



**HILL VIEW  
SCHOOL**



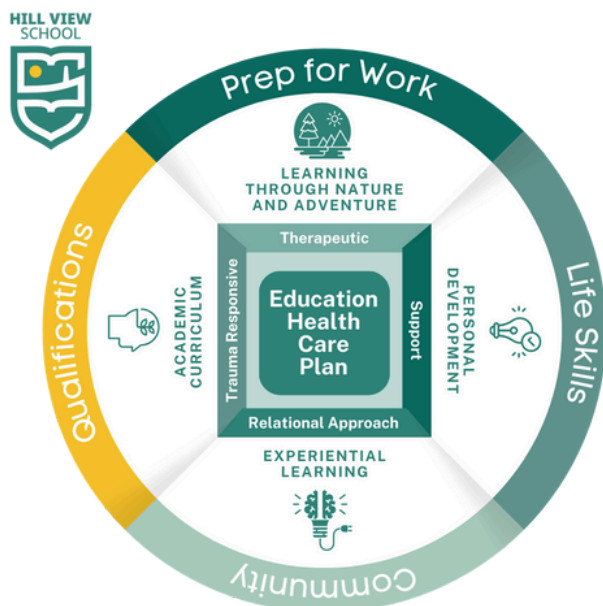
# **CURRICULUM CONNECT**

***Issue 2***  
***February 2026***



**Be the best you.  
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# Welcome to the second edition of *Curriculum Connect*!



Curriculum Model

Welcome to the second issue of Curriculum Connect. We hope you enjoyed reading about the wonderful learning that took place during the Autumn term in Issue 1, especially the amazing off-site experiences students enjoyed in their Outdoor Education sessions. This term, we're shifting the spotlight to phonics and early reading and Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), giving you an insight into how we are building these essential foundations across the school.

At Hill View School, we believe that strong partnerships between home and school help every learner thrive. This newsletter gives you a clear overview of what your child is learning this term and a glimpse into the engaging experiences happening across our classrooms. We hope it helps you feel connected to your child's journey and our vibrant learning community.



### **Parent Activity Suggestion:**

*Spend a few minutes each week talking with your child about something they learned at school. This could be looking at a book together, practising new words, or chatting about a favourite classroom activity. Even short, relaxed conversations can help build confidence, strengthen skills, and deepen your child's connection between home and school.*

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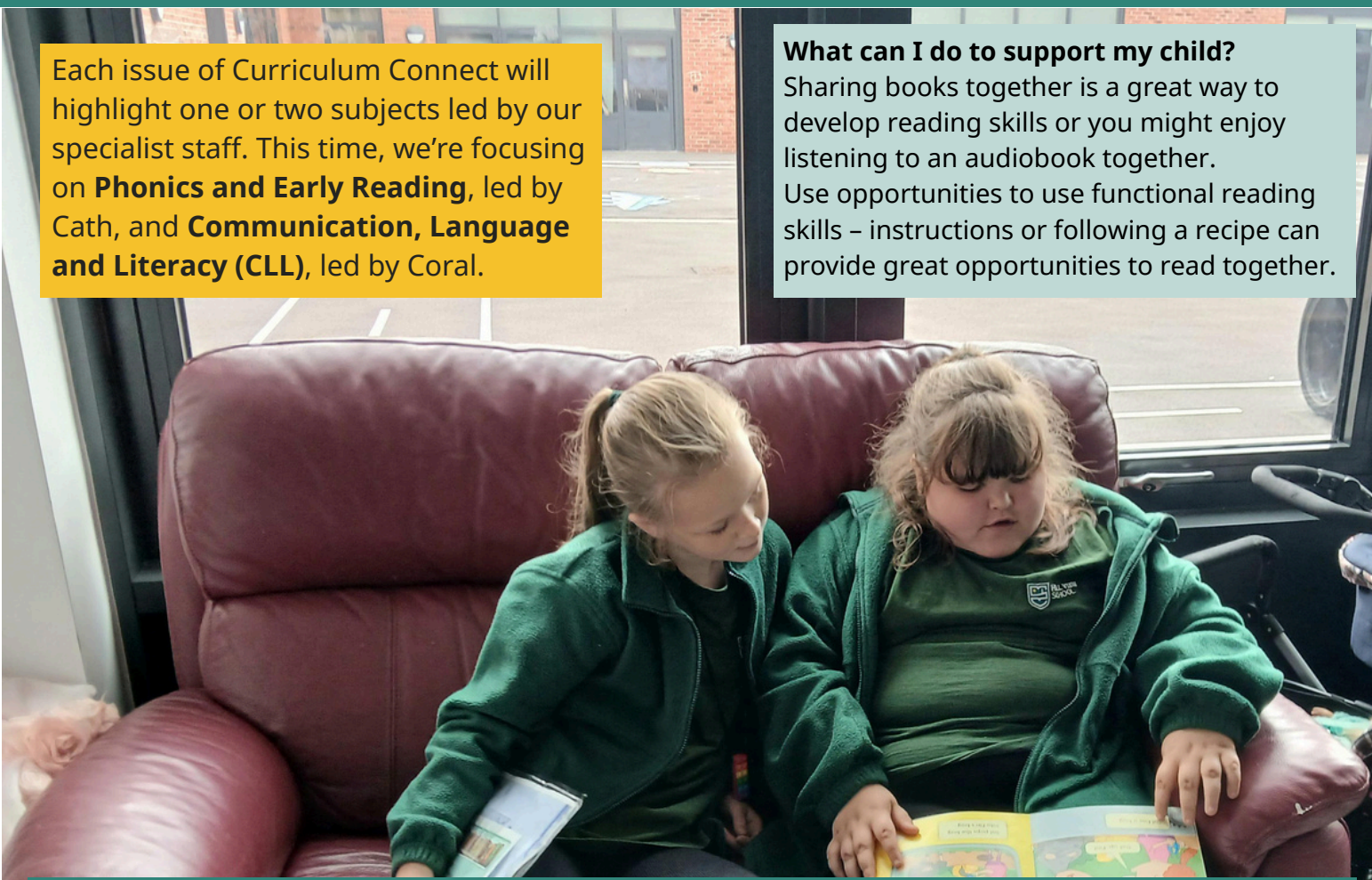
# Curriculum Spotlight - Phonics and Early Reading



