



Oracy Policy

2025 - 2026

Oracy at St John Plessington Catholic College:

At St John Plessington Catholic College, oracy plays a prominent role in teaching and learning. The ability to listen actively, speak clearly and communicate articulately is seen as a fundamental part of the learning process. Critically, oracy underpins the development of reading and writing, and is key to ensuring progress in all subjects.

At SJP we strive to develop oracy skills through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and the whole ethos of the school. Oracy can be described as a combination of learning to talk and learning through talk. At SJP there is a shared understanding of how talk supports learning and children's social development

We believe that developing oracy provides our students with vital life skills. We aim to encourage fluent speakers, who are confident to communicate, debate and present in a wide range of situations.

Oracy is embedded throughout our broad and balanced curriculum, and is explicitly taught in dedicated oracy sessions during form time.. Lessons are talk-rich, and questions are carefully planned to ensure all children can fully participate. Pupils participate in a wide range of oracy activities which help them to develop confidence in spoken language. Some examples are:

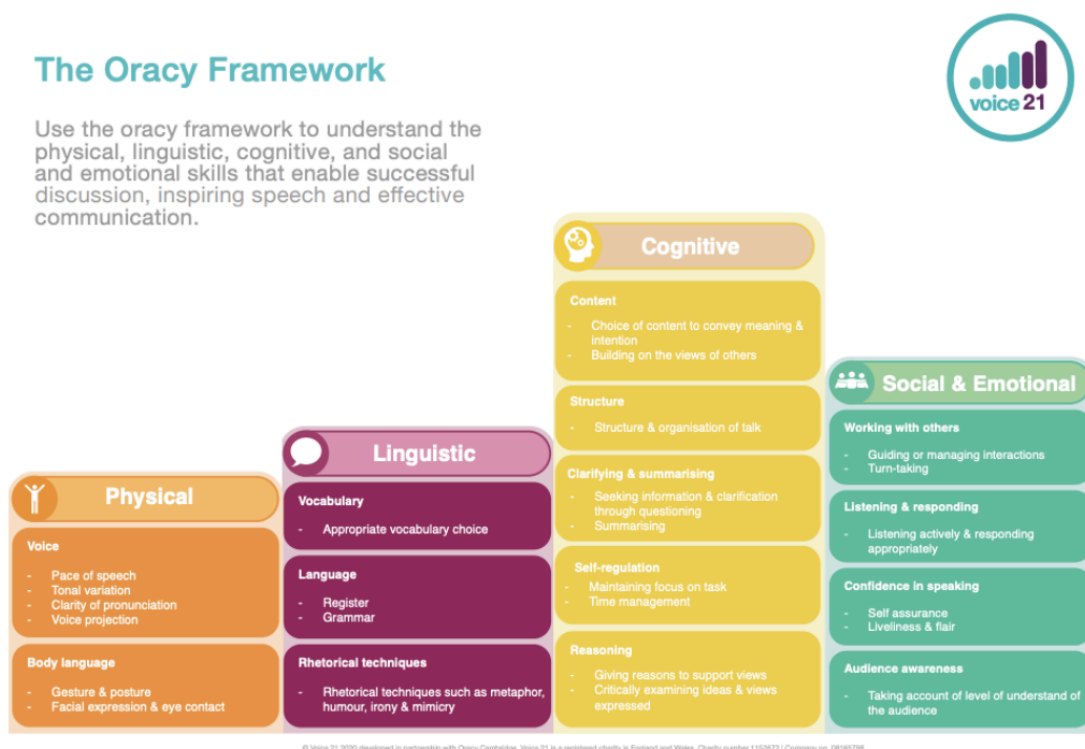
- Partner talk
- Group discussion
- Collaborative work and problem solving
- Debates
- Role play
- Drama
- Presentations
- Whole class debates
- Oracy Conference Days
- Think, Pair, Share tasks

There are opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy skills outside of the curriculum. This is achieved through pupil voice groups, whole-school productions, assemblies, visiting speakers, topic events and participation in local events.

Pupils are taught oracy skills during dedicated Oracy Conference Days, during which pupils are taught listening skills, vocabulary and discussion techniques. They have the opportunity to experience a range of talking styles, from exploratory talk to presentational talk.

At SJP we use the oracy framework that was developed by The University of Cambridge and Voice 21. This framework break oracy into four strands:

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Linguistic
- Social and Emotional



This framework allows both staff and pupils to understand what makes good spoken communication. The four strands enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication. The framework is used by staff to give feedback and assess progress. Pupils use the framework to self-assess, peer-assess and talk about talk.

Presentational Oracy

Presentational skills are taught explicitly within lessons in preparation for assemblies and performances. Pupils are given opportunities throughout the year to speak in front of an audience. Presentational assemblies, performance poetry, school productions and speeches are some examples of the presentation experiences our pupils are offered. Pupils learn the skills required using the oracy framework, and are given verbal feedback from teachers and peers. They consider pitch, tone, pace, gesture, body language and projection when rehearsing and preparing.

Oracy across the curriculum:

Oracy is incorporated across our broad and balanced curriculum to develop understanding and higher order thinking. Oracy supports pupils to make their thinking clear to themselves as well as others. Oracy is carefully planned into lessons. Questions are differentiated to ensure full participation and pupil discussions are scaffolded to ensure inclusive practice. Oracy skills that were originally mastered in discreet oracy lessons are now incorporated across the curriculum.

We also encourage discussion in curriculum areas by encouraging pupils to engage in discussion and speak like professionals from those curriculum areas. Pupils should be encouraged to ‘Speak like a Scientist... a Philosopher... a mathematician or a sportscoach’ giving them skills that they will use for life. This means that pupils should be encouraged to use subject specific language in lessons to encourage their use and understanding of tier 3 vocabulary.

We are a Unicef “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.

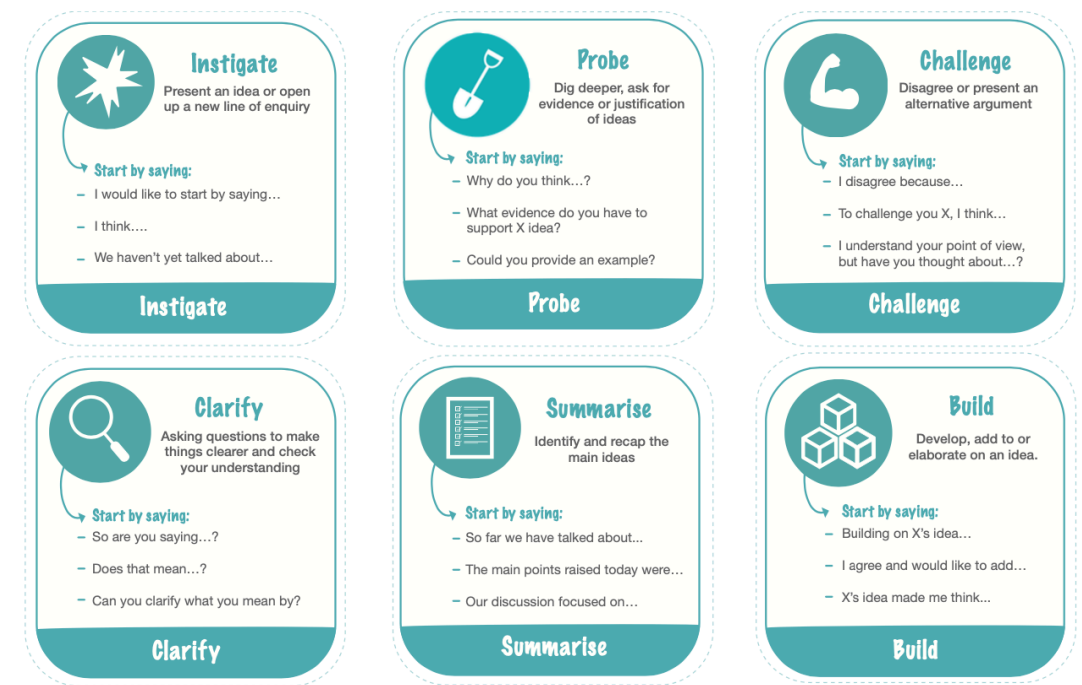
The aim of our Oracy (spoken language) work is to teach pupils to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings
- 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.

How is this implemented throughout school?

- Dedicated Oracy Conference Days for all pupils from KS3-KS5.
- Oracy throughout the curriculum - there is an expectation for pupils to have opportunities for using different talk tactics for whole class discussions as well as paired discussion and presentation
- We expect pupils to use full sentences when asking or answering questions in lessons
- We use talk tactics and “Oracy roles” to support pupils in group discussions/whole class debates



Links to support, research and CPD for staff:

- <https://voice21.org/>
- <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/the-importance-of-oracy-in-language-development>
- <http://robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/DfE-oracy-120220-Alexander-FINAL.pdf>
- <https://voice21.org/oracy-across-the-curriculum-the-evidence/>
- https://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/76321/1/R_alexander_improving_oracy.pdf
- <https://www.esu.org/oracy/>

- <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions>