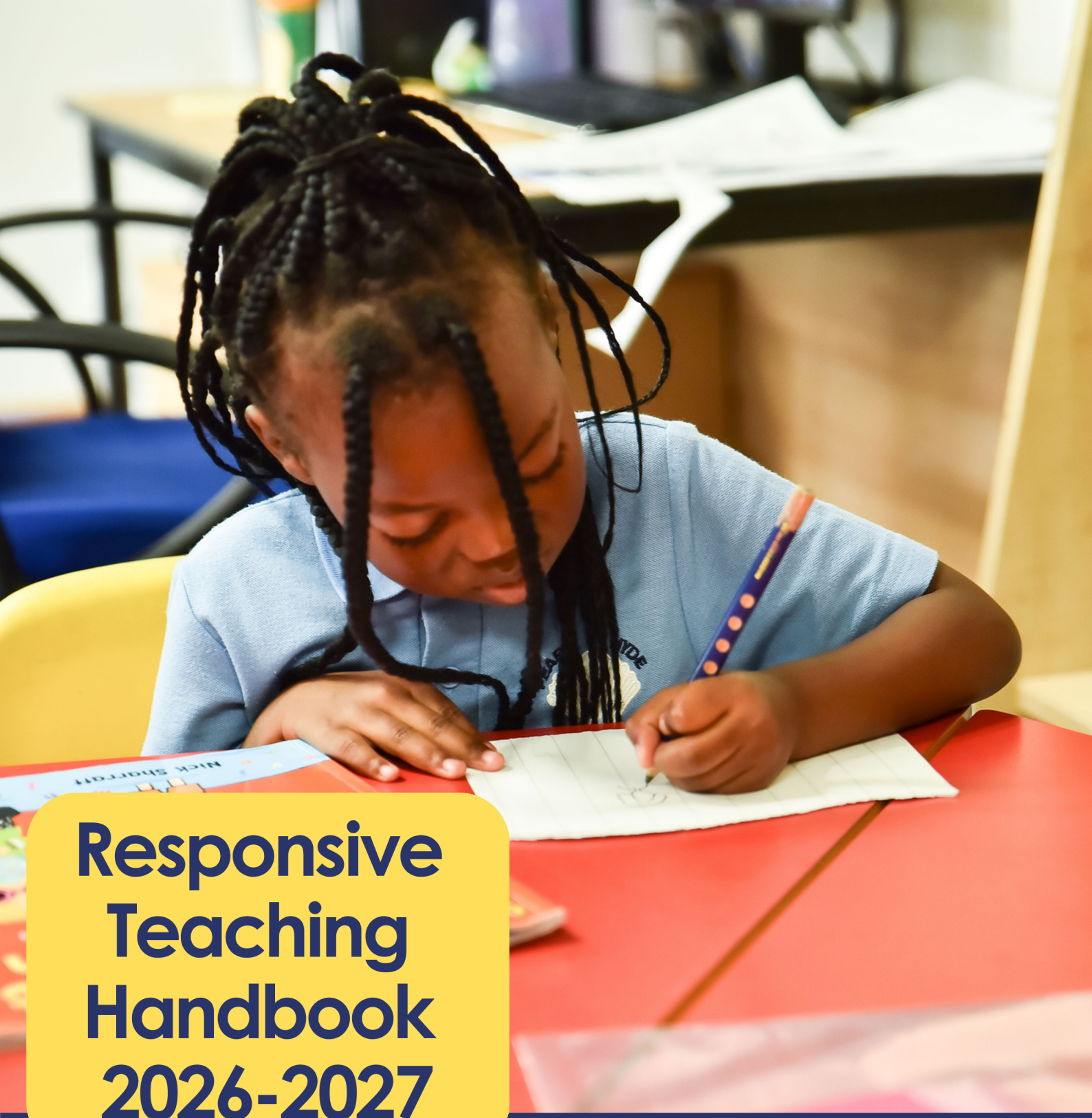


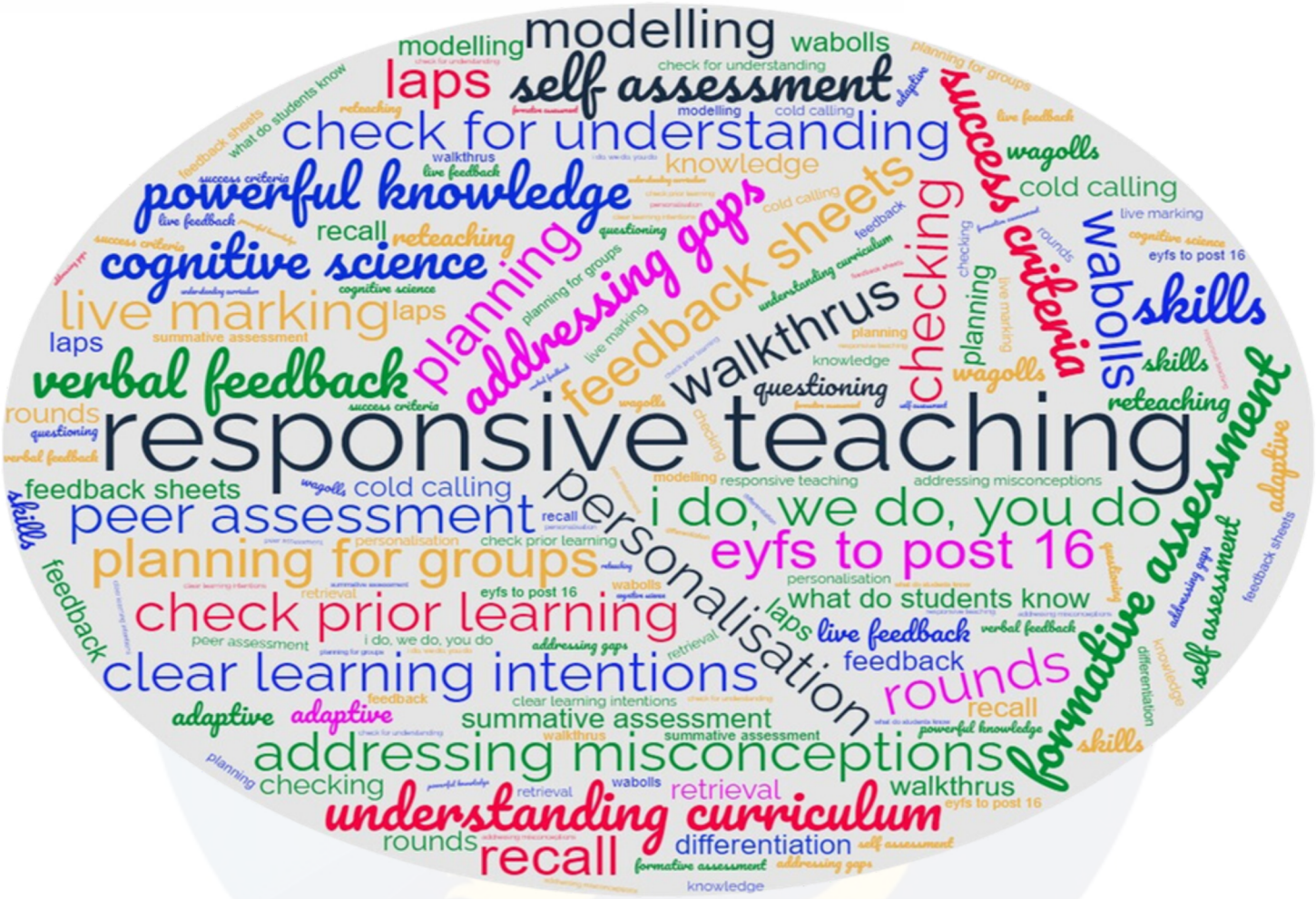
Responsive Teaching Handbook 2026-2027

FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

CONNECTING LEARNING

Kindness - Respect - Teamwork - Honesty - Integrity - Enjoyment

Responsive Teaching - Context

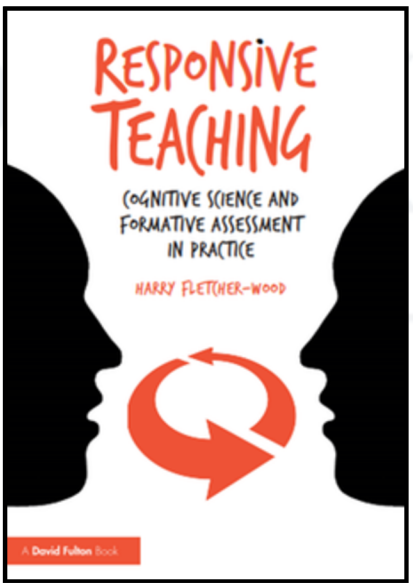


'Responsive Teaching' first became Finham Park MAT's overarching theme for T&L in our schools in 2018. Harry Fletcher-Wood's book 'Responsive Teaching' was released just after and we adopted it as so much of what is discussed in the book fits with our ethos.
We still recommend the book and give copies to any ECTs joining the Trust.

*"My working definition of **responsive teaching** is that it is:*

- *Setting clear goals and planning learning carefully*
- *Identifying what students have understood and where they are struggling*
- *Responding, adapting our teaching to support students to do better."*

Harry Fletcher-Wood, Improving Teaching Blog



Responsive Teaching - Context

What is Responsive Teaching?

Responsive teaching is an adaptive and student-centered approach that addresses the unique needs, interests, and abilities of each learner. It involves actively observing and assessing students' progress and adjusting instructional strategies accordingly. Responsive teaching emphasises building strong relationships with students, creating a safe and supportive learning environment. It embraces differentiated instruction, tailoring lessons and materials to meet the needs of all learners. Responsive