Each issue of Curriculum Connect will highlight one or two subjects led by our specialist staff. This time, we're focusing on **Phonics and Early Reading**, led by Cath, and **Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL)**, led by Coral.

## What can I do to support my child?

Sharing books together is a great way to develop reading skills or you might enjoy listening to an audiobook together. Use opportunities to use functional reading skills – instructions or following a recipe can provide great opportunities to read together.



At Hill View we understand the importance of teaching all our learners to be confident readers. This is essential for their self-esteem, learning and their safety as they move through school and beyond. We hope that they will develop a love of reading too!

We know that for many of our learners the process of learning to read has been difficult and interrupted. Our approach for developing early reading skills is therefore individualised and focused on the next steps for each learner. Confident readers use their sounds (phonics), sight words (high frequency words they just know) and context (their understanding of the subject and the words associated with it) to develop fluent reading skills. Our individual reading plans include working on these skills.



We are currently developing our new, much larger, library area. We have had a delivery of new bookshelves and have plans to make some welcoming reading pods where learners can enjoy some quiet reading time with a favourite book.

We are very grateful to Martock Charity Shop for their donation of £2000 which has enabled us to get started on this exciting project.

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# Curriculum Spotlight - Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL)



Since September, Hill View has been using **Talk for Writing** as our main approach to CLL. This method moves through three key stages—**imitation, innovation and independent application**—and can be adapted for all learners regardless of their starting point. We have also added an **'immerse'** stage to help spark enthusiasm and link the focus book to other curriculum areas.

Talk for Writing helps children feel secure and confident by using clear routines and lots of spoken practice before writing. Research shows that the approach boosts engagement and supports emotional wellbeing through familiar structures and expressive language work.

## **Immerse:**

Learners are introduced to the focus text through engaging activities and cross-curricular links. This creates excitement and builds understanding of the story's themes.



## **Imitation:**

Learners explore a high-quality model text by reading it, acting it out and using story maps. This helps them to develop understanding of structure, language patterns and vocabulary.



## **Innovate:**

Learners adapt the model text by changing characters, settings or events, using the familiar structure to support their own creativity.



## **Independent:**

Learners then plan and write their own original piece, applying all the skills they have practised throughout the unit.



Talk for Writing

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# 'School days' in The Knoll and Ham Hill



This half term in Ham Hill and The Knoll, our theme is **School Days**. Learners are exploring their own school experiences, comparing them with Victorian schools, and are learning about routines and objects linked to school and home.

