



*Opening up the world for our
children and families*

Oracy Policy

Date: December 2020

Review: December 2022

Opening up the world for our children and families

What is Oracy?

Oracy is our ability to communicate effectively using spoken language.
(Oracy APPG)

Intent

At Burrowmoor School, we are working together with our Trust and Oracy Cambridge to develop a whole-school Oracy curriculum as we believe that Oracy is the key to progress in all subjects. Our aim is for children to express themselves effectively - to speak eloquently, articulate ideas and thoughts, influence through talking, listen to others and have the confidence to express their views. We believe that by teaching our children that their voice has equal value, and will be heard, we are opening them up to the idea that the world is truly their oyster.

Implementation

Oracy can be described as a combination of learning to talk and learning through talk. At Burrowmoor, we plan to implement this in our school through:

- Introducing the idea of systematic and planned dialogic teaching in order to impact on children's Oracy skills and in turn their engagement and involvement in all lessons and learning.
- Providing ongoing, high-quality CPD to all staff, leading to them employing strategies that will enable pupils to reason, discuss, argue and explain rather than merely respond, in order to develop higher order thinking and articulacy.

We will develop Oracy within our school using (amongst others) the following ideas and approaches:

- **Guidelines for talk** – All children to generate these together as a class, adult to facilitate not lead. Guidelines to be clearly and centrally displayed, to be referred to regularly.
- **Groups** – Grouping children effectively to teach them how to initiate and sustain *exploratory talk*.
- **Groupings** – flexible based on our knowledge of the children – who to develop and how – based on reflection.
- **Seating plans** – Using Voice 21 resources to ‘play’ with seating/standing plans. (E.g the Harkness model and other ways of arranging groups to effectively generate and sustain discussion.)
- **Sentence stems** – Displayed and used in all lessons to scaffold children’s responses and peer interactions – MODELLED first by class adults.
- **Questioning** – Teachers not to just accept first response- re-frame and wait – all techniques from Oracy Cambridge
- **Wait time** – Allowing children time to think about their answers and not answering for them – teachers not to ‘fill the gap’, higher order thinking is developed as children respond to relevant questioning and time to arrange their thoughts.
- **Structured talk** – Using Voice 21 resources such as talk frames, would you rather, true or false etc. Children given ideas upon which to hang their own.
- **Talking points** – children given statements to interact with – true exploratory talk with constant reference back to class guidelines for talk to ensure all children have a voice that has value.
- **Explicit oracy skills teaching** – Teach children the skills explicitly before giving the opportunity to practise using them in discussions.
- **‘Add in’ information** – Use in all lessons – ‘what about this? Now read this next piece of information – has your opinion changed? ‘
- **Reflection time** – How did that go? Children to discuss their discussions – what do I need to work on? Both self and with peers.
- **Oracy Framework** – Use this to understand the strands of Oracy and how children can develop their subject knowledge by learning through talk and learning to talk.
- **The Oracy Benchmarks** – To be used across the school as a way to define and develop oracy teaching to enable every child to participate in and benefit from oracy in the classroom.
- **Powerful Words Project** – We are also participating in this project through the Opportunity Area. The biggest impact of this has been the ‘Mrs Wordsmith’ resources which explicitly teach tier 3 vocabulary across the school, with a focus on KS2 but we also have the KS1 resources and these have also been adapted in Nursery.

Impact

Oracy at Burrowmoor is in the initial stages of implementation. We have embarked on the journey and will continue to build on the successes seen so far through our 2020-21 School Development Plan.

The impact of recognising Oracy as underpinning our curriculum will be seen through the improved outcomes of our children – academically during school and beyond. Having Oracy skills, and being able to apply them in changing situations, will benefit our children in the wider world and raise their aspirations. Children will use talk to discover, they will have deeper subject knowledge, be more eloquent due to their high-level vocabulary and will have teachers who explore alongside them.