Oracy Policy

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ORACY POLICY

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1. SUBJECT STATEMENT

Intent

Oracy is the golden thread that weaves together all teaching and learning. Speaking and listening underpin everything we do, in every subject of the curriculum. Oracy enables children to express their thoughts, feelings, understanding and ideas fluently. It also helps them to clarify their thinking and to understand new concepts.

As such, talk is essential to children's thinking and learning and to their productive engagement in classroom life, especially in the early and primary years. We believe spoken language to be fundamental to the achievement of the children at George Tomlinson Primary School.

At George Tomlinson Primary School, we believe:
- Oracy is the capacity to use speech to express our thoughts and communicate with others as outlined in the four strands of the Oracy Framework
- Teaching improves Oracy and Oracy improves teaching and learning
- Effective Oracy teaching and learning is purposeful, scaffolded and structured to deepen understanding and develop critical thinking
- Children and young people should become agile communicators who learn to navigate the expectations for Oracy in different contexts through the provision of a wide and varied curriculum
- Oracy is the responsibility of every teacher and the entitlement of every child.

Implementation

At George Tomlinson, Oracy lessons are taught in a cross-curricular method as speaking is at the heart of learning in all subjects (Phonics, Reading, English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Education, PSHE). Approaches such as Project Based Learning (PBL) also support pupils in their efforts in learning to talk and, retrospectively, talking to learn.

In 2019, George Tomlinson began to implement Voice 21's systematic of teaching Oracy: The Four Strands. We use this Oracy framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.

Cognitive – The deliberate application of thought to what you're saying
Linguistic – Knowing which words and phrases to use and using them
Physical – Making yourself heard, using your voice and body as an instrument
Social – Engaging with the people around you; knowing you have the right to speak

We plan talk for a range of purposes, consider its structure, implement necessary scaffolds and reflect throughout the process.

We believe that it is important to provide opportunities for talk that are both exploratory and presentational in nature. Lessons and units include both types, or may follow a progression from one type of talk to the other. Pupils are taught to apply their understanding of each type of talk and to evaluate their efforts.

Exploratory Talk - 'exploratory talk which is typical of the early stages of approaching new ideas […]is hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas, to hear how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns.'

Presentational Talk - 'The difference between the two functions of talk is that in presentational talk the speaker's attention is primarily focused on adjusting the language, content and manner to the needs of an audience, and in exploratory talk the speaker is more concerned with sorting out his or her own thoughts.' Barnes, 1992

The structure of talk is carefully selected to suit its purpose. Pupils are asked to work in different groupings (i.e. nest, pairs, trios, traverse, circles, etc.) varying in size, shape, rotation and with differing classmates.

Scaffolds are used thoughtfully to elevate the quality of talk. Examples of scaffolds include sentence stems, modelling, and key vocabulary. Scaffolding is a "process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (Wood, Bruner and Ross 1976, 90). A scaffold acts as a temporary supportive structure for a student to complete a task they otherwise could not have (Graves, Watts and Graves 1994, 44). As students become more confident, scaffolds will be needed less and less, until eventually they are not needed at all.

Discussion guidelines are created by each class and are displayed, rehearsed and referenced to at the beginning and during all discussions. Their guidelines reinforce the equal importance of both speaking and listening, as well as reinforce the 4 Strands of Oracy.

We believe that reflection upon talk is important in the development of metacognition. We strive to move children towards unconscious competence by having them reflect upon their talk using a range of methods and activities. Some methods include using a three stars and a wish model, a silent summariser, or a talk detective.

In an effort to further improve metacognition, pupils are also encouraged to choose their talk protocol. They may choose to use structures such as thumbs in, pass and go, or a chaired discussion. Upon completion of the activity, pupils evaluate whether the protocol they chose was the right choice or if there was another option that could have been better.

Talking roles are also given to improve the quality of exploratory talk. These roles include the instigator, builder, challenger, clarifier, prober and summariser. In Destination Reader, children also use a variation of these roles in lessons. Furthermore, these roles are utilised in the ABCs that are displayed and used throughout the school.

