



# BRIGHTER FUTURES



## SIC PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025



### WHAT'S INSIDE

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Welcome to our professional learning newsletter. A chance to celebrate what has been achieved over the half term, share best practice and look ahead to how we will continue to develop.

Remember our professional learning sharepoint site is the place to go for up to date research and practical strategies to support your work. <https://bit.ly/3n2Datf>



# Half Term 3 Review

## Personal Development

An exciting development to our personal development programme this year, includes pupils working towards a BTEC Level 2 Award in Personal Growth & Wellbeing.

In addition to building on key areas such as healthy lifestyles and economic understanding, pupils will gain an additional qualification.



## Ready to Learn

This year started with a refreshed focus on supporting our pupils to be 'Ready to Learn'. We've been doing this through the monitoring of Ready to Learn scores, mentoring and a clear focus to morning tutor sessions.



## The Foyer Homeless Project

The Foyer came to school to deliver some sessions around homeless prevention as part of a project to help combat homelessness in Sheffield. The project worked with Y11s as a pilot scheme that is hoped to be rolled out through the city to make young people aware of homelessness and where to go to seek help.

We want to help change the narrative around what homelessness looks like. For us, it's not about older people with chaotic needs, living on the streets, it's about young people and families who have hit hard times.

We also wanted to give advice on what to do if you were faced with homelessness, how to prevent becoming homeless and some education and tips about what it's like living on your own. How much things cost, how much money you need to feel comfortable and enjoy a few treats as well as the essential bills.

We were lucky that the Sheffield Inclusion Centre (Spring Lane) allowed us to deliver a short but punchy project to mixed groups of Y11 students. I think it surprised us all at how well it went, it was so enjoyable for all involved and the students were fantastic at joining in and asking questions.

**Sam Mobbs, Foyer Manager**



# Half Term 3 Review

## Spotlight on Primary

### Science Week



In an exciting change to our usual timetable, the last week of each half term is now dedicated to "Science Week," a time for hands-on exploration and discovery. During this week, children take a break from their usual English, RWI Discovery, and foundation subject lessons to immerse themselves in engaging science topics and activities.

So far, pupils have explored two fascinating units. The first focused on solids, liquids, and gases, where children learned about changing states such as melting, freezing, boiling, and evaporation. Through experiments like making mini water worlds and observing transformations, pupils developed a deeper understanding of these concepts while having lots of fun.



Before Christmas, the spotlight shifted to the digestive system. Pupils investigated the organs involved in digestion, food chains, and the role of teeth. Highlights included enamel experiments using eggs to demonstrate the importance of dental care, sparking curiosity and meaningful discussions.

Throughout these sessions, every child has shown exceptional enthusiasm and progress. They have also taken part in exciting experiments such as borax-making, launching vinegar and bicarbonate of soda pop rockets, and so much more. The energy and engagement from our students have been inspiring to see!

We look forward to our next Science Week at the end of this half term, where the children will delve into the fascinating topic of light. We are confident their curiosity and enthusiasm will continue to shine brightly.