teachers actively listen to students and provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences. They offer timely feedback, encourage reflection, and empower students to take ownership of their learning. Through responsive teaching, educators promote equity, inclusivity, and student success, ensuring that every learner has the opportunity to thrive.

Finham Park MAT World Class Teaching and Learning

World-class teaching and learning is an educational experience that is characterised by excellence, innovation, and transformative impact.
It encompasses a holistic approach that goes beyond the mere dissemination of knowledge, focusing on fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. World-class teaching engages students through interactive and collaborative learning experiences, utilising diverse instructional methods and technologies. It encourages students to take risks, embrace challenges, and develop a love for lifelong learning. World-class teaching and learning is inclusive in a supportive environment, valuing individuality, cultural diversity, and promoting the development of social-emotional skills. Ultimately, it equips students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing global society.

Our Trust Approach

On the next page you will find our Trust Blueprint for Responsive Teaching. The T&L policies in each of our schools align with our Trust approach and principles.

Our Responsive Teaching approach

Responsive Teaching - Blueprint

CURRICULUM

Our rationale of curriculum intent and design

- Our curriculum is planned to be ambitious and inclusive. It promotes progression at all stages and phases for our children.
- Our curriculum equips children with the powerful knowledge and wider cultural capital that they need to be responsible citizens of the world.
- Our curriculum is sequenced to promote progression of knowledge and skills over time.
- Our curriculum is engaging and helps to develop a love of learning amongst all children.
- Lesson planning is high quality, utilising powerful knowledge that has been identified as the key to mastery across subjects.
- We celebrate subjects as both individual and unique, whilst also identifying links, teaching strategies and transferable knowledge and skills across them to support embedding learning.

PEDAGOGY

How our curriculum is implemented in our schools/classrooms

- Our vision is Responsive Teaching for all.
- We use effective strategies in lessons based on national research, action research in our school contexts and through guides/CPD i.e. WalkThrus
- Our lessons are ambitious, but scaffolded for the children in our classes. We know our children well and deliver in ways that ensure they can all be successful in learning.
- We identify and adapt planning to address gaps in knowledge for cohorts or individuals.
- We model and use checking for understanding to support and develop learners.
- Questioning techniques will be inclusive and encourage discussion, debate and critical thinking.
- Every teacher is a teacher of SEND.
- Every teacher is a teacher of Literacy, including Oracy.

