



Castle Hill School

# Guidelines for the use of literature at Castle Hill School



**L**inked to individual learning needs

**I**nclusive and accessible

**T**otal Communication for engagement

**E**ditied carefully to ensure accessibility

**R**epeated and consolidated building up over time

**A**void distraction, over-stimulating sensory input and inaccessible concepts

**T**ime for joint attention, social learning and wonder

**U**niquely adapted for meaningful interaction

**R**hythm, rhyme, repetition and other methods of developing anticipation and learning

**E**njoyable

# Philosophy

Literature and story can be a highly engaging method of delivering many aspects of learning and as a starting point for further engagement. As well as being a key strategy for the development of communication and literacy skills, through the effective use of literature, pupils can also develop empathy, awareness of others and of cultural and social diversity and expectation. The themes covered in literature can promote an understanding of the real life experiences of pupils as well as providing an opportunity to gain an awareness of the wider world and to explore the imaginary world. Story can provide a starting point for learning, and a link between other areas of learning. Story can also be a springboard for exploring emotions.

# Practice

Literature is delivered in a way that meets the learning needs of individuals and classes and groups.

Literature and story provide opportunities for pupils to:

- engage with and experience the external world
- engage with topic themes
- develop speaking and listening skills
- develop reading skills
- use early maths skills (numbers, colours, order of events)
- show recall
- develop anticipation
- work with key vocabulary
- explore social, moral and cultural issues
- develop their imagination
- share attention and learning

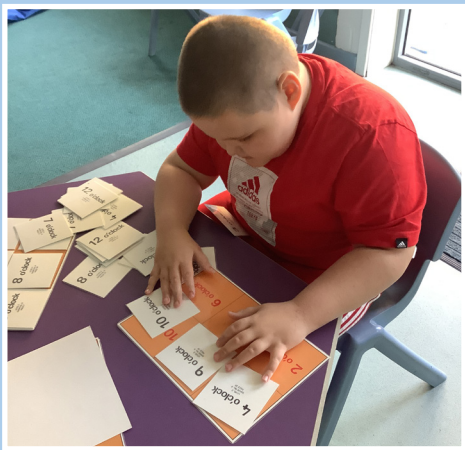
- extend themes within the story through sensory exploration and other practical learning opportunities
- have fun!

Key considerations when planning and delivering learning through literature include:

- meeting individual needs
- including supportive structures within the story and its delivery such as repetition, rhyme, rhythm
- providing personalised support through, for example, key symbols, sentence strips, pre-programmed communication aids
- ensuring any visual or other sensory aids add to rather than detract from understanding

- using the story to lead to other learning opportunities
- limiting themes, plot, character to support understanding
- working with familiar characters, events or situations OR carefully introducing and developing fantasy or more distant characters, events or situations
- the use of space – creating a different learning environment to promote focus on the world of the story (such as through the use of the Chill Den or Sensory Pod)
- the role of the teacher and staff in bringing the story to life, making it engaging to each learner

As the primary mode of learning for the vast majority of our pupils is through direct interactions with staff, and with sensory resources, great care must be taken when using literature so that is adapted in a way that promotes learning through such interactions. Without such careful planning, literature, particularly when delivered on a screen, can be a distraction rather than a stimulus for learning.



When working from a story on screen we give particular attention to:

- visual accessibility
- limiting complexity/over-stimulation
- reducing/editing text to promote engagement through, for example, repetition or use of limited vocabulary
- actively involving all staff in supporting the engagement and learning of pupils through the story
- ensuring content is meaningful to pupils with clear learning goals

