

Teaching Methods and Programmes in use at Firbeck Academy

CLLD (Communication, Language and Literacy Development)

The advice of the CLLD team endorses the observation that high-quality, daily, discrete, phonics sessions should be active, engaging, paced and multi-sensory. Short sessions (15–20 minutes) of this nature every day, following the teaching sequence suggested in the CLLD programme of 'Review-Teach-Practice-Apply', will support all children's incremental acquisition of phonics knowledge and skills. This is achieved by:

- using a familiar structure that scaffolds new learning and shows children how it is applied in real reading and writing;
- using props such as objects and pictures to clarify understanding;
- starting with familiar words and extending to new words;
- the use of repetitive words and phrases in context;
- enabling the practitioner to make ongoing assessments that enable him/her to fine tune each session to match the children's rate of learning.

These, of course, are important for all children. For children learning EAL, aural, as well as oral, experiences should continue through all phases. The ongoing assessment should include careful observation and listening to assess children's understanding, particularly as some phonemes may not occur in the children's first language and therefore they will need more focused teaching.

Talk for Maths

Improves mathematics School Attainment Target (SAT) results by introducing a whole school approach to the subject. Teachers now include mathematics across the school day with daily mental and oral starters, mathematics assemblies, and giant counting games in the playground. Different speaking and listening strategies have also contributed to the rise in SAT results.

Talk for Writing

Developed by Pie Corbett & Julia Strong.

Talk for Writing is powerful because it enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analysing it and then writing their own version. There are three stages of imitation, innovation & invention (independent application).

Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children are helped to write in the same style. Schools that have adopted the approach have not only increased their children's progress but have found that children and teachers alike love it. It not only works throughout primary schools from the early years to Year 6 but also in secondary schools where it is key to making literacy across the curriculum really work.

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is a well-established intervention scheme for children with reading difficulties. The programme provides daily half-hour sessions with specially trained Reading Recovery teachers for six-year-olds who are in the bottom 20% of their class in terms of reading.

Reading Recovery is an accredited school-based literacy programme for the lowest achieving children aged five or six that enables them to reach age-expected levels within 20 weeks. It involves a short series of one-to-one lessons for 30 minutes every day with a specially trained teacher. The programme is different for every child, starting from what the child knows and what he/she needs to learn next.

The focus of each lesson is to comprehend messages in reading and construct messages in writing, learning how to attend to detail without losing focus on meaning.

“Switch On”

Switch-on is based on some of the principles of Reading Recovery. Switch-on Reading is an intensive 10-week literacy intervention. It is delivered on a one to one basis by staff, most commonly teaching assistants, who have been trained in the approach. The purpose of Switch-on is to achieve functional literacy for as many pupils as possible, and so to close the reading achievement gap for vulnerable children working below age-expected levels. It is inspired by the well-established intervention Reading Recovery, which is teacher led and delivered over a 12-20 week period.

The students are removed from class to attend the sessions, which aim to improve their reading comprehension and fluency. Each session requires students to read from four different books graded on the basis of their difficulty.

FAST (Families and Schools Together)

FAST is an award-winning early-intervention programme that brings parents, children, teachers and the wider community together, to make sure children get the support they need to fulfill their potential at school – and in life.

FAST works by building stronger bonds between parents, schools and communities to make sure children get the support they need to do their best at school.

The programme consists of an eight-week cycle of activity sessions, as well as help for parents to develop learning at home and ongoing support at school and within the community.

FAST supports families by:

- helping children improve their skills in reading, writing and maths – as well as encouraging good behaviour and a positive attitude to school and learning
- helping parents get more involved in their child’s education, so they can support learning and development at home
- encouraging stronger bonds between parents and their child, their child’s school, other parents and the wider community.

“The Reach”

The Reach works with children in Firbeck at a vital stage of their development. We offer them support to cope with emotional and behavioural difficulties which has a positive impact on the whole class, and helps teachers focus on teaching.

The Reach offers one to one counseling tailored to each child's needs. We offer drop in sessions open to all pupils at play times and lunch time. We also do group work on issues such as transition to secondary school, friendships and self-esteem. The Reach Manager is Shelley MacDonald.

SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)

A curriculum resource aimed at developing the underpinning qualities and skills that help promote positive behaviour and effective learning. It focuses on five social and emotional aspects of learning: self-awareness, managing feelings, motivation, empathy and social skills.

The materials help children develop skills such as understanding another's point of view, working in a group, sticking at things when they get difficult, resolving conflict and managing worries. They build on effective work already in place in the many primary schools who pay systematic attention to the social and emotional aspects of learning through whole-school ethos, initiatives such as circle time or buddy schemes, and the taught personal, social and health education (PSHE) and Citizenship curriculum.

The materials are organised into seven themes: New Beginnings, Getting on and falling out, Say no to bullying, Going for goals!, Good to be me, Relationships and Changes. Each theme is designed for a whole-school approach and includes a whole-school assembly and suggested follow-up activities in all areas of the curriculum. The colour-coded resources are organised at four levels: Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. Pupil reference material and photocopiable teacher reference material accompany each theme.

There is a whole-school pack for the staffroom, a year-group pack with the same materials organised into a set of booklets for each year group from early Foundation Stage through to Year 6, and a resource file of photographs and posters.

P4C

P4C.COM is a co-operative providing resources and advice on philosophy for children mainly to teachers who already know something about it through courses or reading and are looking for further advice and resources.

P4C is an educational approach that encourages children to think critically and creatively. The basics of philosophy for children are straightforward. In P4C sessions, the teacher acts as a facilitator giving children responsibility for their own learning in a creative and collaborative environment. Children, or older students, come up with their own questions after looking at a stimulus, which may be a picture, a piece of music or a short story with their teacher. The children take some thinking time to devise their own questions. They choose a question that interests them and, with the teacher's help, discuss it together. The teacher is concerned with getting children to welcome the diversity of each others' initial views and to use those

as the start of a process of that involves the children questioning assumptions, developing opinions with supporting reasons, analysing significant concepts and generally applying the best reasoning and judgement they are capable of to the question they have chosen.

In the longer term, the teacher aims to build the children's skills and concepts through appropriate follow-up activities, thinking games and the orchestration of connections between philosophical discussions, life and the rest of the school curriculum.