Gascoigne Primary School

Oracy Policy

Date agreed: xxxx   2025
Review Date: xxxx   2027

This policy, having been presented to, and agreed upon by the whole staff and Governors, will be distributed to:

- All teaching staff
- School governors

A copy of the policy will also be available in:

- The Staffroom
- The Head's office
- School web site

This will ensure that the policy is readily available to visiting teachers, support staff and parents.

1. Mission Statement

At Gascoigne, we believe oracy is a moral imperative not an educational choice. It empowers every child—regardless of background, language, or ability—to find their voice and participate fully in society. By embedding oracy in our culture, we nurture confident, compassionate communicators who can advocate for themselves, break down barriers, and thrive in the wider world to and in the future.

Intent

We believe spoken language to be fundamental to the achievement of our pupils. To ensure we are teaching oracy skills across the curriculum and providing our children with a range of oracy opportunities, and a variety of audiences, we have partnered with Voice 21 (a charity which aims to improve the teaching of oracy in schools). This project will ensure that teachers and leaders are equipped with the skills to develop oracy for teaching and learning, to plan for talk across the curriculum and to elevate speaking beyond the classroom. The project will build a culture of oracy within our school to support and develop our pupils' confidence, spoken language and written outcomes across and beyond the curriculum.

Our aim is to enable the children improve their levels of oracy so that all pupils are able to communicate effectively and confidently in front of any type of audience. These skills are being encouraged in every area of our curriculum as good communication skills can enhance every type of learning. The children are encouraged to explore ideas through talk; challenge each other's opinions and develop their own reasoned arguments, as well as talking in full sentences with a clear and confident voice.

Many of our pupils start early school life without the oracy skills relevant for their age. We strive to develop spoken language skills through the taught curriculum, the hidden curriculum, playtimes and lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities and the whole ethos of the school. Respectful and productive relationships between all who form part of the school community are crucial aspects of this ethos. As a staff, we therefore foster good communication amongst ourselves and with our pupils, their

parents and carers, and with the wider community. We place a high priority on supporting the development of good speaking and listening skills amongst our pupils.

Our oracy curriculum will enable children to:

- speak with confidence, clarity and fluency;
- recognise the value of listening;
- be confident in the value of their own opinions and to be able to express them to others;
- adapt their use of language for a range of different purposes and audiences, including using Standard English;
- sustain a logical argument and respond to others appropriately;
- concentrate, interpret and respond appropriately to a wide range of listening experiences;
- be open-minded, to value the contribution of others and to take account of their views;
- appreciate the diversity of languages, dialects and accents in the school and value the experience and contributions of children with a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds;
- share their learning in an engaging, informative way through formal presentations.

Implementation

Correct spoken language is fundamental to learning. From the first days in school, speaking and listening play a large part in a child's progress in all curriculum areas and teachers plan to develop these skills in a wide variety of ways. We aim to develop and encourage fluent speakers, who can confidently articulate their ideas in a wide range of situations.

Pupils should have a range of planned oracy experiences (this is not an exhaustive list), which include:
- drama;
- talking partners;
- listening to stories;
- reading lessons;
- preparation for writing;
- visiting speakers;
- giving and receiving instructions;
- paired/collaborative work;
- problem solving in maths;
- presentation of learning;
- plan, do review sessions.

It should also be recognised that there are opportunities for children to develop their oracy skills outside of the curriculum, including (but not limited to):
- assemblies, including class assemblies;
- school council and other pupil voice activities;
- topic showcase events;
- extra-curricular and year group productions;
- participating in out of school events.

Impact
The impact of this policy will be evidenced through the monitoring of attainment and progress of all children by class teachers. Each year group has oracy objectives which build on the preceding years' study to ensure progression in this area as children move through the school.
The Progression in Oracy document is available on the school's website.
The Oracy leaders, SLT, Headteachers and link Governor will be responsible for monitoring the impact of this policy and standards of listening and spoken language across the school, through work scrutiny, planning scrutiny, learning walks, lesson drop-ins, pupil voice and any other relevant monitoring activities.

