

Governor Visit – English – focus Oracy

On 11th February 2026, Claire Price & Annie Balme met with Kat Grant & Beth Cleine

We talked about Oracy and how it's a key area of focus this year on the School Development Plan, as it's a crucial life skill that all young people need. The areas we talked about were:

- **Developing Language:** Aiming to build on Word Aware which is presently being used at Fleet with all classes or finding an alternative. Mrs Wordsmith didn't work well, as the bank of words provided were out of context, so hard for the children to work with, but it did provide effective activity ideas on how to embed words etc. E.g. in soft start to a lesson, looking for synonyms and antonyms in a context specific activity. Classes are building banks of words, especially topic words and words for writing.
- **Reading (e.g. language development, vocabulary building):** ECR7 (Every Child a Reader by 7) training through Camden Learning – supporting Fleet – Kat is going to training with ECR7.
- 'Chapter 1' – KS1 – online. Chapter 1 is a volunteer reading charity. We have 10 children in Year 1 and 10 children in Year 2 reading with volunteers. The sessions are delivered virtually on a laptop in class!
- Bookmark volunteers read with Year 3, 4 and 5.
- LSU readers to read with Yr 6 kids. Trial reading mentor/peer mentor.
- Tutoring for Year 6. Betsy supporting emerging readers.
- Staff training in echo reading, inference, teacher modelling, paired reading, choral reading. A reading INSET was delivered to TA's in January – KS1 TA's had phonics training and KS2 TA's had training on reading comprehension/guided reading.
- **Communication Guidelines:** all the staff have them for their classrooms so that staff are supporting early communicators. For example, 'good walking' instead of 'don't run', reduced speech when talking to children and leaving processing time.
- Beth updated us on **Camden Talk** which Annie did a visit on with Rebecca Combes a few years ago. Staff in the Early Years still successfully use the **SHREC approach**, so that all interactions are purposeful and of a high

quality. **SH**: Share attention; **R**: Respond; **E**: Expand; **C**: Conversation. The use of Camden Talk in the Early Years, has benefitted the children for when they have moved up the school.

- **Emotion Coaching**: staff are trained to notice child's feelings, name emotion, validate emotion, meet need & problem solve with child and set boundaries. Also help children to build self-regulation skills. Staff are still using Zones of Regulation and had an INSET on this in the Spring Term.

Teachers had an **oracy** inset with Beth in September 2025, and in September 2026 with teachers and TAs. They looked at what talk in different year groups looks like, and how in addition to teacher to child facilitated talking, there are grouping opportunities for trio, pair, circle and class talk. Staff also discussed successful methods of encouraging children who struggle to talk and the use of sentence stems as a scaffold to build confidence. Staff all value the importance of talk as a key life skill for every pupil, and are working towards embedding the oracy framework in all classes, aiming for consistency with signals, language, resources to support oracy etc. (Since our meeting, Beth and Kat have attended an Oracy workshop at Torriano, who are an established Voice 21 school. They will meet to discuss key takeaways and practice that we can roll out at Fleet.)

In addition to above, what is working well:

- Teacher modelling of using sentence stems. On their learning walls - maths and English
- Low stakes & differentiated questions in any opportunities during discussions
- Thinking thumbs Year 3 use them successfully
- Some classes using pick sticks
- Camden Talk being a strong foundation for children as they go up the school

Areas that Kat is considering & would be great to revisit when we next meet:

- Kat's visit to Torriano to see their use of the oracy framework there
- Development of standardising the same symbols & groupings so uniform across the classes
- We discussed the possibility of having a dedicated oracy time & be great to hear if you've experimented more with this (eg whole school assembly time, in PSHE etc)
- Staff have looked at ways & resources to include all children eg use of Yarn & passing it around and holding on to it once spoken, then ball of yarn keeps being passed around to make a web of everyone's contributions to the discussion. Counters red/yellow & lego blocks for building on conversations. Would be great to see how this is developing and what works well.
- Still working to get quieter voices.
- How you moderate oracy, emotion coaching and use of communication guidelines by all staff.

Thanks so much for your time Kat and Beth, it was very interesting to hear everything that is already under way and your plans for the next steps in embedding the oracy framework more. Claire and I would love the opportunity to come back and visit a class using the symbols and groupings. Thank you both, we really enjoyed our visit and hearing about oracy at Fleet.

Annie and Claire