



St Anne Line Catholic Infant School and Nursery

"With Jesus, we love, we learn, we pray, together we grow our school each day."

ORACY PROGRESSION

Nursery (2–3) • Nursery (3–4) • Reception • Year 1 • Year 2

Our oracy approach

We explicitly teach children how to listen, speak, think and participate with others. The progression combines the Communication & Language skills already embedded in our Nursery provision with the Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social & Emotional strands of the Oracy Framework used in the example document.

Design principle

Language is taught deliberately through stories, play, talk partners, vocabulary, questioning, role play, discussion and authentic opportunities to speak. Progression moves from short, supported interactions towards increasingly confident, purposeful and audience-aware talk in Key Stage 1.

What we mean by oracy

At St Anne Line, oracy is the purposeful development of children's ability to listen, understand, speak and participate in talk. It is not an additional subject: it is a thread running through stories, play, phonics, reading, writing, mathematics, RE and the wider curriculum.

The four strands

Strand	What this looks like at St Anne Line
Physical	Voice, pace, volume, clarity, posture, gesture and eye contact.
Linguistic	Vocabulary, sentence structures, Standard English, language choices and sentence stems.
Cognitive	Questions, explanations, reasoning, sequencing, connecting ideas and responding to what has been heard.
Social & Emotional	Listening, turn-taking, confidence, audience awareness, empathy, collaboration and building on others' ideas.



The Nursery statements are drawn from the school's existing 2–3 and 3–4 Communication & Language progression. These statements have been reorganised under the four Oracy Framework strands so that the progression is coherent from Nursery to Year 2. Reception draws on the EYFS Early Learning Goals and the EYFS oracy progression in the example document. Year 1 and Year 2 use the progression and language stems from the example document.

Progression at a glance

Stage	Key oracy milestone
2–3	Attend to familiar stories; follow routines and one-step instructions; use 2–3 words, then 4–5 word sentences; begin questions; communicate feelings.
3–4	Listen with engagement; follow two-part instructions; answer what/who/where/when/why questions; initiate conversations; retell stories; use because/and; organise play through talk.
Reception / EYFS end point	Speak audibly; use gestures; use new vocabulary in play; join ideas with because/so/could/but; make relevant contributions and questions; describe events; take turns and listen to others.
Year 1	Speak clearly and confidently; choose topic vocabulary; link to others' ideas; give reasons; ask for clarification; disagree politely; organise group discussion.
Year 2	Adapt talk for audience; build/challenge ideas with sentence stems; ask questions to find out more; connect ideas and experiences; invite others into discussion; deliver short prepared talk.



2–3 YEARS

Nursery: foundational communication and interaction

Oracy strand	Progression at this stage
Physical	• Join in with songs and rhymes and copy actions. • Begin to use speech sounds such as p, b, t, d, m, n and w. • By Summer 2, speech is mostly understood by unfamiliar adults.
Linguistic	• Put 2–3 words together to make short sentences. • Begin to ask simple questions, progressing to 'why' questions. • Use language to share feelings and use pronouns such as me, him and she, even if not always correctly. • Develop towards 4–5 word sentences.
Cognitive	• Listen to and enjoy simple stories in 1:1 and small-group contexts. • Recognise familiar sounds and respond to routine cues. • Understand and respond to simple 'what', 'who' and 'where' questions. • Follow one-step instructions, progressing to simple two-step instructions. • Shift attention from one task to another when attention is gained.
Social & Emotional	• Take part in short shared experiences such as circle time. • Hold a back-and-forth conversation with an adult. • Use language to communicate feelings, likes, dislikes and preferences. • Begin to seek friendships based on shared interests and communicate with others in play.

Talk opportunities in everyday provision

1:1 story sharing • circle time • songs and rhymes • naming and commenting in play • simple choice questions • back-and-forth conversations with adults • modelling and repeating new vocabulary • role play with familiar routines.



3–4 YEARS

Nursery: developing confident talk

Oracy strand	Progression at this stage
Physical	• Speak so that familiar adults can hear and understand. • Use actions and props to support meaning in play and storytelling. • Develop pronunciation of multi-syllabic words through clapping syllables. • Develop pronunciation of r, j, th, ch and sh.
Linguistic	• Use vocabulary and/or actions to express wants, needs and ideas. • Use themes and vocabulary from core books in play. • Confidently use 4–6 word sentences. • Begin to use a range of tenses: play, playing, will play, played. • Join sentences using 'because' and 'and'.
Cognitive	• Listen to stories with engagement and interest and recall key events or characters. • Answer 'what', 'who', 'where', 'when' and simple 'why' questions. • Listen and do for short periods and follow two-part instructions. • Retell a favourite story and recall an event from personal experience. • Use talk to organise themselves and their play and begin to share a point of view.
Social & Emotional	• Initiate conversations with adults or friends and take turns back and forth. • Take turns during play and wait to have a go. • Use talk to cooperate with others and organise shared play. • Use props and visual aids to act out familiar stories.

Talk opportunities in everyday provision

Core-book talk • partner conversations • story retelling • role play • small-world storytelling • questioning during exploration • turn-taking games • talk to organise shared play • vocabulary rehearsed through play.



RECEPTION / EYFS END POINT

Reception: building independent, purposeful talk

Oracy strand	Progression at this stage
Physical	• Speak audibly so they can be heard and understood. • Use gestures to support meaning in play. • Develop awareness of how voice and physical communication support the listener.
Linguistic	• Use talk in play to practise and embed new vocabulary. • Join phrases using words such as 'if', 'because', 'so', 'could' and 'but'. • Express themselves effectively and connect ideas or events in narratives and explanations. • Use past, present and future forms when talking about events.
Cognitive	• Make relevant contributions and ask questions. • Use 'because' to develop ideas. • Describe events that have happened to them in detail. • Listen attentively, anticipate key events and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions. • Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
Social & Emotional	• Look at someone who is speaking to them and respond appropriately. • Take turns to speak when working in a group. • Show awareness of the listener's needs. • Build confidence through role play, partner talk and opportunities to speak for an extended period about something of interest.

Talk opportunities

Partner talk • role play with defined roles • talk in play • extended talk about interests • storytelling • question prompts • new vocabulary and sentence stems • turn-taking routines • speaking to unfamiliar adults in meaningful situations.



YEAR 1

Year 1: purposeful discussion and confident participation

Oracy strand	Progression at this stage
Physical	• Use an appropriate tone of voice for the context. • Speak clearly and confidently in a range of contexts.
Linguistic	• Use vocabulary appropriate to the topic. • Try out new language, even if it is not always used correctly. • Use sentence stems to link to others' ideas, such as 'I agree with... because...' and 'Linking to...'. • Use conjunctions to organise and sequence ideas, such as firstly, secondly and finally.
Cognitive	• Offer reasons for opinions. • Recognise when something has not been understood and ask a question for clarification. • Disagree with another person's opinion politely. • Explain ideas and events in chronological order.
Social & Emotional	• Listen to others and be willing to change their mind based on what they have heard. • Organise group discussions independently of an adult. • Take part in small-group discussions, speak to a larger audience and reflect on their own talk.

Suggested classroom experiences

Small-group discussions without an adult • talk protocols for turn-taking • builder/challenger roles • clarification questions modelled by adults • filmed speaking for reflection • speaking in an assembly or to a larger audience.



YEAR 2

Year 2: audience, elaboration and building on ideas

Oracy strand	Progression at this stage
Physical	• Begin to use gesture to support the delivery of ideas. • Use gesture purposefully, for example when referencing another speaker's idea or counting off points.
Linguistic	• Adapt how they speak in different situations according to audience. • Use sentence stems to signal when they are building on or challenging others' ideas. • Develop increasingly confident and purposeful spoken language.
Cognitive	• Ask questions to find out more about a subject. • Build on others' ideas in discussions. • Make connections between what has been said and their own and others' experiences. • Elaborate on ideas and prepare short spoken contributions.
Social & Emotional	• Develop awareness of audience and what may interest a particular group. • Notice who has not spoken and invite them into discussion. • Deliver short pre-prepared material confidently. • Speak to unfamiliar people with a real purpose and take part in short show-and-tell/presentational talk.

Suggested classroom experiences

Role play for different audiences • 'tell me more' and 'just a minute' games • hot-seating and question tennis • sentence stems with gestures • inviting quieter speakers into discussion • short show-and-tell • purposeful conversations with unfamiliar adults.



Language stems: the language we teach for talk

Sentence Stems

Sentence stems are used as scaffolds rather than scripts. Adults explicitly model them, rehearse them with children and gradually remove support as confidence, vocabulary and independence develop. Sentence stems give children the language structures they need to express an idea, explain their thinking, agree or disagree, make comparisons, ask questions and build on the contributions of others. They are particularly important for children who need additional support to organise their spoken language and for pupils developing English as an additional language.

In Key Stage 1, sentence stems are explicitly visible and taught. Staff use them during lessons and you will see key stems written on whiteboards, displayed on working walls and incorporated into classroom talk prompts. Children are encouraged to use these stems when talking to partners, contributing to discussions and explaining their thinking. This ensures that children are not simply being asked to 'talk more', but are explicitly taught how to use talk to develop and communicate their thinking.

As children become more confident, adults reduce the level of scaffolding so that pupils move from repeating a model → completing a sentence stem → adapting a stem → generating their own language independently. This gradual release supports the development of confident, purposeful speakers who can select appropriate vocabulary and language structures for themselves.

Say it again better

We use the 'say it again better' approach to encourage children to use modelled language and correct vocabulary. Adults acknowledge what children have said and then model a more precise or complete version, giving the child an opportunity to repeat and internalise the improved language. This supports children to develop their vocabulary, sentence structure, pronunciation and confidence in speaking.

Think pair share

We use Think–Pair–Share to provide every child with regular opportunities to develop and rehearse their ideas before sharing them with the wider class. Children are given thinking time to consider a question, discuss their ideas with a partner and then share or build upon their response. This supports children to develop confidence, practise vocabulary and sentence stems, listen to others and respond appropriately. It also ensures that oracy is inclusive, giving all children—including those who may be less confident speaking in whole-class situations—an opportunity to contribute.

My turn, your turn

We use 'My Turn, Your Turn' to explicitly model and rehearse new vocabulary, sentence structures and spoken language. Adults model the language first, with children listening carefully before repeating it back. This provides a safe and supportive way for children to practise pronunciation, sentence construction and subject-specific vocabulary. It is particularly effective when introducing new language, reinforcing key vocabulary and developing confidence in speaking. The approach is used alongside 'Say It Again, Better' so that children hear high-quality language, practise it and then apply it independently in their own talk.



Reception / EYFS

Language for argument and opinion	Language for comparing and contrasting	Language of explanation / description	Language of prediction
I agree with... / I disagree...	It's the same because...	It's the same/different... because...	I think it will...
I think...	It's different because...	Altogether we / I have...	This will... because...
I don't think...	This is... and that is...	I know... because...	I know that...
It will... because...	They / we both have...	It looks / smells / feels / tastes / sounds like...	
I like the way...			

Year 1

Language for argument and opinion	Language for comparing and contrasting	Language of explanation / description	Language of prediction
Yes / no because...	They are the same / different because...	I... because...	I think... because...
I don't like / do like... because...	They are alike because they are both...	When I... because...	I predict...
I agree / disagree with...	It is... and...	It is a/an (adjective) (noun)	I think... will happen because...
It is right / wrong because...		After I...	I know that...
I think / don't think that...			



Year 2

Language for argument and opinion	Language for comparing and contrasting	Language of explanation / description	Language of prediction
Yes / no because...	They are the same / different because...	I... because...	I think... will happen because...
I don't like / do like... because...	They are alike because they are both...	It is... and...	I predict... because...
I agree / disagree with...	They are similar because...	It is (adjective) (noun)	I know that...
It is right / wrong because...	They are different because...	After / Before I...	
I think / don't think that...			
I believe...			
I think that...			
In my opinion...			
However...			
Also...			

Whole-school oracy practice

Non-negotiable	What this looks like
Model it	Adults explicitly model attentive listening, clear speech, appropriate volume, vocabulary, sentence stems, clarification and respectful disagreement.
Rehearse it	Children get frequent low-stakes opportunities to say ideas to a partner before whole-class sharing.
Build it	Children are taught to connect ideas using stems such as because, so, I agree..., linking to..., however... and also....



Teach vocabulary	New vocabulary is introduced, explained, rehearsed and used in meaningful talk, especially within core texts and subject learning.
Teach listening	Listening is made visible: facing the speaker, waiting for a turn, responding to what was said and using what has been heard to develop thinking.
Use purposeful roles	Role play, expert roles, builder/challenger, questioner, storyteller and other defined roles give children a reason to use language.
Increase independence	Talk moves from adult-supported interaction to partner talk, small-group discussion and increasingly independent discussion.
Reflect on talk	Children are encouraged to notice what makes discussion effective and, as they get older, reflect on and improve their own oracy.

Oracy across the curriculum

Oracy is embedded in curriculum teaching rather than confined to discrete lessons. Teachers deliberately plan the talk children need in order to access and communicate subject knowledge.

- Reading and English: retell, predict, explain, discuss characters and justify responses using evidence from the text.
- Mathematics: use precise mathematical vocabulary, explain methods, compare strategies and justify answers.
- Science: predict, observe, describe, explain and use subject-specific vocabulary.
- RE: ask questions, share ideas, listen to different viewpoints and explain thinking respectfully.
- History and Geography: sequence events, describe places, compare, explain cause/effect and use subject vocabulary.
- Art, DT, Music and PE: describe choices, explain processes, evaluate work and communicate ideas through performance and practical activity.
- PSHE / RSHE and personal development: express feelings and opinions, listen to others, take turns and practise respectful disagreement.

A consistent classroom question

'What have you heard? What do you think? Can you explain why? Can you build on someone else's idea?'

Important note on progression - The Nursery Communication & Language statements have been regrouped into Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social & Emotional strands. This is an organisational decision to make progression easier for staff to use; it does not replace the school's existing EYFS skills progression.