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 o Participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play/improvisations and debates
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s) o 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 Framework Progression document**
- Discussion Guidelines
- Protocols (linked to turn-taking / good listening etc.)
- Teacher Talk Tactics / Pupil Talk Tactics
- Sentence stems and scaffolds
- Appropriate stickers to clearly evidence the strategies used

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 EYFS Framework and all of our work evolves around the children's ability to communicate and understand the wider world. We believe that in order to achieve in all areas of the curriculum, the pupils must meet their communication and language goals first.

The framework is divided into the following key areas:
- **Communication and Language**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Physical Development**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

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 develop conversation, often jumping from topic to topic.
- Start to say how they are feeling, using words as well as actions.

- o Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important.
- o Learn new vocabulary.
- o Use new vocabulary through the day.
- o Articulate their thoughts and ideas in well-formed sentences.
- o Describe events in some detail.
- o Develop social phrases.
- o 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:

- o The Oracy Framework Progression document
- o Pupil Voice
- o Parent Voice
- o Whole-school presentations
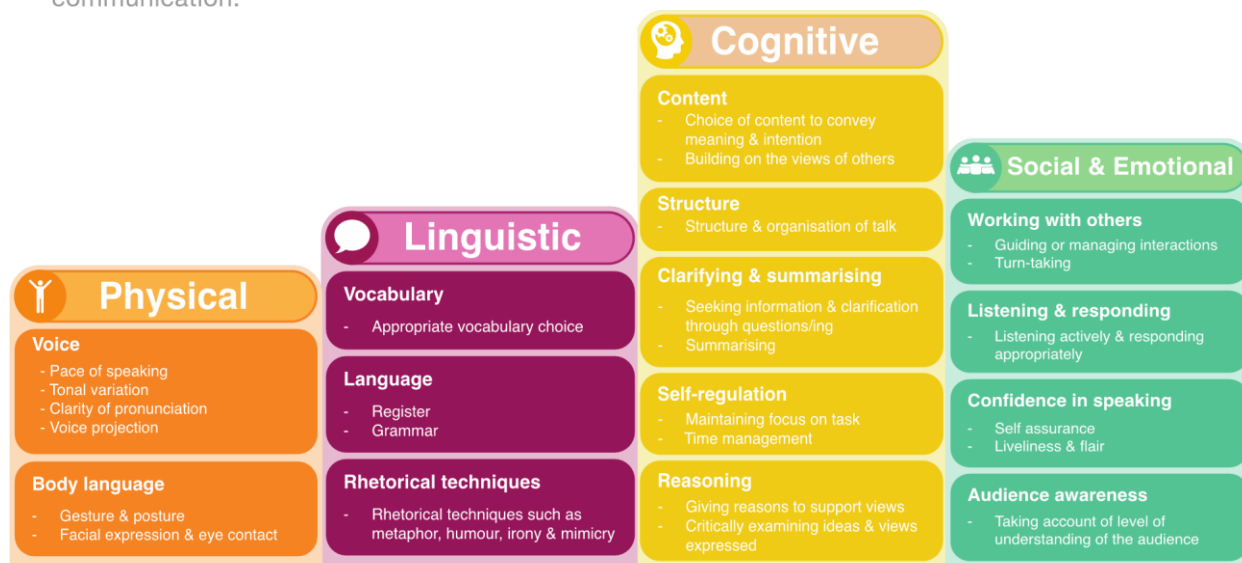- o Debates
- o Technology
- o Learning walks

5. Teaching and Learning – The Primary Oracy Framework

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: o Physical o Linguistic o Cognitive o Social and Emotional

Use the oracy framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.