A) Agree – Do you agree with something that someone has said? Show this symbol to let them know and to give them support.
B) Build – Do you want to build-up on or add to something someone has said? Show this symbol and then explain your thinking.

C) Challenge – Do you disagree with something someone has said? Show this symbol to challenge them. Be prepared to explain why.

Assessment plays a key role in the development of Oracy. Both formative and summative assessments are used to track and ensure the progress of all pupils.

Impact

Children enjoy taking part in class debate and are able to articulate their point of view effectively. In KS1, children make good progress in Oracy and perform confidently in class assemblies and seasonal productions. In KS2, children perform confidently in class assemblies, GTTV (our YouTube channel) and Year 6 end of year production. Children are keen to participate and enjoy learning lines and performing in role. Children read expressively in whole class guided reading sessions, and know how to use their voice to express emotion. Class assemblies are well attended by parents, who enjoy the assemblies and always provide positive feedback to class teachers and school governors. Children are able to recite poetry by heart, and enjoy learning poems both at school and at home.

The successful teaching and learning of Oracy will also help meet our school's key priorities:
- Develop pupil's oracy though exposure to high quality teacher language, texts and curricular schemes such as Philosophy 4 Children, Project Based Learning
- To empower children with social skills, resilience and oracy skills so that they are able to articulate their feelings and views clearly
- To teach and develop children's oracy skills along with their fluency and accuracy of spoken English

The impact of this policy will be evidenced through the monitoring of attainment and progress of all children by class teachers. Oracy skills will be assessed using the Oracy Framework.

The English Lead, SLT, Head teacher and link Governor will be responsible for monitoring the impact of this policy and standards of spoken language across the school, through work scrutiny, planning scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations and any other relevant monitoring activities.

It is every class teacher's responsibility to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

2. TEACHING AND LEARNING

EYFS
Oracy is at the heart of teaching and learning in EYFS and their In The Moment Planning (ITMP). Pupils are expected to speak to a partner during whole class teaching. Mock and real life experiences are provided for pupils to communicate for a range of purposes (i.e. taking pupils to the supermarket or post office to practice speaking to an unfamiliar adult to carry out a transaction). Pupils are also provided with opportunities to speak for an extended period of time about something they are interested in, for example a favourite toy or what they did at the weekend.

Pupils are given opportunities to take on different roles, ensuring they are equipped with the appropriate knowledge and vocabulary to do this successfully. E.g. A shopkeeper speaking to a customer might say 'How can I help you today?' 'Yes, let me get that for you. One moment'. We ensure that pupils are given specific praise when they adopt a role and use language appropriately. E.g. 'Wow you sounded just like a grown up shopkeeper!' Teachers support pupils' understanding of turn-taking in talk by using a physical object such as a toy to signify whose turn it is to speak. Teachers also support pupils' understanding of listening through partner conversations. They break down what it means to listen and frequently return to this through praise. E.g. 'Perfect partners sit calmly and face each other when they are listening'. New language and sentence stems are introduced through call and repeat, 'my turn, your turn'. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of the volume of their voice through modelling and chances for them to practice speaking at different levels. E.g. 'tell your partner what you had for breakfast in a whisper … now tell me your favourite colour in a playground voice!' Throughout this period of time, pupils' confidence to speak in class builds by getting them talking about silly subjects, e.g. would you rather be a chicken or a cow?

Year 1
In Year 1, pupils are expected to take part in small group discussions without an adult. They may be filmed speaking and use this for reflection. They will also be given opportunities to speak in front of a larger audience e.g. during an assembly.

Pupils are introduced to different protocols to scaffold turn-taking e.g. putting a thumb in when they want to speak, or taking turns passing talk around a circle. The use of visual aids support pupils' awareness of talk e.g. using counters to represent contributions to a discussion or passing wool from speaker to speaker to show how contributions in a conversation should link to each other. Pupils are introduced to the roles of the 'builder' and 'challenger'. Pupils are provided sentence stems to fulfil each role. Teachers explicitly model their own use of questions to clarify their understanding, e.g. 'I didn't understand that so I'm going to ask a question to help me. What did you mean by X?' Pupils' attention is drawn to the role that listening has in developing understanding. E.g. 'Now that we have heard that, has anyone changed their mind?'

Year 2
In Year 2, pupils speak to unfamiliar people with real purpose e.g. asking questions to a museum curator or having a conversation with a visitor in the classroom. Pupils can tell others about what they're learning.

Sentence stems are introduced with accompanying gestures to support meaning for both speaker and their audience. E.g. linking fingers together for 'linking to' and holding up one finger to emphasise their first point. Different role play scenarios are created which enable pupils to practice speaking in different contexts e.g. having tea with the Queen, talking to a sibling, talking to a neighbour or a friend on the playground. Games are played which encourage pupils to elaborate on their ideas, e.g. 'tell me more' or 'just a minute'. Pupils use hot-seating and question tennis to develop pupils' questioning skills. Pupils are praised when they invite others into discussions and as a class develop ideas for how this can be done, e.g. saying their name, asking them a question, turning to them. Before students deliver presentational talk, they create structured opportunities for pupils to reflect on what will engage their audience e.g. how can they make their object for 'show and tell' interesting for their peers.

Year 3

In Year 3, pupils can adapt the content of their speech for a specific audience. They can speak with confidence in front of an audience.

Pupils are exposed to a range of models for talk, e.g. by meeting an expert or watching a talk online. Pupils can unpick why each speaker is successful e.g. how they establish their authority. Pupils develop a shared language to describe talk in the classroom through creating a class set of 'discussion guidelines'. These can be used as success criteria to support pupils to reflect on their discussions. The use of 'Talk Detectives' is used to support pupils to reflect on their talk and raise pupils' awareness of what makes good discussion. Time is spent teaching pupils what it means to be a chair, e.g. a chair should be prepared to ask probing and clarifying questions and encourage others to do so too. Pupils' scaffolded summaries are made by allocating one student in a trio discussion the role of the 'silent summariser'. While the other members of the trio discuss an idea, the silent summariser must remain quiet, listen and then feedback the main points at the end of the discussion. Pupils play 'articulate' with specialist subject vocabulary.

Year 4

In Year 4, pupils use talk for a specific purpose e.g. to persuade or to entertain. Pupils speak in front of a larger audience of adults e.g. a group of eight. Pupils can work together to collaboratively solve a problem. They can speak with an unknown adult for a specific purpose, e.g. for market research or making an order. Pupils can take on feedback from a peer or audience member on their Oracy skills. Pupils create TV or Radio adverts. Pupils can teach their peers appropriately. They can also memorise and perform poetry to the class.

Pupils use sentence stems to cite evidence and ask probing questions. Teachers teach the conventions for different types of talk, e.g. in oral storytelling using similes, metaphors, time connectives, rich description and techniques to build suspense. In a persuasive pitch using a 'hook' to grab the audience's attention, rhetorical devices such as a list of three and rhetorical questions. Opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their own Oracy skills and those of their peers, and set targets for improvement. Discussions are set up where each pupil has key information to bring to the discussion e.g. each pupil has read a different historical source or piece of evidence and the group needs to decide the cause of the central event. When using trio discussions, one member of the trio is allocated the role of questioner. Their sole responsibility during the trio discussion is to ask questions of the rest of the group.

Year 5

Year 5 pupils can create videos for a range of purposes (i.e. to inform or to persuade). Pupils can also hold events for parents and take on various roles in PBL. Pupils are provided with opportunities to meet professionals e.g. a lawyer, an MP or councillor to ask questions about their job. Pupils are also expected to reflect upon their progress leading up to parents' evening. Pupils may act as judges for school competitions. Pupils perform an even wider range of poetry, including lengthier pieces. Year 5 pupils can tell jokes to an audience.