In **Communication, Literacy and Language**, both classes are reading and enjoying our class book '*Dragon Post*', building listening and speaking skills, retelling the story, and taking part in linked activities such as sandwich-making and letter writing. Ham Hill learners are also working to create their own story versions with new characters and events.

In **Maths**, Ham Hill is focussing on 2D and 3D shapes through sorting, describing and shape hunts, while The Knoll is exploring heavy and light objects including talking about the heaviest animals.

In **PSHE** and **RE**, Ham Hill is learning about ADHD, Autism and empathy, and are learning about and sequencing the Creation Story.



We are respectful

In **Science**, both classes are investigating everyday materials, thinking about why objects are made from specific materials and investigating their properties.

In **Creative Arts**, Ham Hill learners are taking part in interest-led activities like landscape painting and dinosaur mask-making, while The Knoll is exploring patterns through playful painting.

Across both classes, learners practise emotional regulation strategies and join therapeutic activities such as Animal Care and sessions with Gus, our therapy dog.

#### Parent Activity Suggestion:

Encourage your child to ask friends and family members about their time in school. Was it the same or different than what your child experiences at Hill View School?

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# Myths, Makers and Masterpieces in Herne Hill



This term our learning is based around Greek myths and legends, with lots of practical activities.

In **Literacy**, we are enjoying the stories of **Theseus** and the **Minotaur**, **Icarus**, and **Medusa**, using them to develop speaking, listening, and writing skills.

In **Science**, we are exploring why Icarus fell from the sky and investigating materials, including the best ways to join feathers together. We're using glue, sellotape and string as our starting point.

In **Food Tech**, we are practising recipes and techniques. We've already made cakes (we hope you enjoyed them!) and will be making a pasta bake and Chinese noodles.

Our **PSHE** learning focuses on dreams, goals, and aspirations as we get older. Alongside this we are learning about animal care and enjoying rock climbing which has been incredible with all of our learners succeeding at it.

**Art Exhibition** – we are also gearing up for our next art exhibition. This time learners have all been given large canvases and have enjoyed planning their painting and how to create a painting in stages. We have painted the background and are starting the final image. They have already planned the actual exhibition and this time learners want Schloer to celebrate as well as cakes!



We learn more

#### Parent Activity Suggestion:

Encourage your child to get involved in simple cooking or baking at home — they love helping in the kitchen, and it's a great way to build confidence and practical skills (mess included!). You might also set up a small space for painting or creative art; our learners are becoming fantastic young artists and really enjoy expressing themselves through colour and design.

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# From Field to Fork in Stone Hill and Cadbury Hill classes!

