



**MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL  
SPOKEN LANGUAGE POLICY  
MAY 2022**

## **Intent**

The ability to speak and listen is fundamental to pupils' language and social development; it is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum as talk underpins learning and thinking and the development of reading and writing. It is vital that its significance is recognised by pupils, parents and carers and teachers. Pupils need to be provided with varied contexts for talk, but they also need direct teaching in the skills of speaking and listening. This is especially important with our children as many speak English as an additional language and many begin school with lower-than-expected levels of communication skills.

We aim to enable children to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and audibly using standard English. They will develop the ability to carefully organise thoughts before speaking (this is to clarify their thinking and also to help to organise their ideas for writing) and listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard. Children will take account of the audience and so select the appropriate register for effective communication.

## **Implementation**

Spoken language will be taught through the following contexts:

- Speaking - *To develop oracy skills to speak competently and creatively for different purposes and audiences, reflecting on impact and response when presenting. To explore, develop and sustain ideas through talk. To learn and practise the use of new vocabulary.*
- Listening and responding - *To understand, recall and respond to speakers' implicit and explicit meanings. To gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener. To consider and evaluate different viewpoints. To explain and comment on speakers' use of language, including vocabulary, grammar and non-verbal cues.*
- Group discussion and interaction - *To take different roles in groups to develop thinking and complete tasks; to debate and discuss. To participate in conversation, making appropriate contributions building on others' suggestions and responses using strategies such as the 'rainbow' techniques or 'jigsaw' groups.*
- Drama - *To use dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts, using hot-seating, freeze-framing or the 'conscience alley'. To create, share, rehearse and evaluate ideas and understanding through drama.*

## **Planning**

All year groups will include Spoken language activities on the weekly English Smart file planning. Much of the Power of Reading scheme uses drama and other spoken language activities to immerse the children in a text in preparation for writing. The activities will be explained in detail in the planning.

In the FSU weekly planning, new vocabulary is highlighted from the books that are read and worked on through the week. Children repeat these words and are encouraged to use these words in sentences in order to embed and understand them.

From Foundation Stage to Year Six, we will use the strategies devised by Pie Corbett through, 'Talk for Writing'. Texts will be mapped and learnt. Children will innovate the text and then produce their own text. This demonstrates spoken language, clarifying thinking and organising ideas for writing. Throughout the school year, all classes will use the 'Talk for Writing' teaching sequence when appropriate. As we have recently completed a 2-year programme with Voice 21, their Voice

21 Exchange provides lots of helpful seminars and resources for teachers to use in their planning and practise.

Each half term, every class will present, 'Work to be proud of' in the assembly on a Friday. All children throughout the school will be involved in a key stage production once a year. We will insist on high standards of oral presentations from the children at all times be that to the whole school, the class or another child/adult. We encourage children to stand up in class when they are presenting work or sharing ideas. This will give them time to compose themselves and raise the profile of what they have to say. We expect children and adults to speak clearly, audibly and in grammatically correct English at all times.

### **Spoken Language in the Foundation Stage**

The following activities will be used through the week to develop the children's speaking and listening skills:

- Books with repetitive text - *The children have the book read to them repeatedly with them joining in with the phrases. These books are also sent home with the children to encourage the retelling of the story in a wide range of settings.*
- 'Chatterwall' - *Within each book, words are chosen which are new to the children or interesting. They are added to the 'chatterwall'. One of these words is explored in detail in a 'Word Magic' activity, requiring children to think about the meaning of the word and questioning what they know about it.*
- Retelling the weekly story in a variety of ways - *Story mapping, using objects to retell the story, or changing characters or settings from the story but keeping the general language the same encouraging longer utterances.*
- 'Sentence building' - *Talking about a picture from the weekly story, deciding on a basic sentence which is written down by the teacher, the children are encouraged to add more interesting words, each time repeating the new sentence.*
- 'Conversations' - *Objects or pictures from the book are used to encourage children to talk about what they can see, what they have got, or what they think might happen next. Teachers model a sentence starter for the children to use and they repeat and extend upon that with their talking buddy.*

### **Differentiation**

Class teachers provide for the particular abilities for each pupil using one or a combination of the following teaching strategies:

- Adults modelling dialogue and correct use of grammar
- Adults modelling listening (the use of non-verbal communication - respecting, even if disagreeing with the views of others)
- Adults modelling values (e.g. encouraging the participation of reticent pupils)
- Adults modelling participation (e.g. recognising the value of being seen as a learner alongside the pupils)
- Adults model effective communication particularly in the Foundation Stage. Don't just ask children questions. Instead use comments, introduce new vocabulary, follow their line of interest, give them time to answer and time to rehearse any talk
- Working in a small group with an adult
- Using resources such as key vocabulary lists, prompts

