



Barley Mow Primary School

Oracy Policy

Date Written: January 2026

By: Amy Raine

Adopted by Governors: March 2026

Date for Review: March 2028

This policy should be read in conjunction with school policies for English, Teaching and Learning, SEND, Inclusion and Assessment.

Vision

We want our students to feel safe, valued and respected when using their voice.

We want our students to be able to speak clearly, articulately and confidently; to be able to express their feelings and use talk to resolve conflict.

We want our students to know they will be listened to; how to speak to different audiences; how their body language and facial features can affect how what you are saying is perceived.

We want students to understand that their voice is as important as anyone else's and the importance of listening.

Rationale

At our school, we believe that the ability to effectively communicate, listen and feel listened to is fundamental to children's learning, thinking, wellbeing and future success. As a **Voice 21 school**, we place oracy at the heart of our curriculum and school culture. We recognise oracy as a powerful tool for learning, self-confidence and social mobility, enabling all pupils to find their voice and engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Oracy underpins achievement across all aspects of life as well as the curriculum. It supports children to develop confidence, resilience, and positive relationships which, in turn, leads to children to feel empowered and aspire to be the best that they can be. We are committed to creating a language-rich environment where all pupils are explicitly taught how to speak and listen effectively, in line with the **Voice 21 Oracy Framework (appendix 1)**.

Oracy is multi-faceted and it equips children with many different communication skills:

- Express ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly and confidently
- Listen actively and respond thoughtfully to others
- Develop vocabulary and language structures
- Reason, explain, and justify their thinking
- Participate respectfully in discussions and collaborative learning

Aims

The aims of our Oracy Policy are to ensure that all pupils develop a range of oracy skills:

- Develop confidence and competence in spoken language
- Use talk to support learning across all curriculum areas
- Learn to listen attentively and respectfully
- Build a wide and ambitious vocabulary
- Can adapt their speech for different purposes and audiences
- Advocate for themselves and others
- Safeguard themselves and others
- Are prepared for future education, employment, and everyday life in modern Britain

Definition of Oracy

In line with **Voice 21**, oracy is defined as the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding, and engage with others through spoken language. Effective oracy empowers pupils to speak with confidence, listen with purpose, and interact respectfully.

The **Voice 21 Oracy Framework** identifies four interrelated strands which underpin our approach to teaching, learning, and assessment:

1. **Physical** – voice projection, clarity, pace, intonation, gesture, and body language
2. **Linguistic** – vocabulary, grammar, and appropriate language choices
3. **Cognitive** – content, reasoning, structure, questioning, and explanation
4. **Social and Emotional** – listening, turn-taking, collaboration, confidence, and respect

These strands are explicitly taught, modelled, and revisited across the curriculum to ensure progression in pupils' spoken language skills.

Teaching and Learning

Curriculum Integration

Oracy is explicitly taught and embedded across the whole curriculum. Teachers plan purposeful opportunities for talk in every subject using a range of strategies (the list below is not exhaustive):

- Partner talk
- Small-group discussions
- Class discussions and debates
- Presentations and performances
- Role play and drama
- Storytelling and oral rehearsal

Classroom Practice

In line with Voice 21 pedagogy, teachers will plan **purposeful, structured talk** that is explicitly taught and carefully scaffolded. Teachers will set the benchmark for students through their own practice:

- Model high-quality spoken language and active listening
- Teach and reinforce agreed **discussion guidelines**
- Use Voice 21 **talk tactics** and strategies (e.g. think–pair–share, exploratory talk)
- Explicitly teach vocabulary and sentence structures
- Provide structured support such as sentence stems, talk frames, and role cards
- Create inclusive opportunities for all pupils to participate
- Value and build on pupils' contributions

Pupils will be taught how to:

- Speak clearly and audibly, adjusting voice for audience and purpose
- Listen actively and without interrupting
- Build on, challenge, and question others' ideas respectfully
- Take on different roles within group talk
- Reflect on and improve their oracy skills

To support pupils, we have developed progressive discussion promises which underpin the varied elements of oracy and support student success (**see appendix 2**).

Inclusive Practice

We recognise that pupils come with diverse language experiences. Oracy teaching supports:

- Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Appropriate scaffolding, visual support, pre-teaching of vocabulary and alternative communication methods will be used where necessary.

Assessment and Progression

Assessment of oracy is informed by the **Voice 21 Oracy Framework** and is primarily formative. Our expectations for how oracy skills progress can be found in **appendix 3**.

The school environment promotes oracy in a variety of ways:

- Language-rich classrooms
- Displays/scaffolds that model ambitious vocabulary and sentence structures
- Clear expectations for talk and listening
- Opportunities for talk beyond the classroom (assemblies, performances, school council)

Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting high standards of spoken language
- Modelling effective communication
- Creating safe and supportive environments for talk

Subject Leaders

Subject leaders play a vital role in monitoring and developing oracy skills and teaching:

- Ensure oracy opportunities are embedded within their subjects
- Ensure staff are supported with planning and resources.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor oracy across the curriculum:

- Promote the importance of oracy across the school
- Support professional development in oracy
- Monitor the implementation and impact of this policy.

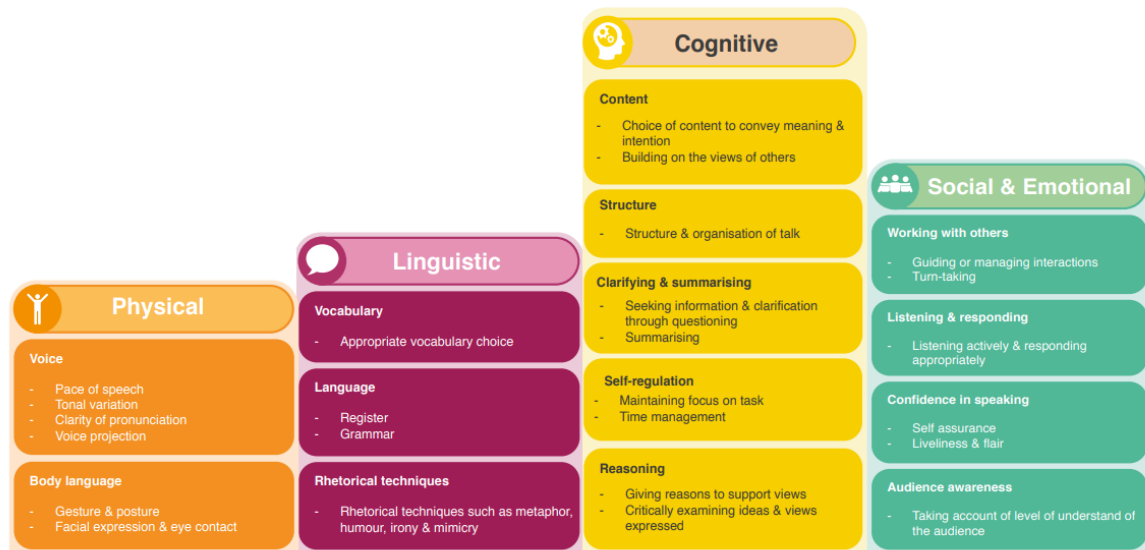
Monitoring and Review

The Oracy Policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects current best practice and the needs of our pupils.

Appendix 1 – The Oracy Framework

The Oracy Framework

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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Appendix 2 – Our School Discussion Promises

EYFS

Our Discussion Promises

We promise to...

- ☆ turn towards the speaker.
- ☆ take turns speaking.
- ☆ respect everyone's ideas.
- ☆ speak clearly.

Year 1-3

Our Discussion Promises

We promise to...

- ☆ turn towards the speaker.
- ☆ take turns speaking.
- ☆ acknowledge the speaker.
- ☆ respect everyone's ideas.
- ☆ speak clearly.


Year 4-5


Our Discussion Promises


We promise to...

- ☆ turn towards the speaker.
- ☆ take turns speaking.
- ☆ acknowledge the speaker.
- ☆ respect everyone's ideas.
- ☆ speak clearly and at the correct volume.
- ☆ think about what we are going to say before we speak.
- ☆ build on other people's ideas.

Appendix 3 - Oracy Progression

 Physical			
EYFS (3-5 YEARS)	RECEPTION (4-5 YEARS)	YEAR 1 (5-6 YEARS)	YEAR 2 (6-7 YEARS)
<p>To turn your body towards the speaker for an appropriate amount of time.</p> <p>To speak to be heard clearly by others.</p>	<p>To use gesture to support meaning in play.</p> <p>To speak audibly so they can be heard and understood.</p>	<p>To use body language to show listening.</p> <p>To experiment with adjusting tone, volume and pace.</p>	<p>To use gesture to support the delivery of ideas e.g. gesturing towards someone if referencing their idea.</p> <p>To speak clearly and confidently in a range of contexts.</p>
YEAR 3 (7-8 YEARS)	YEAR 4 (8-9 YEARS)	YEAR 5 (9-10 YEARS)	YEAR 6 (10-11 YEARS)
<p>To consider position and posture when addressing an audience.</p> <p>To experiment with adjusting tone, volume and pace for different audiences.</p>	<p>To consider movement when addressing an audience.</p> <p>To consider how tone, volume and pace influence meaning.</p>	<p>For body language to become increasingly natural.</p> <p>To project their voice to a large audience.</p>	<p>To have a stage presence.</p> <p>To adjust tone, volume and pace for a given purpose and audience.</p>

