Maiden Erlegh Trust

ORACY STRATEGY

MAIDEN ERLEGH TRUST

Maiden Erlegh School

Initial approval:	July 2025
Review frequency:	Every 3 years
Date(s) reviewed:	

This document should be read in conjunction with each school:

- Curriculum page on the school website
- MET Reading Strategy
- School Improvement Framework

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Vision

Maiden Erlegh Trust (MET) recognises that oracy is a foundational building block of our curriculum in line with National Curriculum guidance (**Annex 1**).

There are many definitions of oracy but MET will adopt the following:

"articulating ideas, developing understanding and engaging with others through speaking, listening and communication"
Oracy Education Commission (2024)

All learners should be able to communicate fluently at an age-appropriate level by the time that they leave our settings. While all children benefit from oracy activities, research indicates they are particularly beneficial for low attaining children and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. UK studies found that 3-year-olds in the lowest income group had language skills 17 months behind those in the highest income group **(Gascoigne & Gross, 2017)**.

As an inclusive organisation, we must also consider the provision for children and young people who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) or SEND, for example those who use British Sign Language (BSL) or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). In addition, dialects and accents should be encouraged **(Levon E *et al,* 2022).**

Trust and school leadership are committed to develop the oracy expertise of colleagues to ensure that every member of staff feels confident to be a teacher, and advocate, of oracy (**Annex 1**).

MET expects that each school will have a culture of effective communication which contributes to a language-rich environment.

It should be noted that oracy is intrinsically linked to writing and reading, all encompassed within the bracket of literacy so it is inevitable that improving oracy will also lead to an improvement in literacy. This document is only concerned with the oracy element, but undoubtedly, strategies will aid all areas of literacy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each school has appointed a lead member of staff responsible for the local design and delivery of oracy which can be supplemented by internal and external providers. The quality of content and design are overseen by the Trust School Improvement Team **(Annex 2).** Oracy can be included in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and appropriate subject or phase development plans (**Annex 5**).

All staff who work within the school have a responsibility to implement the oracy programme devised for their learners and to highlight other opportunities within lessons and the wider curriculum to enrich the oracy curriculum.

Importance of oracy

"Reading and writing float on a sea of talk"
James Britton

"If there's one thing I've learned in life, it's the power of using your voice."
Michelle Obama

Every child, regardless of their background, should be empowered to find, develop and express their authentic voice.
National Literacy Trust

Almost a third (31%) of five-year-olds started primary school without the language, communication and literacy skills they need to thrive.
National Literacy Trust

"Oracy is an essential, foundational building block to support our young people on their journey towards living fulfilling adult lives"
Oracy Education Commission

Oral language interventions can have a positive impact at all phases of education, but the impact is highest in the early years (+7 months), and higher in primary schools (+6 months) than in secondary (+5 months).
EEF

All staff are expected to model oracy appropriately and to promote effective communication as a life skill and leisure activity. Subject leaders will have planned for oracy within their schemes of learning.

Aims

Across the Trust, the oracy provision must be appropriate for the setting, so each school has a bespoke offer for the learners **(Annex 6)** which fulfil the MET aims (**Figure 1**).

MET strand	Aims
	• Learners communicate at age-appropriate level. • Learners are provided with appropriate support. • Staff are trained to support oracy. • Schools provide training for all staff.
	• Learners actively participate in oracy activities. • Staff promote oracy. • Schools involve parents to support the culture of communication.
	• Learners can access all areas of the curriculum. • Staff plan for and promote oracy in the curriculum. • Schools build time into the curriculum to support oracy.

***Figure 1**: MET oracy aims*

Implementation

Communication and Language is a prime area of learning and development within the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. Early Years practitioners will be trained in appropriate techniques and strategies that intentionally develop young children's understanding of language and their ability and confidence to use language to communicate effectively. Children's language development benefits from approaches that support communication through talking and non-verbal expression which can add 7 additional months progress within a year to children. (***Early Years Toolkit, EEF***).

Dialogic teaching where conversations are encouraged is the ideal context for the development of children's language and thinking as they can confirm a child's understanding or feelings, while others elaborate and extend knowledge. These can be divided into 3 dimensions:

- Language learning environment: items related to the physical environment and learning context that provide important infrastructure for language learning, for example, resources, space, and noise at transition times.
- Language learning opportunities: items related to the explicit structured opportunities that are present in the setting to support children's language development, for example, pre-teaching key vocabulary, interactive book reading, language interventions groups or talk partners.
- Language learning interactions: items related to the ways in which adults in the setting talk with children, for example, adult responsiveness and modelling of language.

High quality classroom discussion can support children to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding, and extend their vocabulary. Closed questions followed by short responses can be useful and appropriate in some contexts. As children get older the focus on should move to developing their expressive language. Activities that can be used to articulate ideas before writing means children are not hindered by handwriting and spelling skills. Listening activities can develop inference skills without the need to process the written text.

Quality of talk is most likely to be improved by considering structure and variety. One structure that could be in place is the **accountable talk** framework which highlights:

- Knowledge e.g. by seeking to be accurate and true – teachers may need to prompt speakers to refer to key facts or quotes, and to address misconceptions which arise.
- Reasoning e.g. by providing justifications for claims – children will benefit from explicit teaching as some key words such as evaluate have different meanings in different disciplines In some cases it means to assess the reliability of sources, while other it will invite personal responses.
- Community e.g. listening and showing respect to others - this could be implemented at a whole school level or at a subject specific level.

Children also benefit from **metacognitive talk** which focuses on the processes of learning and on dealing with barriers to learning. This will often be task and/or subject specific.

Self-talk can be grouped into two categories:

- Elaborative interrogation – children generate explanations for why something is true.
- Self -explanation - students are prompted to ask themselves questions about what they are studying.

Exploratory talk encourages children to engage critically and constructively, share ideas, challenge assumptions, and collaboratively build understanding, often used to foster critical thinking and problem-solving**.**

Learn to communicate (This can be known as Learning to Talk)

Suggested strategies

EYFS

- Reading to young children (shared reading) and encouraging them to answer questions and talk about the story with a trained adult.
- Linking children's spoken language to the development of their reading and writing skills.
- Story telling
- Extending children's vocabulary by providing a rich language environment, carefully selecting words for explicit teaching, developing the number of words children know, and their understanding of relationships between words and the contexts in which words can be used, by providing multiple opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary.
- Talking with children based on their immediate experiences and activities.
- Guided interactions.
- Sustained shared thinking e.g. tuning in, showing genuine interest, asking children to elaborate, recapping, giving their own experience, clarifying ideas, using encouragement to extend thinking, suggesting, reminding, asking open questions.
- Questioning to develop reasoning.

Primary

- Collaborative learning where children work together on the same part of a task or working on separate tasks contributing to a common overall outcome are beneficial e.g. jigsaw grouping. Competition between groups can be beneficial to support pupils working together more effectively.
- Improvisation activities e.g. create a narrative based on a set of picture cards.
- Teaching modelling and providing scaffolding to support the activities.
- Asking open questions which require pupils to explain, reason or argue.
- Probing with follow-up questions that require pupils to expand on their answers.
- Building on pupils' responses to move the dialogue forward.
- Encouraging pupils to ask their own questions.
- Ensuring every pupil has opportunities to articulate their ideas and be listened to.
- Creating a classroom culture that encourages dialogue e.g. teaching pupils to listen when others are speaking.
- Incorporating opportunities for dialogue into lesson plans and classroom activities.

Secondary

- Teachers modelling what effective talk sounds like in their subjects using subject specific language and vocabulary.
- Deliberately sequencing talk activities alongside reading and writing activities.
- Using sentence starters and prompts to help students structure and extend their responses.
- Selecting questions that are open ended.
- Setting goals and roles similar to the reciprocal reading approach.
- Using wait time to develop students' responses giving them time to reframe, extend or justify their reasoning.
- Giving precise feedback and, over time, training students to provide peer feedback

Parent

- Shared reading – reading to children before they are able to read themselves, and when they do begin to read, is beneficial.
- Parents can ask questions about the book or link the topic of the book to real-life examples.
- Schools are encouraged to run training workshops for parents to offer advice about reading practices.

Vocabulary development

Approaches to developing vocabulary can be split into 2 groups:

- Explicit teaching of new vocabulary,
- Exposure to a rich language environment with opportunities to hear and confidently experiment with new words.

With either approach the following should be considered:

- Repeated exposure to new vocabulary is necessary across spoken language, reading and writing.
- Pre-teaching and discussing new words can support reading comprehension.
- Pupils should learn new words as well as how to use familiar words in new contexts.
- Teaching the etymology of new words.
- Vocabulary learning should entail active engagement in learning tasks.
- Digital technology can be used to help develop and teach vocabulary.

Assessment

Voice 21 have developed a sector-wide accepted Oracy Framework (**Annex 3**) which divides oracy into 4 categories: Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive, Social and Emotional and can be used as formative assessment, enabling teachers to gauge what their students have or have not yet grasped and informing them what to teach next. Each school will develop their own context specific assessment method. (**Annex 4**)

Identification of underachievement

Learners who are struggling to communicate may need further diagnostic tests to precisely identify what the reasons are. These are usually completed by the SENCo who will then coordinate the appropriate support. In more extreme cases, guidance and advice from a Speech and Language Therapist may be required.