ASSESSMENT

The assessment and feedback strategies that underpin our teaching

- Checking for Understanding is a key strategy in every lesson. Teachers will use a wide range of techniques to do this.
- We identify misconceptions and gaps and use formative assessments to regularly check whether progress has been made following reteaching or interventions.
- Our assessment informs our planning and how and what we teach.
- We teach students how to peer and self-assess and how to use the information gained from feedback/assessment to improve their work.
- Our assessments are planned as part of our curriculum and at KS3 End of Year common assessments are used.
- We moderate and standardise across subjects, schools and the Trust.

CULTURE

The behaviours we expect to see in our learning environments

- All of our schools are inclusive and safe environments where we celebrate diversity and equality.
- We know our children well and develop positive relationships across all areas of our school and Trust.
- We have high expectations of good behaviour, which is modelled and taught in all of our schools.
- Colleagues are expected to use a range of strategies to support safe and calm learning environments, including individual approaches to meet the needs of students.
- Our behaviour polices are clear and concise to support children using them and all colleagues to apply them consistently.

PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT

The professional behaviours all colleagues will exhibit to support world class T&L

- All teaching colleagues will engage with Instructional Coaching using Steplab to support their professional development at all careers stages.
- We commit to life-long learning and promote a love of learning to our children and families.
- We engage in our own action research as well as using national/ international educational research.
- Subject knowledge is extremely important and our teachers are committed to addressing any gaps. Experts within our Trust support colleagues so no children are disadvantaged.
- Co-construction is an important aspect of our CPD expectations.
- Supported by The Lion Alliance we offer a range of CPD, specific to the needs of the contexts of our colleagues and schools and the wider education community.

Kindness - Respect - Teamwork - Honesty - Integrity - Enjoyment

Responsive Teaching - Walkthrus

Walkthrus

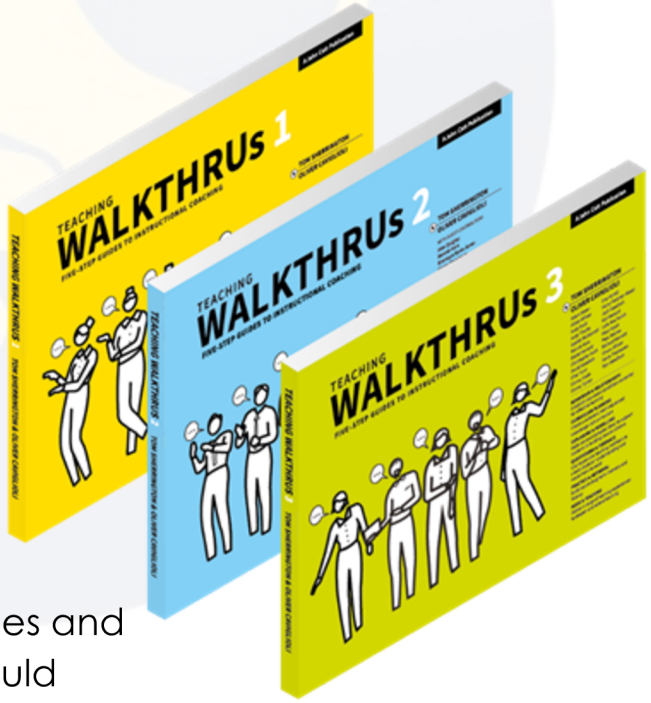
All schools within the Finham Park Multi-Academy Trust use 'Teaching Walkthrus' written by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli as part of their teaching & learning professional development.

The Walkthrus in Books 1-3 share 160+ strategies that teachers and other student facing staff can use in class lessons, small group interventions and 1to1 teaching sessions.

At the heart of Walkthrus is a selection of evidence based teaching strategies rooted in a deep understanding of how learning works. Each 'Walkthru' breaks teaching techniques down into five clear steps. Walkthrus are categorised into 5 themes:

- Behaviour & Relationships
- Curriculum Planning
- Explaining & Modelling
- Questioning & Feedback
- Practice & Retrieval

Plus, each book covers why? what? and how? to look at effective implementation.



The first Walkthrus book was published in 2020 and schools in our Trust at the time were amongst the first to sign up for the online resources and books. We could see how the books could support teaching development at FPMAT.