 Linguistic			
EYFS (3-5 YEARS)	RECEPTION (4-5 YEARS)	YEAR 1 (5-6 YEARS)	YEAR 2 (6-7 YEARS)
<p>To use talk in play to practise new vocabulary.</p> <p>To join phrases with words such as 'if', 'because' 'so' 'could' 'but'.</p>	<p>To use talk in play to practise new vocabulary.</p> <p>To join phrases with words such as 'if', 'because' 'so' 'could' 'but'.</p>	<p>To use vocabulary specific to the topic at hand.</p> <p>To take opportunities to try out new language.</p> <p>To use conjunctions to organise and sequence ideas e.g. firstly, secondly, finally.</p> <p>To use sentence stems to link to other's ideas in group discussion (e.g. 'I agree with... because ...')</p> <p>'Linking to ...')</p>	<p>To adapt how they speak in different situations according to audience.</p> <p>To use sentence stems to signal when they are building on or challenging others' ideas.</p> <p>To use newly learnt vocabulary in an appropriate way.</p>
YEAR 3 (7-8 YEARS)	YEAR 4 (8-9 YEARS)	YEAR 5 (9-10 YEARS)	YEAR 6 (10-11 YEARS)
<p>To begin to use specialist vocabulary.</p> <p>To be able to use specialist language to describe their own and others' talk.</p> <p>To begin to make precise language choices (e.g. describing a cake as 'delectable' instead of 'nice').</p>	<p>To carefully consider the words and phrasing they use to express their ideas and how this supports the purpose of talk.</p> <p>To use specialist vocabulary when discussing a known topic.</p>	<p>To use an increasingly sophisticated range of sentence stems with accuracy.</p> <p>To select specific vocabulary appropriate to the topic at hand.</p>	<p>To vary sentence structures and length for effect when speaking.</p> <p>To be comfortable using idiom and expressions.</p> <p>To use sophisticated vocabulary appropriate to the context and purpose of talk.</p>

 Cognitive			
EYFS (3-5 YEARS)	RECEPTION (4-5 YEARS)	YEAR 1 (5-6 YEARS)	YEAR 2 (6-7 YEARS)
<p>To begin to understand how and why questions.</p> <p>To use 'and' to link their ideas.</p> <p>To describe events currently happening and what might happen next.</p>	<p>To ask questions.</p> <p>To wonder about ideas.</p> <p>To use 'because' to develop their ideas.</p> <p>To describe events that have happened to them in detail.</p>	<p>To consider the merits of different viewpoints.</p> <p>To offer reasons for opinions.</p> <p>To disagree with someone else's opinion politely.</p> <p>To explain ideas and events in chronological order.</p>	<p>To ask questions to find out more about a subject.</p> <p>To build on others' ideas in discussions.</p> <p>To make connections between what has been said and their own and others' experiences.</p>
YEAR 3 (7-8 YEARS)	YEAR 4 (8-9 YEARS)	YEAR 5 (9-10 YEARS)	YEAR 6 (10-11 YEARS)
<p>To offer opinions that aren't their own.</p> <p>To reflect on discussions and identify how to improve.</p> <p>To be able to summarise a discussion.</p> <p>To reach shared agreement in discussions.</p>	<p>To be able to give supporting evidence e.g. citing a text, a previous example or a historical event.</p> <p>To ask probing questions.</p> <p>To reflect on their own oracy skills and identify areas of strength and areas to improve.</p>	<p>To be able to draw upon knowledge of the world to support their own point of view and explore different perspectives.</p> <p>To identify when a discussion is going off topic and to be able to bring it back on track.</p>	<p>To construct a detailed argument or complex narrative.</p> <p>To assess different viewpoints and present counter-arguments.</p> <p>To spontaneously respond to increasingly complex questions, citing evidence where appropriate.</p> <p>To acknowledge and explain changes of position.</p>



Social & Emotional

EYFS (3-5 YEARS)	RECEPTION (4-5 YEARS)	YEAR 1 (5-6 YEARS)	YEAR 2 (6-7 YEARS)
<p>To listen to others.</p> <p>To take turns to speak with the support of an adult.</p>	<p>To listen attentively in a pair or small group.</p> <p>To take turns to speak with a partner independently.</p>	<p>Listen carefully to others.</p> <p>To participate in group discussions independently of an adult.</p>	<p>To encourage everyone to contribute.</p> <p>To develop an awareness of audience, e.g. what might interest a certain group.</p> <p>Confident delivery of short pre- prepared material.</p>
YEAR 3 (7-8 YEARS)	YEAR 4 (8-9 YEARS)	YEAR 5 (9-10 YEARS)	YEAR 6 (10-11 YEARS)
<p>Listen actively, questioning and responding to others.</p> <p>To adapt the content of their speech for a specific audience.</p> <p>To speak with confidence in front of an audience.</p>	<p>To use more natural and subtle prompts for turn taking.</p> <p>To develop an awareness of audience.</p> <p>To consider the impact of their words on others when giving feedback.</p>	<p>Listening actively for extended periods of time.</p> <p>To speak with flair and passion.</p>	<p>To use humour effectively.</p> <p>To be able to read a room or a group and take action accordingly e.g. if everyone looks disengaged, moving on, or if people look confused stopping to take questions.</p> <p>To develop an awareness of group dynamics and invite those who haven't spoken to contribute.</p>