculum use colourful semantics as a way of supporting early sentence development in both writing and speaking. Some pupils on the informal and semi-formal pathway, may also develop their ability to record by accessing fine motor skills sensory activities, mark making and using ICT to support them to record their ideas.

Speaking and listening and communication: Communication is at the heart of everything we do, we want our pupils to be able to communicate to request, express themselves, but also to socialise and engage with the world. We hope to give pupils lots of opportunities daily to interact with a range of people, so they can gain confidence in doing do. These opportunities might be in formal English sessions, when delivering a presentation but also more informal opportunities such as when requesting snack in a structured snack time. We hope to continue to improve our pupils’ vocabulary by using the STAR approach within lessons, but also taking the time during sharing of stories to point out new words and discuss the meaning. Key vocabulary is highlighted across the curriculum and understanding of the meaning and appropriate use of these words is checked and revisited as the pupils' time in school progresses. Staff will use questioning to extend and develop pupils thinking in relation to what they have read and check for understanding.

IMPACT:

We hope the impact of the curriculum is that pupils have a level of literacy to allow them to access the world around them. This will be measured by;

* Termly bsquared assessments.
* Specific reading and writing assessments.
* Accreditation as appropriate.
* EHCP outcomes, linked to SaLT outcomes as appropriate.
* Evidence in books and progress of work.
* Pupil voice and expressing what they have done.
* Pupils’ confidence when interacting with people in school and out in the community.