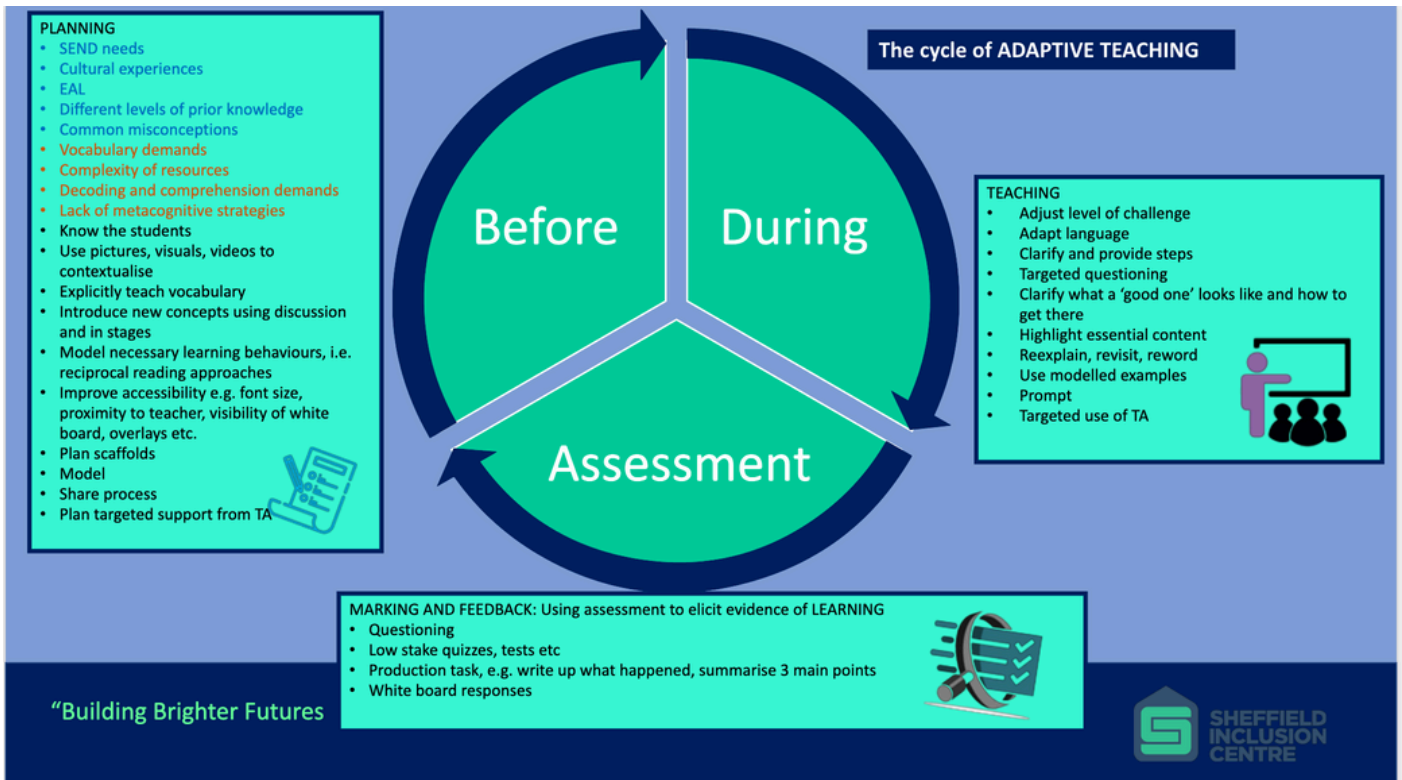




# Teaching & Learning

Out teaching and learning training this year continues to focus on the key areas of:

Adaptive Teaching & Effective Use of Teaching Assistants  
Reading & Disciplinary Vocabulary  
Assessment & Feedback



## The effective use of TAs under everyday classroom conditions

- 1** TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low attaining pupils
- 2** Use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them
- 3** Use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage their own learning
- 4** Ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom

## The effective use of TAs in delivering structured interventions out of class

- 5** Use TAs to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions
- 6** Adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction

## Integrating learning from work led by teachers and TAs

- 7** Ensure explicit connections are made between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions

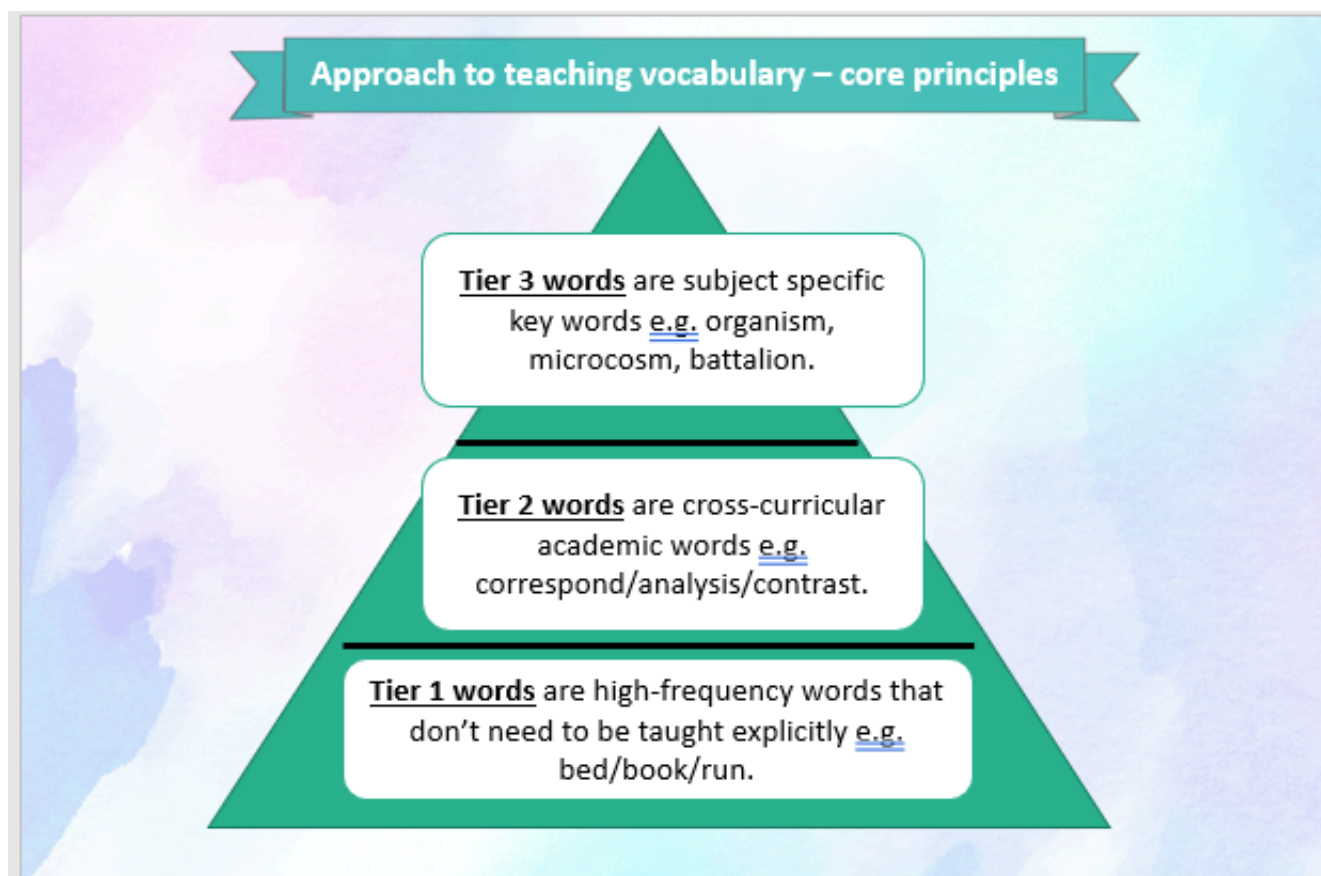
# Teaching & Learning

## Literacy - Disciplinary Vocabulary

Do you plan opportunities to explicitly teach vocabulary?  
Do you teach pupils how to recognise the roots of words?

### Why is it important to explicitly teach vocabulary?

- Words form the basis of everything we do.
- The typical vocabulary of a teacher is between 50,000 – 60,000 words. Pupils need 50,000 to thrive in school.
- Only 73% of pupils leaving primary school reached the expected level for reading in 2019 (DfE, 2019)
- Research by the National Literacy Trust reveals that 1 in 11 children said that they didn't have a book of their own at home; the figure for disadvantaged children is 1 in 8 (Clark and Picton, 2018)
- 95% of words on a page need to be understood to fully support reading comprehension.
- 67% of AQA GCSE English Language papers since 2017 have required pupils to understand vocabulary associated with geography and places.



# Teaching & Learning

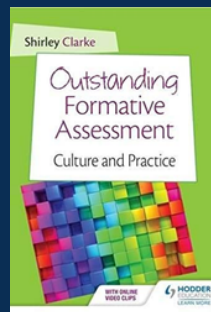
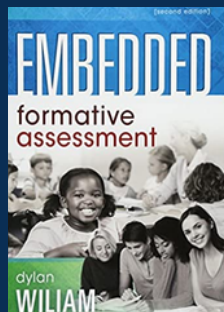
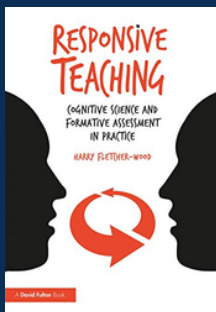
## Assessment for Learning

**#1** Explicitly share the learning intention / big question with pupils and review throughout the lesson.

**#2** Embed use of recall activities and questioning strategies to elicit pupil understanding.

**#3** Use data from cold tasks to inform teaching and plug gaps in knowledge and understanding

**#4** Make effective use of questioning to check for understanding



### Further Reading



Sandringham Research School  
Formative Assessment  
Webinar  
<https://bit.ly/3zaYH7y>



BLOG



Revisiting Dylan William's  
Five Brilliant Formative  
Assessment Strategies  
Tom Sherrington  
<https://bit.ly/3zbskFU>



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@dylanwiliam  
@shirleyclarke\_

# Professional Learning Opportunities

## Forge CPD Curriculum



Forge CPD Platform has been added to the Learn Sheffield subscription offer. On the platform there are a range of opportunities. Please see the link to the curriculum specific webinars and documents. <https://bit.ly/3HXOuhP>

## Specialist NPQs 2025 - April 6th Deadline

NPQs will empower leaders and aspiring leaders to create conditions for change and embed evidence-informed teaching and learning at their levels of control, whether that be the classroom, department, school or Trust.

The new pathways have been designed to be relevant and flexible, featuring a blended learning approach. If you are interested in applying for any of the following then please speak to your line manager.

Leading Behaviour & Culture (NPQLBC)

Leading Teaching (NPQLT)

Leading Literacy (NPQLL)

Senior Leadership (NPQSL)



## Sheffield Sensory Service



Learn Sheffield have a range of videos and training resources on their website to develop your understanding of sensory processing. The training will introduce you to theories around sensory processing and will help you to understand more about where challenges can occur for children and young people in school who have sensory processing difficulties. The resources will guide you on how reduce barriers to education for pupils with sensory processing difficulties by introducing strategies to make your school more sensory accessible. You will then learn how to create an individual Sensory Plan for learners who need more tailored support. You will need to register your name and email address to access content. <https://www.learnsheffield.co.uk/Training/sheffield-sensory-service/#>