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Cognitive

Content
- Choice of content to convey meaning & intention
- Building on the views of others

Structure
- Structure & organisation of talk

Clarifying & summarising
- Seeking information & clarification through questions/ing
- Summarising

Self-regulation
- Maintaining focus on task
- Time management

Reasoning
- Giving reasons to support views
- Critically examining ideas & views expressed

Social & Emotional

Working with others
- Guiding or managing interactions
- Turn-taking

Listening & responding
- Listening actively & responding appropriately

Confidence in speaking
- Self assurance
- Liveliness & flair

Audience awareness
- Taking account of level of understanding of the audience

Linguistic

Vocabulary
- Appropriate vocabulary choice

Language
- Register
- Grammar

Rhetorical techniques
- Rhetorical techniques such as metaphor, humour, irony & mimicry

Physical

Voice
- Pace of speaking
- Tonal variation
- Clarity of pronunciation
- Voice projection

Body language
- Gesture & posture
- Facial expression & eye contact

© Voice 21 2019 developed in partnership with Oracy Cambridge. Voice 21 operates as an organisation under the School 21 Foundation, a registered charity in England and Wales, registration number 1152672

6. Oracy Toolkit

To support our teaching of Oracy, we have developed our own resources as well as adapted existing materials.

6.1 Discussion Guidelines

These are a set of guidelines for partner and group discussions that help maintain an effective and respectful environment for talk.

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

WE GIVE PROOF OF LISTENING

WE RESPECT OTHERS' IDEAS

WE BUILD, CHALLENGE, SUMMARISE, CLARIFY, AND PROBE EACH OTHER'S IDEAS

WE ARE PREPARED TO CHANGE OUR MIND

WE INVITE OTHERS INTO OUR DISCUSSION

WE TRY TO REACH A SHARED AGREEMENT

6.2 Sentence stems

These sentence stems support the children to articulate their answers orally, as well as in writing.

Sentence Stems Bank	
To predict	I predict that... I think this will be about... I think the effect will be...
To compare and contrast	On the other hand... Another difference is that... In contrast... Similarly, I think...
To evaluate	Overall, I think... In my opinion... On the one hand... but on the other hand... On balance, I think...
To explain	This is because... It is evident that... because... It is clear that... because The reason for this is...
To sequence	First,... To begin with... Second, ... Then,... After,...

6.3 Talking Roles

We believe that it is very important for children to understand their role in a discussion and how to use vocabulary to communicate this effectively.

Talk roles: language progression

Talking Roles

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Instigator
The person who starts the discussion
Will say:
"I would like to start by saying..."
"I think the first thing we should consider is..."
"To begin with let's talk about..."

Builder
Develops, adds to or runs with an idea
Will say:
"I agree and I'd like to add..."
"Linking to your point..."
"Building on that idea..."

Challenger
Disagrees with or presents an alternative argument
Will say:
"That's true, but have you considered..."
"You mentioned X but what about..."
"I hear what you're saying, but..."

Clarifier
Makes things clearer and simplifies ideas by asking questions
Will say:
"What do you mean when you say..."
"Could you tell me more about..."
"Does that mean that..."

Prober
Digs deeper into the argument, asks for evidence or justification of ideas
Will say:
"What evidence do you have to support that?"
"How does that support your argument?"
"How did you come to that conclusion?"

Summariser
Presents reflections on the discussion. May offer a conclusion or balanced assessment of the main points
Will say:
"Overall, the main points covered were..."
"In summary..."
"From today's discussion, it's clear that..."

Student Talk Tactics

Instigate
Present an idea or open up a new line of inquiry

❝ I would like to start by saying ____

❝ I think ____

❝ We haven't yet talked about ____

Instigate

Probe
Dig deeper, ask for evidence or justification of ideas

❝ Why do you think ____?

❝ What evidence do you have to support X idea?

❝ Could you provide an example?

Probe

Challenge
Disagree or present an alternative argument

❝ I disagree because ____

❝ To challenge you X, I think ____

❝ I understand your point of view, but have you thought about ____?

Challenge

Clarify
Asking questions to make things clearer and check your understanding

❝ So are you saying ____?

❝ Does that mean ____?

❝ Can you clarify what you mean by ____?

Clarify

Summarise
Identify and recap the main ideas

❝ So far we have talked about ____

❝ The main points raised today were ____

❝ Our discussion focused on ____

Summarise

Build
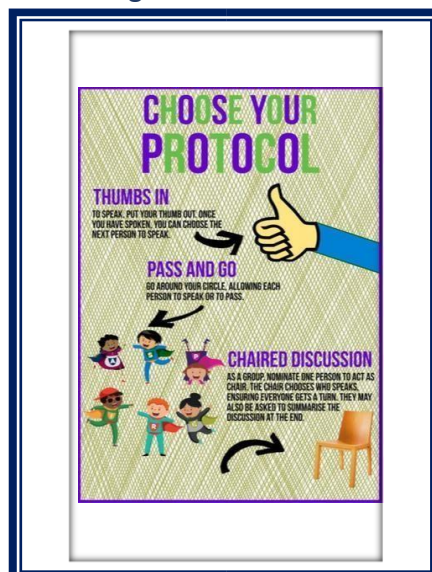Develop, add to or elaborate on an idea.

❝ Building on X's idea ____

❝ I agree and would like to add ____

❝ X's idea made me think ____

Build

6.4 Talk Protocols

Talk protocols allow children to self-govern talk

6.5 Talk Detectives

Talk detective enable children to identify different Oracy skills used during a discussion.

	Strand	Person or group name
Physical	and clearly? Are they speaking loudly Are they using hand gestures?	
Cognitive	Are they giving reasons for their opinions? Are they asking questions?	
Linguistic	Are they using ambitious vocabulary?	
Social & Emotional	speaker? Are they tracking the Are they making sure everyone gets a turn to speak?	

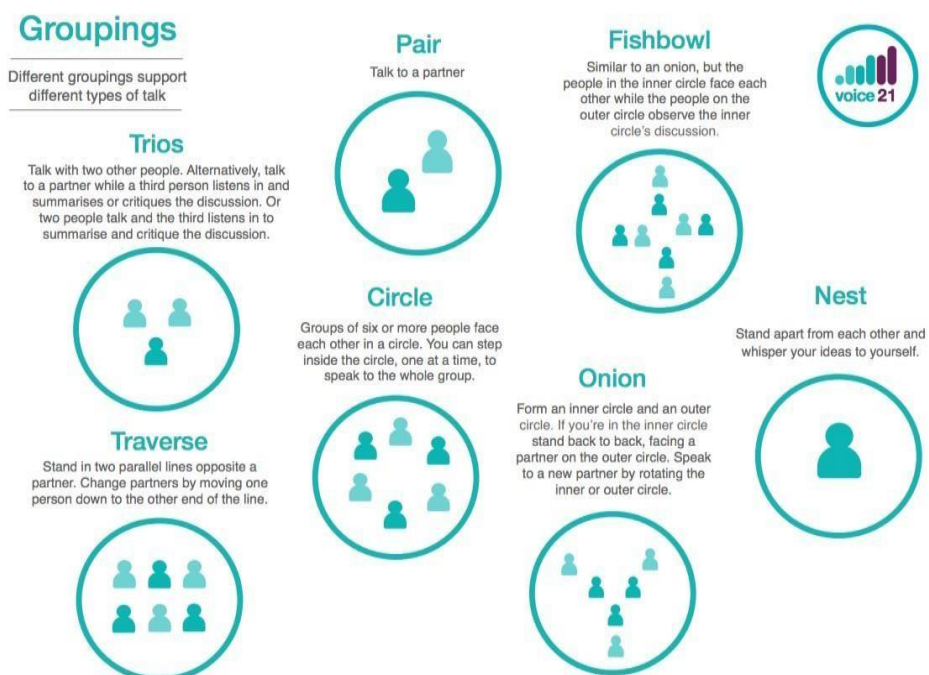|	Person or group name
Invited someone else to contribute	
Challenged a group member	
Summarised a group member's ideas	
Clarified somebody in their group's ideas	
Built on somebody else's ideas	
Changed their mind	
Came to a shared agreement	

6.6 Vocabulary Bullseye

This activity is based on teaching new vocabulary and it can also be used to develop peer feedback on writing.
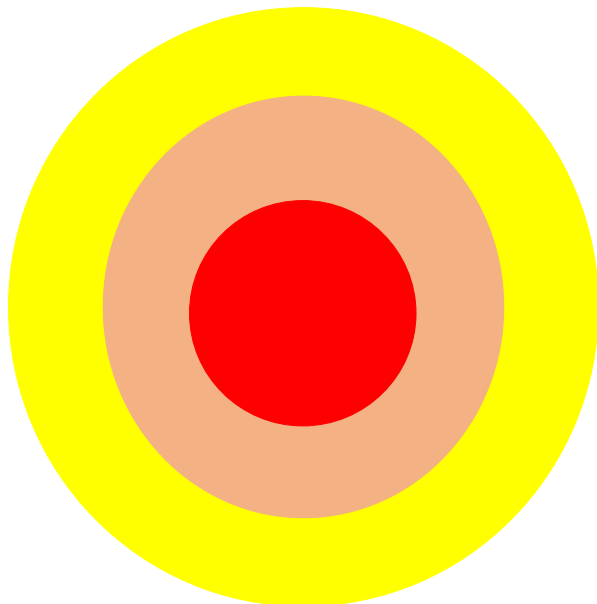
	Tally	Total
1 point		
2 points		
5 points		

6.7 Groupings

Groupings enable children to explore different types of talk and communicate for different purposes.

Groupings

Different groupings support different types of talk

Trios
Talk with two other people. Alternatively, talk to a partner while a third person listens in and summarises or critiques the discussion. Or two people talk and the third listens in to summarise and critique the discussion.

Traverse
Stand in two parallel lines opposite a partner. Change partners by moving one person down to the other end of the line.

Pair
Talk to a partner

Circle
Groups of six or more people face each other in a circle. You can step inside the circle, one at a time, to speak to the whole group.

Fishbowl
Similar to an onion, but the people in the inner circle face each other while the people on the outer circle observe the inner circle's discussion.

Onion
Form an inner circle and an outer circle. If you're in the inner circle stand back to back, facing a partner on the outer circle. Speak to a new partner by rotating the inner or outer circle.

Nest
Stand apart from each other and whisper your ideas to yourself.

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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.

7. Learning environment

Each classroom has working walls which contribute to promoting subject-specific vocabulary development for English, Maths, History, Geography and Science. In addition, Oracy Tools (sentence stems, rules for talk / roles for talk) are displayed in the classroom.

8. Celebrating Oracy

Oracy is rewarded with Marvellous Me points across the school. A weekly Oracy Master certificate is given out in the Year Group/ SLT assembly.

9. Inclusion

We have a strong understanding of the different starting points of our pupils and we value all forms of communication to ensure that everyone feels heard, included, valued and supported.

Children with additional needs are encouraged to take a full and active part in spoken language activities at a level appropriate for their needs. Some pupils access small group or individual sessions with a TA or teacher to encourage children to practise sentences. By actively encouraging children to use sentence stems and that the classroom is a safe place for talk and exploratory talk, we are finding more children are accessing talk. By having a strong focus on building vocabulary in all subjects and explicitly teaching vocabulary and modelling sentence stem use, children have something to start with and build upon.

Our Inclusion Managers and speech and language specialists work alongside our teachers to make recommendations to support pupils with special educational needs and advise on carefully tailored resources to provide scaffolds for talk and communication.

Speech and language targets are carefully set for pupils, (and included in the pupil passports), who need support and these are developed with expert advice from Inclusion Managers for maximum impact on the children's learning and development.

10. Rights Respecting School

We are a rights respecting school and ensure that every child has access to their rights. This policy supports Article 12 and 13 on the UN Convention of the rights of the child.
- Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.
- Article 13 (freedom of expression) Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.