Pupils are equipped with the language to describe when a discussion has gone off track and support them to identify when this has happened e.g. by looking at transcripts or video examples. Sentence

stems are developed for students to bring discussions back on track e.g. 'That might be true, however what do you think about X?' 'It feels a bit like we are going off topic here. Let's get back to X'. Teachers provide pupils with strategies to be able to listen for an extended period of time, e.g. note-taking or drawing visuals. Pupils use vocal warm ups and diaphragm breathing exercises to support voice projection. Pupils develop a bank of sentence stems which have a similar meaning to those students are already familiar with e.g. for agreement: 'I agree and I would like to add …' 'I would like to echo what X said because …' 'I see it in a similar way to X because …' 'I have a similar opinion because …'

Year 6
In Year 6, pupils are able to use humour effectively. Pupils are able to read a room or a group and take action accordingly e.g. if everyone looks disengaged, moving on or changing topic, or if people look confused stopping to take questions.

Pupils may play games like 'just a minute' to practise fluency when talking about a given topic e.g. climate change. Pupils practise 'power poses' to explore physical aspects of speaking. Pupils are taught structures for building evidence-based arguments. At the end of the year, Year 6 pupils deliver their annual end of year performance to the school.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the Oracy curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, and ability, or of any physical or sensory disability.

4. INCLUSION

In a classroom where every voice is valued, it is not just the loudest, most confident or most eager to contribute that are heard. The teacher appreciates the diversity of communication and language, listening meaningfully and supporting all pupils to develop, expand and extend their ideas and their verbal and linguistic repertoire. Pupils are taught how to listen to each other with courtesy and respect so that they all feel confident to contribute

SEND

All pupils can and should benefit from a focus on oracy in the classroom. However, as in most areas of learning, the teacher must be aware of the individual needs of their pupils, ensuring that they are supported to access the full breadth of the curriculum. To do this, teachers could, for example, consider how they group pupils, provide prompts for speaking and listening or resources for non-verbal students to contribute, or pre-teach key vocabulary. Where appropriate, teachers should liaise with specialists to inform teaching strategies and ensure their approaches complement and reinforce their work.

High quality oracy teaching demands that all pupils are explicitly taught the speaking and listening skills, rather than simply assuming that they arrive with them or will develop them as a matter of

course. An inclusive, talk-rich classroom should therefore benefit all pupils, including those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and other specific learning needs.

Effective oracy teaching enables pupils to practise speaking and listening, uses structured approaches which support participation and develops their metacognitive skills to identify when they do or do not understand something. This focus can, in turn, support with the better identification of students with SLCN, and the provision of support.

5. ASSESSMENT

Effective oracy teaching requires teachers to continually gauge (formatively assess) what their pupils have learned, and use this to judge what to teach next. To do this, the teacher must have a strong understanding of which facet of oracy they are developing and how they will know when their pupils have mastered it. The teacher has a central role in providing and promoting feedback, building up their pupils' metacognitive understanding of oracy. They must design tasks which support pupils to analyse and evaluate speaking and listening, teaching them the vocabulary needed to do this with precision. As a result, it should not only be the teacher, but also pupils, who are able to provide meaningful and useful feedback which supports them and their peers to make progress in oracy. Teachers must be attentive listeners and astute observers, building up an understanding of their pupils' oracy skills across a range of contexts.

Target Tracker formative statements for speaking and listening are updated throughout the year and summative steps are updated three times a year to track progress towards end of year expectations (see Assessment Policy).

6. THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER

The role of the subject leader in Oracy is to coordinate the teaching of reading across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure high quality reading provision for every child, including outstanding teaching and learning, effective use of resources and the highest standards of achievement for all.

Some key duties that the Oracy subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of Oracy in class books
- Learning walks and other lesson observations where necessary
- Planning and organising reading enrichment opportunities and competitions
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Liaising with SLT to help implement school improvement priorities
- Liaising with the school SENDCO to best support children with reading difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of Oracy