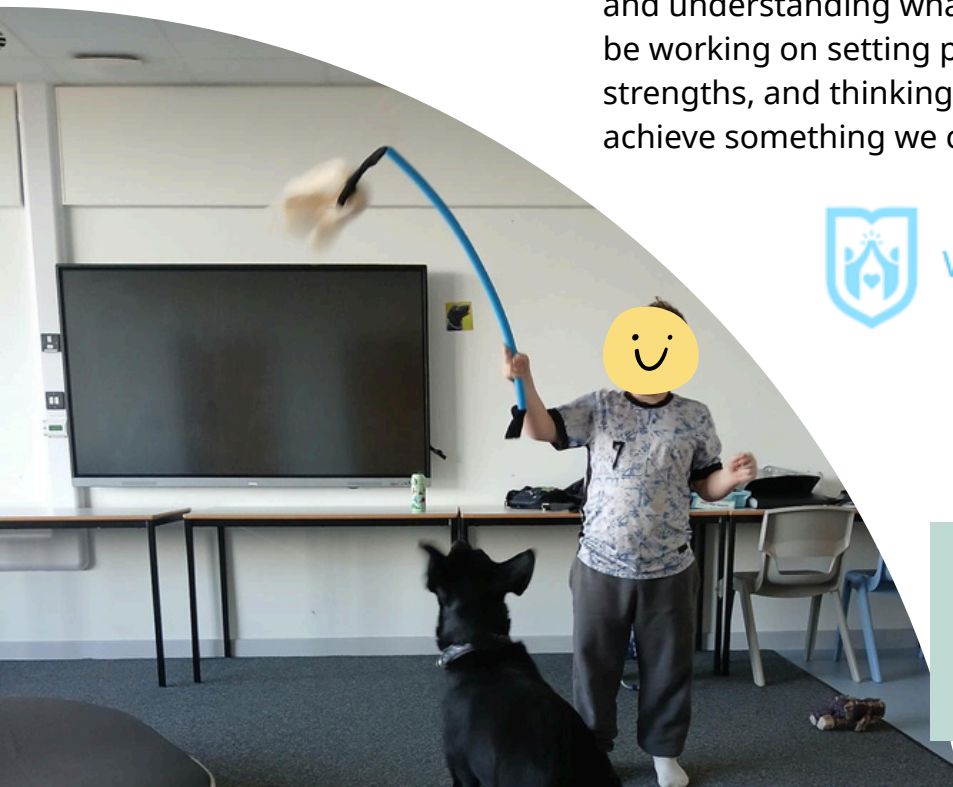


In Stone and Cadbury this term, we are embarking on an exciting journey to **discover how plants grow** and how the food we eat makes its way from the **field to our forks**. Learners are finding out about the vital role that farming plays in our everyday lives, exploring where some of our most well-known foods come from and how they are produced. We will be **investigating** a wide variety of plants, looking closely at their different parts and learning about the fascinating ways they reproduce, spread seeds and adapt to their environments.

As part of our **CLL** work, we will be exploring some of our favourite recipes and using them as inspiration to write our own clear and detailed instructional texts. Learners will be practising how to use imperative (bossy) verbs, time connectives and precise sequencing to guide a reader step-by-step through a process.

In **Maths**, we are continuing to build confidence and accuracy with the four operations of number—addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Learners will apply these skills in a range of contexts, deepening their understanding through problem-solving and reasoning challenges.

In **PSHE**, our focus this term is the importance of motivation and understanding what helps us learn and succeed. We will be working on setting personal goals, recognising our strengths, and thinking about the small steps we can take to achieve something we care about.



We are respectful



We learn more

#### Parent Activity Suggestion:

Pick a piece of fruit or veg at home and chat with your child about where it comes from and how it grows. You could even plant a few seeds together and watch them sprout!

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# Cultivating confidence in Lydeard Hill



This term has been a busy and successful one so far in English and Maths lessons, with learners showing fantastic engagement and real determination to build their skills.

In **CLL**, we are focusing on letter writing, exploring what makes a letter clear, purposeful, and appropriate for its audience. Learners are finding out about the difference between formal and informal language, identifying how tone changes depending on who we are writing to and why. They are planning and writing their own letters, experimenting with vocabulary choices and structure to match the intended style. It is wonderful to see learners gain confidence in expressing themselves while also thinking carefully about clarity and communication.

In **Maths**, the class is working hard on long multiplication, breaking down larger calculations into manageable steps and practising strategies to ensure accuracy. Alongside this, we are revisiting some key previous topics to strengthen understanding and build fluency. This consolidation is helping learners to make secure links between mathematical ideas and boosted their confidence when tackling more challenging problems.

In **PSHE**, our focus is on social skills, cooperation, and communication. Learners are practising these skills through a mixture of structured group activities and play-based sessions, giving them opportunities to take turns, share ideas, negotiate roles, and work together towards shared goals.



In **Art**, learners have successfully completed their unit on repeat pattern design and printmaking, with everyone learning how to create prints using Styrofoam plates. They are now beginning an exciting new project: the Clay Monster Pot project, where creativity and imagination will really come to life.



We stay safe



We learn more

#### Parent Activity Suggestion:

Invite your child to write a quick note or work out a small real-life maths problem, and give them time for a bit of drawing or pattern-making too. These small tasks help build the same skills they're practising in class.

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# Sunny Hill - Building Skills for Learning and Life



This term, our learning is focusing on developing a range of skills including emotional understanding, confidence, and thoughtful discussion. Teaching is being carefully adapted to meet individual needs, with a strong emphasis on one-to-one support, small group work, and meaningful conversations.

In **Communication, Language and Literacy**, pupils are exploring the novel '*A Monster Calls*' to support discussions about feelings and personal experiences. This is supporting diary writing and reflective work, helping learners to express thoughts in a safe and structured way.

In **Maths**, teaching is tailored to each learner's needs, focussing on strengthening core understanding and practical life skills such as money and time.

In **Science**, learners are finding out about movement and forces. Lessons explore how objects move and what affects that movement, using practical examples and clear explanations to develop understanding.



We are respectful

In **Our World**, learners are focussing on the history of slavery, with carefully guided discussions to build empathy, understanding and critical thinking. Learners are watching *Roots* and engaging in thoughtful, guided discussions about racism, language, and historical injustice.

In **PSHE**, learners are exploring bullying and online safety, learning strategies to make safe, confident choices.



We stay safe

## Parent Activity Suggestion:

Encourage regular reading and talk together about stories and characters. Practise everyday maths such as money, time, or Times Table Rock Stars. Chat about online safety and kindness, and invite your child to share what they're learning in school. Celebrate their effort and progress to help build confidence. Working together, we can support each child's learning and wellbeing.



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# Coker Hill - Grimm Tales and Global Thinking



In Coker Hill this Spring term, we are using '*Grimm Tales for Young and Old*' to guide our learning in **Communication, Language and Literacy** (CLL). Using these well know short stories, we are focussing on developing our comprehension skills including understanding, retelling the stories in our own words and exploring the characters in them. These skills help to develop our learners' ability to read, understand and summarise text that they come across in everyday life. We also 'top and tail' our week with a focus on SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) to strengthen our learners' literacy skills.

In **Maths**, we are working on geometry and areas of shapes. We are keen here at Hill View School to make sure our learners can make connections between classroom learning and life, looking at when these skills can be used in the real world.

In **Food Technology** we are bringing in a real life focus too, by asking the question of how we can cook healthy meals, that we enjoy, and are affordable.



We learn more

We continue to try and expand our students' horizons and have begun to look at the Middle East in **Our World**. We are looking at the physical region and will be touching on the political importance of the region, to continue to equip our learners to be well rounded individuals.



We are respectful

## Parent Activity Suggestion:

Choose a short story—perhaps a modern retelling of a classic—and discuss it together. Invite your child to summarise the key events or analyse a character's choices, echoing the comprehension and critical thinking skills they use in class. You might also look for real-life examples of geometry at home or outdoors, or plan and cook a healthy, budget-friendly meal together to build independence and practical life skills.

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# Burrow Hill - Learning for Life and Qualifications



Learners in Burrow Hill are working hard towards their formal qualifications, with plenty of opportunities to link their personal interests to their learning. In **Communication, Language and Literacy**, *'The Traitors'* is sparking lively discussions and inspiring high-quality review writing. Learners are finding out about how to introduce themselves professionally, write fair and balanced reviews, and summarise information across a range of contexts, including hotels, meals and everyday items.

In **Maths**, the focus this half term is fractions. Learners are developing confidence with mixed numbers, improper fractions, equivalent fractions and the links between fractions and decimals. They are also applying these skills to real-life situations to deepen understanding.

In **Food Technology**, learners are making excellent progress with independent cooking. They are creating healthy, balanced soups and have already even planned and prepared a full two-course meal for £5, including budgeting, shopping and cooking. Next, they will explore seasonal vegetables and imaginative ways to prepare them.

In **Art**, learners are continuing to develop their own independent projects, producing a wide range of creative outcomes such as bold cartoon artwork, T-shirt designs and a detailed 3D model tank.



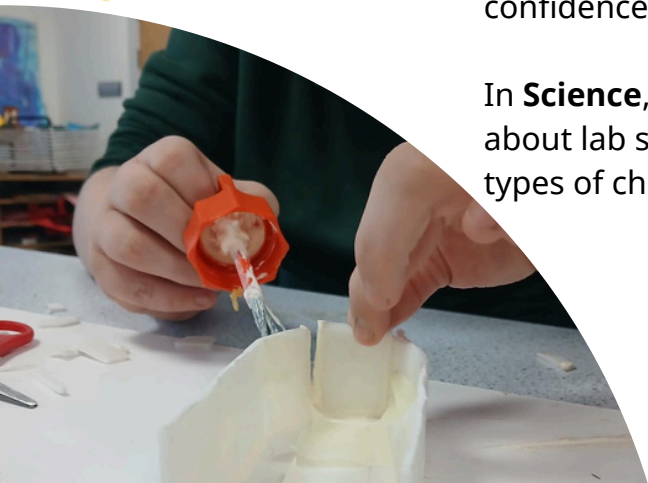
We learn more

In **Employability**, the class is focusing on professionalism and workplace preparation. Visits to local businesses are planned to build confidence and readiness for future work experience.

In **Science**, learners are beginning their Chemistry unit, learning about lab safety, the Periodic Table, atomic structure and the different types of chemical bonding.

#### Parent Activity Suggestion:

Ask your child to write a quick review of a meal, film or product, or involve them in planning a simple, low-cost recipe at home. You could also let them compare prices while shopping to build budgeting skills, or chat about their latest art or science projects to keep learning connected to real life.



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