St John the Evangelist Primary School Oracy Policy

Our School's Vision Statement

"Following Jesus' example, we seek to grow good people who are ready to make a difference to the world around them."

We believe that

"The only thing that matters is faith expressing itself through love."

Galatians 5:6

Developed 2026

Reviewed 2028

Mission Statement

At St John's, Oracy plays a key role in teaching and learning. The children develop the confidence and skills to listen and talk effectively by valuing different views and engaging in meaningful conversations. They communicate with others positively in all forms and articulate reasoned ideas.

In our school's community, our aim is to promote all forms of communication and use all the available opportunities to encourage children to interact and learn through talk. Oracy is embedded across the curriculum and used to unlock new learning and challenge thinking.

Oracy is described as learning through talk whilst learning to talk and we understand how this can support the learning of all pupils and provide them with the opportunity to articulate their ideas and learn from each other as they explore new topics. We aim to provide pupils with the skills required to become confident speakers, using strongly embedded strategies aimed to support them beyond their school life.

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development. Oracy is embedded throughout our broad and balanced curriculum and new strategies are explicitly taught to support learning. Questions are carefully planned to ensure that that all children can fully participate and there is a shared understanding that everyone's opinion should be valued.

Some of the activities we use to help develop spoken language are:

- Partner Talk
- Group Discussion
- Debate
- Role Play
- Drama
- Presentation
- Collaborative work and problem solving

2. Teaching and Learning

The National Curriculum 2.1 Spoken Language – Years 1-6 Pupils should be taught to:

Listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers.

Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge.

Use relevant strategies to build vocabulary.

Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions

Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feeling.

Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments.

Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.

Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English.

Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates.

Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s).

Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication

2.2 Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

These statements apply to all years. The content should be taught at a level appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils should build on the oral language skills that have been taught in preceding years. Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness of their communication across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. They should therefore have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Pupils should understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates.

To support this, we will use the following tools:

Whole-school Oracy Progression Grid.

Sentence stems and scaffolds.

Strategies mat to facilitate planning.

3. EYFS

Our EYFS curriculum is communication rich and carefully designed to deliver a broad and balanced array of topics, which ensure coverage and progression for all. It provides pupils

with creative, memorable experiences in addition to diverse and rich opportunities, which build children's aspirations demonstrating possibilities for their future lives.

The framework is divided into the following key areas:

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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Pupils should be able to:

Gaze at faces, copying facial expressions and movement.

Make eye contact for longer periods.

Watch someone's face as they talk.

Recognise and be calmed by a familiar and friendly voice.

Listen and respond to a simple instruction.

Use gestures like waving and pointing to communicate.

Copy your gestures and words.

Use intonation, pitch and changing volume when 'talking'.

Understand simple words in context.

Listen to other people's talk with interest, but can easily be distracted by other things.

Start to say how they are feeling, using words as well as actions.

Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important.

Learn new vocabulary and use it. through the day.

Articulate their thoughts and ideas in well-formed sentences.

Describe events in some detail.

Develop social phrases.

Use new vocabulary in different contexts.

4. Assessment

We believe that monitoring the pupil's progress in Oracy will be a pivotal part of their development and success. Due to the nature of spoken language, we will use a range of tools to assess their knowledge and present their work, such as:

Spoken Language National Curriculum statements

The Oracy Progression Grid

Pupil and parent Voice

Whole-school presentations

Learning walks

5. Teaching and Learning Oracy at St John's

At St John's, pupils are taught Oracy skills during dedicated sessions, which are then used and embedded across the curriculum. During these sessions, the children are taught about discussion techniques, vocabulary and listening skills. They explore the use of exploratory talk and presentational talk and teachers understand how to use these appropriately based on where they are within a sequence of learning. We use the Oracy framework developed by Voice 21, which breaks Oracy into four strands:

Physical - Linguistic - Cognitive - Social and Emotional

The skills of oracy support all areas of learning. The skills are applicable whichever subject you teach. To be secure with the understanding of subject content, it is important that pupils are able to talk about what they are learning and use talk as a tool to develop their understanding.

See our separate documents for:

- Our progression for the primary age range.
- St John's Oracy framework and glossary

6. Oracy Toolkit to support our teaching of Oracy.

We have developed our own resources as well as adapted existing materials from Voice 21 (see separate document).

- Groupings
- Listening wheel
- Discussion guidelines
- Teacher Talk Tactics
- Student Talk Tactics

7. Presentational Oracy

Presentational skills are taught within lessons where children have the opportunity to share their work and ideas through performance poetry, assemblies, school productions and speech. We understand the different staring points of all pupils and adapt accordingly to suit their needs and ensure that their voices are valued, heard and nurtured. During presentation, the children are encouraged to consider their pitch, tone, pace, gestures, pace, body language and projection.

Oracy across the curriculum

Whilst new skills are taught explicitly when first introduced, they will become embedded in our curriculum as the children develop their fluency and confidence. We carefully plan for opportunities to talk and teachers are able to use their experience and knowledge to cultivate a talk-rich environment in their classroom. Questions are differentiated and planned to ensure full participation.

Oracy in English

As a school, we are committed to raising and maintaining high standards for literacy. We support our pupils by providing them with a range of skills to help them to:

Develop a rich vocabulary.

Participate in reasoned discussions.

Articulate and justify their answers.

Participate in role plays, presentations, discussions and debates.

Speak with appropriate volume and pitch with an increasing command of Standard English.

Give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes.

Oracy in Maths

Oracy is strongly embedded during Maths lessons to support the teaching of mathematical vocabulary, new concepts, support children in proving or justifying their answers to address misconceptions. Oracy has a particularly important role in reasoning lessons, which focus on the children using their vocabulary to communicate their understanding of mathematics accurately. Children work collaboratively to solve problems and use sentence stems to support discussion.

Classroom Displays

Each class shows Discussion Guidelines which include the student talk tactics and rules. These are created and agreed with the children using the models below:





St John's Oracy Journey:

This is our broad aim, more detail will be available in our school development plan.

2026-27 – Explicitly teach Oracy – example videos from year 6 teaching, introduce student talk tactics over time

2027-28 – Embed Oracy within the Curriculum

2028-29 – Develop a whole school culture of Oracy