Support will be personalised to each setting and to each diagnosis of need but may include:

- Deliberate practice
- 1:1 tutoring
- Small group work
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Trained adults
- Peer mentoring

The support plan will be communicated to parents with updates regarding progress shared regularly either via the SENCo or another appropriate adult such as a Head of Year or phase leader.

Love to communicate (This can be known as Learning through Talk)

Effective communication is an important life skill which many employers are recruiting for, particularly with a persuasive purpose. On leaving school, children with poor verbal communication skills are less likely to find employment and more likely to suffer from mental health difficulties.

Well planned and structured oracy activities help build strong student engagement, develop their confidence, self-esteem and emotional literacy. By building thinking time into activities, all children, including the quiet ones, will be able to participate enabling them to deepen their sense of identity and belonging.

Research has shown that children who listen actively and critically, who have higher levels of eloquence, are more likely to be able to disagree agreeably and participate effectively in civic and social life.

Suggested school strategies

- Role play
- Retell stories
- Debate clubs (only 18% of state schools have one)
- Spoken word poetry competitions
- Theatre productions
- Public speaking
- Reward achievement
- Zones of regulation language use
- Student voice opportunities.

Suggested parent strategies

- Talk to their children about their friends, hobbies, current affairs.
- Read a book or watch a show together and discuss it afterwards.
- Visit a theatre to watch a live production.

Communicate to achieve (This can be known as Learning through Talk)

Research has shown that a high-quality oracy education can deepen children's subject knowledge and understanding and as a result improve attainment and outcomes e.g. 2 months additional progress in English and science, and 2 month in maths (EEF, 2017). In addition, there is evidence to support that oracy can support disadvantaged children in particular.

Alongside developing key skills which can be used in both internal and external examinations such as narration, explanation, speculation, imagination, hypothesising, exploration, evaluation and discussion. Oracy activities will also develop higher order thinking skills such as reasoning, composing, justification, critical thinking and problem solving. The ability to ask questions, articulate ideas and formulate arguments which can be applied to a range of situations and purposes.

Suggested school strategies

- Subject specific speech and debate
- Deliberate rehearsal
- Enquiry questions
- Say it again better/loud and proud
- Choral response
- Turn to talk, nest/think pair share.
- ABCQ – add, build, challenge, question
- Talk for Writing scheme
- Philosophy for Children course
- Discourse through writing cycle
- Oracy pledges
- Talk like a ….
- Oracy focused tasks
- Discrete oracy lessons
- Whole school approach to oracy.

Suggested parent strategies

- Ask their children questions about what they are learning in school.
- Encourage their children to participate in oracy related activities e,g, public speaking, amateur dramatic clubs, outside of school.

CPD

Each setting will provide training for relevant members of staff with regards to oracy. CPD will be planned for the academic year as part of the School Improvement cycle.

Monitoring oracy

The implementation of oracy will be monitored using school-based quality assurance programmes linked to the MET School Improvement Framework looking at a range of evidence such as:

- the quality of learning (and thus the impact of curriculum design and teaching) through observation
- academic outcomes where appropriate e.g. KS4 Speaking and Listening endorsement
- outcomes for specific groups
- oracy assessments
- learner self-assessment
- learner feedback and surveys
- cross-Trust moderation activities
- Trust and external review.

The school oracy lead will be able to report on the impact of oracy (against specified aims) through the termly school evaluation process.

Impact

Learners will:

- be successful in the appropriate key stage outcomes
- develop their confidence and self-esteem
- be able to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders.

Staff will:

- be trained in appropriate oracy strategies
- model effective communication strategies
- plan for oracy within their lessons and schemes of work.

Schools will:

- have a culture of oracy and a language rich environment
- provide regular oracy opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

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ANNEX 1: Statutory guidance regarding oracy

EYFS Framework

Prime Area: Communication and Language

Early Learning Goals:

Children at the expected level of development will:

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Specific Area: Literacy

Comprehension

- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.

Writing

- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.

Specific Area: Mathematics

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.

Specific Area: Understanding the World

Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.

Specific Area: Expressive Arts and Design

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and – when appropriate – try to move in time with music.

National Curriculum

Spoken Language

Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using standard English. They should learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They should be taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Primary English

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the six years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

KS1 & KS2 Statutory Requirements

Pupils should be taught 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.

Secondary English

Spoken Language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language continues to underpin the development of pupils' reading and writing during key stages 3 and 4 and teachers should therefore ensure pupils' confidence and competence in this area continue to develop. Pupils should be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate, as well as continuing to develop their skills in working collaboratively with their peers to discuss reading, writing and speech across the curriculum.

KS3 Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- speak confidently and effectively, including through:
- using Standard English confidently in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion
- giving short speeches and presentations, expressing their own ideas and keeping to the point
- participating in formal debates and structured discussions, summarising and/or building on what has been said
- improvising, rehearsing and performing play scripts and poetry in order to generate language and discuss language use and meaning, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact.

KS4 Statutory Requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- speak confidently, audibly and effectively, including through:
- using Standard English when the context and audience require it
- working effectively in groups of different sizes and taking on required roles, including leading and managing discussions, involving others productively, reviewing and summarising, and contributing to meeting goals/deadlines
- listening to and building on the contributions of others, asking questions to clarify and inform, and challenging courteously when necessary
- planning for different purposes and audiences, including selecting and organising information and ideas effectively and persuasively for formal spoken presentations and debates ♣ listening and responding in a variety of different contexts, both formal and informal, and evaluating content, viewpoints, evidence and aspects of presentation
- improvising, rehearsing and performing play scripts and poetry in order to generate language and discuss language use and meaning, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact

OFSTED School Inspection Handbook: Good

Early Years

- There is a sharp focus on ensuring that children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and, in Reception, secure a knowledge of phonics, which gives them the foundations for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become confident and fluent readers.
- Staff present information clearly to children, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They communicate well to check children's understanding, identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations to improve their learning. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary
- Children enjoy, listen attentively and respond with comprehension to familiar stories, rhymes and songs that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children develop their vocabulary and understanding of language across the 7 areas of learning.
- Children demonstrate their positive attitudes to learning through high levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. They listen intently and respond positively to adults and each other. Children are developing their resilience to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.

KS1-4

- Teachers ensure that their own speaking, listening, writing and reading of English support pupils in developing their language and vocabulary well.
- Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. They are able to apply mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriately for their age.

KS5

- Teachers encourage students to use subject-specific, professional and technical vocabulary well.

Teacher standards

Standard 3 - Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy, and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.

Standard 5 - Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively

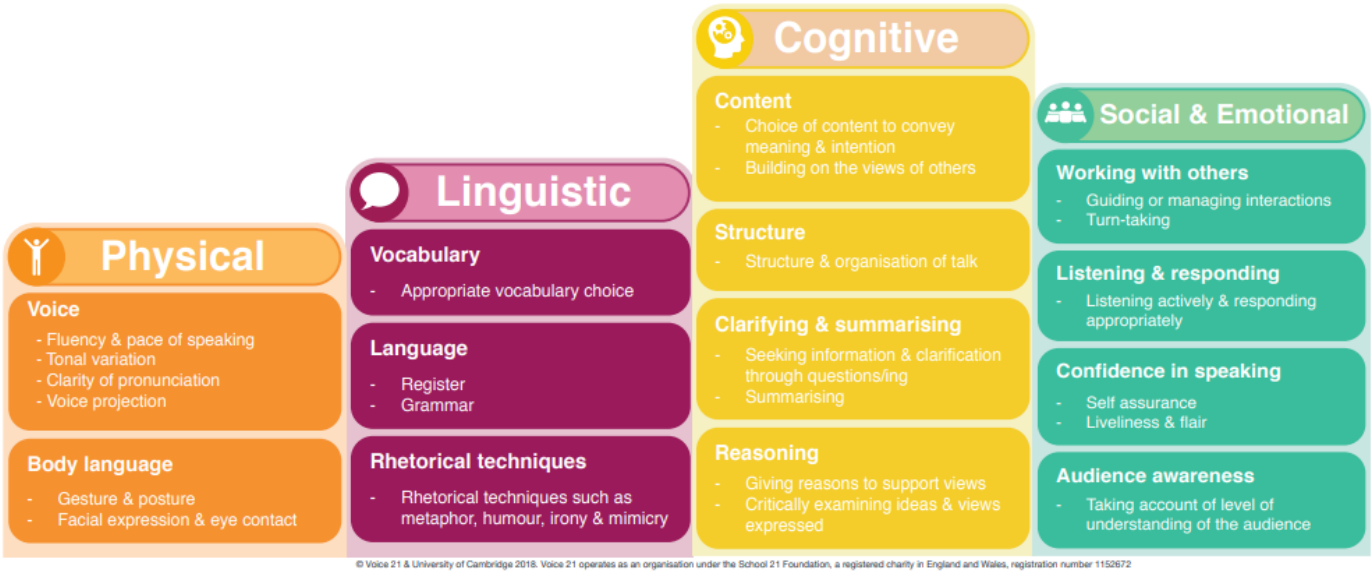
Standard 6 – Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback

ANNEX 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Role and Responsibility	Named Leader
Strategic oversight of MET Education provision	Andy Johnson
Strategic oversight of MET oracy provision	Sara Elliss (SID:QoE) Emma-Louise Roberts (Trust Lead for Secondary English and Literacy)
Strategic oversight of school oracy provision	NAME

ANNEX 3: Voice 21 Oracy Framework



ANNEX 4:

Details of the local strategy at Maiden Erlegh School can be found here:

https://www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk/page/?title=Oracy&pid=488