In 2021, we launched our 2nd 3 year focus on Responsive Teaching and Walkthrus became a key feature and helped us to develop a common language around T&L.

Walkthrus strategies can be seen being used in all of our schools, Primary & Secondary and each MAT Conference Day in January we have workshops looking at the use of Walkthrus in different contexts for effective teaching and therefore learning.

All schools have access to the online Walktrhus resources - please speak to your T&L lead for access.

Responsive Teaching Instructional Coaching

Instructional Coaching



Instructional Coaching is a key feature of the CPD offer at Finham Park MAT schools. All schools must use IC with staff to improve teaching and learning in lessons, IC is personalised so whatever stage of careers all staff can be involved and developed, not just ITT/ECTs.

What is Instructional Coaching?

Instructional coaching in education is a collaborative and personalised professional development approach that supports teachers in improving their instructional practices and enhancing student learning outcomes.

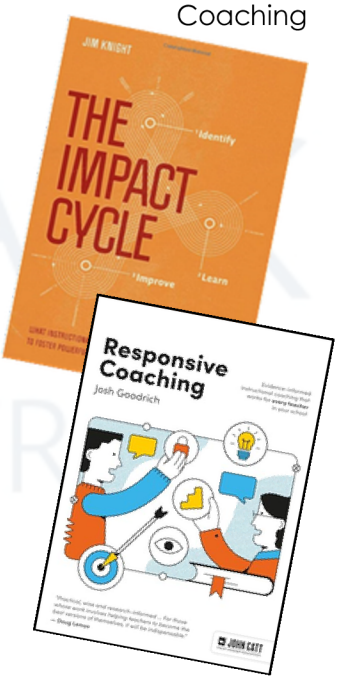
Instructional coaches work closely with teachers, providing guidance, feedback, and resources to help them reflect on their teaching strategies, set goals, and implement effective instructional techniques. Through a trusting and non-judgmental relationship, instructional coaches observe classroom instruction, consider data, and engage in reflective conversations to identify areas of strength and areas for development. Instructional coaching is a regular cycle of observation, feedback and practice to help all colleagues develop at whatever stage of their career.

Instructional coaching ultimately aims to empower teachers, build their instructional expertise, and positively impact student achievement.

Three types of Instructional Coaching?

1. Directive: The Master and the Apprentice
2. Dialogical: The Partner
3. Facilitative: The Sounding Board

Recommended reading for Instructional Coaching



Steplab

At FPMAT we use Steplab, which is an online tool for Instructional Coaching. You can record IC observations, select action steps (including Walkthrus linked steps), watch and compare good practice and practice in IC pairs.



Steplab



Responsive Teaching : Connecting Learning 2024-2027

Our T&L historic timeline

FPS 2009/10 – 2011/12 Assessment for Learning
FPS 2012/13 – 2014/15 Personalising Learning
FPS/FP2 2015/16 – 2017/18 High Challenge Classroom
FPMAT 2018/19 – 2020/21 Responsive Teaching
FPMAT 2021/22 – 2023/24 Responsive Teaching & Instructional Coaching
FPMAT 2024/25 – 2026/27 Responsive Teaching : Connecting Learning

Responsive Teaching : Connecting Learning

- Further embedding of Instructional Coaching/Steplab
- Development of a standardised approach for primary & secondary phases so all colleagues benefit from the same experience
- Onboarding new schools

Oracy curriculum & pedagogy

- The importance of oracy for success in all areas of the curriculum
- Developing confident, resilient learners who are able to express themselves well
- Developing oracy in our colleagues to ensure the benchmark is high

Connecting Learning

- The responsibility of pupils for understanding how they learn and what role they can play in supporting better learning themselves
- The role that parents can play when they better understand the learning process and how they can support their child in the home
- How can our local communities better support learning for all our children and young people – a return to 'life-long learning' principles?
- Link to 'Learning Walkthrus' – book aimed at students and parents