- Pupil groupings
- Extra time to pre-visit words, objects or subjects to be used during lessons
- As much as possible, identify children in advance who are going to orally share work with the class so that they have time to prepare themselves
- Give the children time to speak and insist on positive body language, eye contact, clarity and grammatically correct talk.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We endeavour to create a climate where all children can develop as confident speakers and listeners. Equality of opportunity is a high priority and Mellers Policy for Equal Opportunity gives guidance on how this is achieved. Equal opportunities will be developed wherever possible and be an integral aspect of all teaching. As we are a school where a considerable number of children use English as a second language and we are very culturally diverse, staff make every effort to ensure work is accessible to all and use stimuli that reflect this and draw on pupils' own experiences. We emphasise the importance of spoken language activities. For children that are new to English, we provide small group work with a specialist teacher several times a week, depending on need. We encourage the children to use their first language in school, when appropriate. We want children to know that we value their home language.

### **Special Educational Needs**

We teach Spoken language to all children, whatever their ability. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Children who are included on the Special Needs Register are supported in their work through Individual Education Plans, monitored by the class teacher and Special Needs Co-ordinator. Every effort is made to obtain additional support in relation to the Code of Practice. Children with specific speech and auditory problems are identified and specialist help sought when appropriate.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- Using texts that children can read and understand
- Using visual and written materials in different formats
- Using computers and other technological aids and taped materials
- Using alternative communication such as signs and symbols
- Using translators and amanuenses

Pupils working on fast stream targets and those identified as 'more able and talented' will be provided with suitable challenging tasks to develop their skills in all areas including speaking and listening. The Primary Parliament, debating festival and school productions provide opportunities for children who are gifted and talented in oracy to be challenged and to perform in front of large and unfamiliar audiences.

### **Computing**

The use of computers enables children to use and apply their developing skills in a variety of ways. Teachers use interactive white boards to stimulate children. Children research topics and use computers, particularly the internet as a source of information. Evidence of spoken language activities can be stored on Dictaphones, computers or CD-ROMs.

### **Resources**

We follow the programmes of study from the National Curriculum and The Early Years Foundation Stage Document, 'Ages and Stages'. We access resources from the Voice 21 website.

### **Cross Curricular Themes**

Spoken language skills are essential for progression in all areas of the curriculum. The children's skills enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. We encourage children to take part in class and group discussions to express their opinions on topical issues which often take place in PSHE and Citizenship. Circle time is an activity which our children benefit greatly from. All children are given the opportunity to represent their class on the School Council and regular Class Council meetings are held in every class. Children discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views. Drama activities provide the ideal vehicle for teaching and exploring a historical event, character or geographical or scientific concept. Classes perform in their own assemblies several times a year. All teachers regularly make use of Talk Partners in the course of their regular class-based work. Children are provided with regular opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through visiting theatre companies, storytellers etc. Through all subjects, there is specific teaching and learning of spoken language.

### **Assessment and record keeping**

Children are assessed on entry to the Foundation Unit. They are then assessed termly within the unit to recognise both progress made and areas for development. This also helps to highlight children who are having specific speech difficulties and who need extra support.

### **Subject Monitoring**

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader has specially-allocated time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. Observations of the teaching and learning of speaking and listening will also be carried out through other subject monitoring, for example the monitoring of EMA work. There is a named governor responsible for English.

### **Impact**

The following criteria throughout Key Stage One and Two is used for assessing children's achievements:

- The effectiveness of their talk, including adaptation to purpose, context and audience
- Contributions that show positive and flexible work in groups responding positively and appropriately to other children
- Clarity in communicating, including the use of reasons, clear sequences of ideas and use of Standard English

It is best for staff to collect evidence when:

- Activities have been specifically set up to teach speaking and listening
- Activities include mainly oral or group work which is cross-curricular or related to English
- A child excels in his/her contribution to the lesson

Notes can be made by the teacher or other adults when or soon after the activity. Work can be recorded, when appropriate. Comments about the child's progress in spoken language by the class teacher are included in the child's end of year report. Records and information are passed onto the next teacher.

### **Policy Monitoring**

The policy will be reviewed and revised on a yearly cycle by the subject co-ordinator.

Compiled by: Lila Bird

Signed:

Approved by the Governing Body:

Issue status:

Review: