Strategic School Improvement Fund Project

Impactful strategies used by SSIF schools to improve the oracy skills of their disadvantaged pupils:

- 'No Pens Wednesdays!' (The Communication Trust). Schools adopt a 'no pens' approach where all lessons focus on developing pupil talk and reasoning skills.
- Oral feedback is given and pupils have to respond to the feedback orally before they undertaken any written response to the feedback
- Use of sentence stems to support pupil discussions or questioning. E.g. I think, I agree with…however…..
- Use of word mats or learning walls to provide subject specific language support for pupils – access to key words and terminology and definitions
- Reciprocal reading strategy – pupils work in groups to discuss a book or aspects of the text they are reading collaboratively. Pupils undertake 4 key tasks and orally **summarise** aspects of the text, **ask questions**, through discussion and questioning they **clarify their understanding and make predictions. This strategy can be used across all subjects and in different context**
- Group discussions – allocation of key roles to individuals. This may involve pupils being given key viewpoints to present, asking questions etc.
- SALT – engagement of SALT to support identified issues with speech and language
- Use of the Tower Hamlets – 'Progression in Language Structures' document to provide scaffolds for talk in the classroom (See link below)
- Focus on developing an understanding of exploratory talk and dialogic talk and how listening to others can help to shape and develop ideas and learning. E.g. what did you learn from your discussions? Do you agree? Disagree? Why? (Robin Alexander)
- Whole staff training on developing pupils' attentive listening skills
- Implementation of Word Aware programme – whole school approach to promote development and use of vocabulary across all aspects of the curriculum. (Ages 5 – 11)
- Talk for Writing – Pie Corbett's model of T4W embedded across all year groups. (See link below)
- Implementation of 'Language for Thinking' Programme – (SEN) (See link below)
- Introduction of narrative story telling – to promote vocabulary and awareness of structure of writing. Modelling of language across all subjects.
- Use of R.A.P.T (Renfrew Action Picture Test) assessment tool to diagnose aspects of language pupils find most challenging
- Use of subject specific vocabulary target boards. Pupils are encouraged to use words in responses and given points – adds an element of competition!

Useful Reading/resources/websites:

Alexander, R.J. Hardman, F. & Hardman, J. with Rajab, T. & Longmore, M. (2017). *Changing talk, changing thinking:*

https://www.talk4writing.co.uk (Pie Corbett)
https://www.talk4writing.co.uk/secondary/ (Julia Strong)
http://integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk/our-approaches/speech-therapy-approaches/language-thinking/ (Language for Thinking – Stephen Parson and Anna Branagan)
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/dialogic-teaching/
http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/slts/assessment-children-slcn/expressive-language-assessments