Oracy at Finham Park Trust

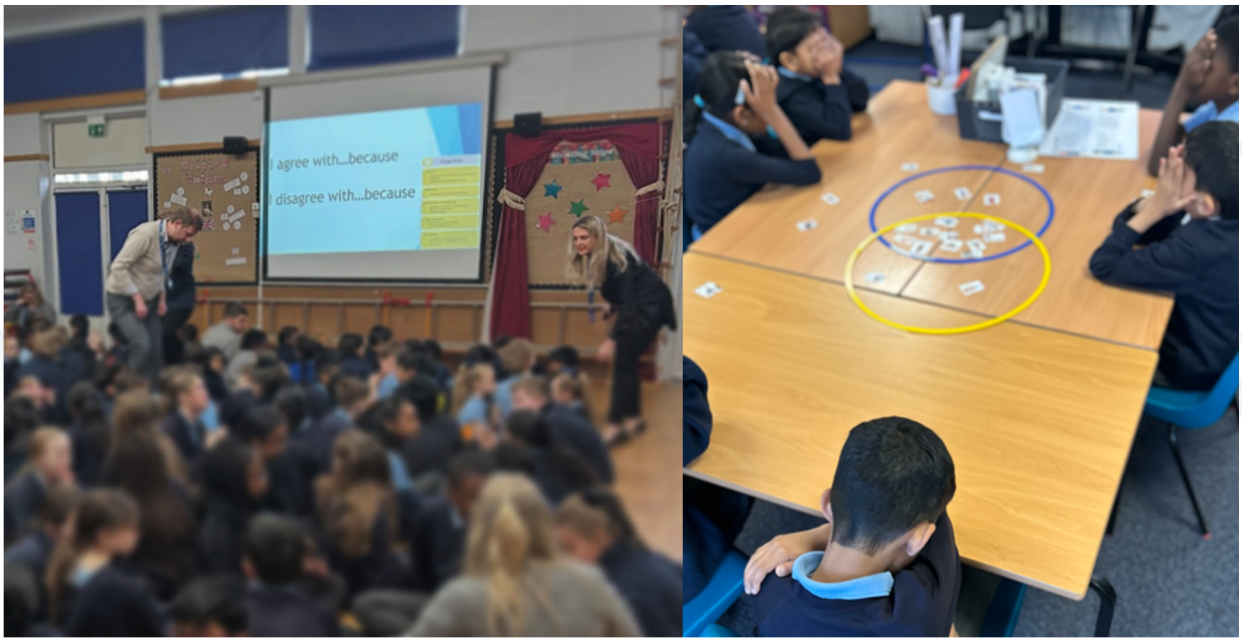
What is oracy?

Oracy is articulating ideas, developing understanding and engaging with others through speaking, listening and communication.
In school, oracy is a powerful tool for learning; by teaching students to become more effective speakers and listeners we empower them to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them. It is also a route to social mobility, empowering all students, not just some, to find their voice to succeed in school and life.
[Voice 21 Website]

Vision Statement: Empowering Every Voice Through Oracy

At Finham Park MAT, we believe that oracy is fundamental to learning, empowerment, and future success. Our vision is to create a culture where every learner, from primary to secondary, develops the confidence, skills, and opportunities to articulate their ideas, listen actively, and engage meaningfully with the world around them. Our focus is both on learning to talk and learning through talk.
Through our 2024–2027 Oracy strategy, we aim to:
·Embed high-quality Oracy practices across all classrooms to enhance communication skills, deepen understanding, and raise achievement.
·Foster an inclusive environment where every child, regardless of background, develops the confidence to express themselves with clarity and purpose.
·Strengthen our partnerships with parents, carers, and communities to celebrate and support the importance of Oracy beyond the classroom.
·Equip our teachers with professional development and resources to deliver transformative Oracy experiences.
This renewed focus on Oracy builds on our past efforts, leveraging our collective expertise to ensure that all students leave our schools as articulate, empathetic, and critically engaged individuals ready to succeed in a dynamic world.
Together, we commit to unlocking the potential of every voice through world class education.

"My voice is my power and I can change the world"





FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

FINHAM PARK SCHOOL

PEARL HYDE Community Primary School

Limbrick Wood PRIMARY SCHOOL

Finham Primary School

Lyng Hall School

FINHAM PARK 2

LILLINGTON SCHOOL NURSERY AND PRIMARY