

Sacred Heart Catholic Academy

Oracy Strategy

Vision

Inspired by the Gospel and the example of Christ as the Word made flesh (John 1:14), we are called to nurture young people who use their voices with truth, courage, and compassion. We believe that every student is created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of being heard and empowered to speak.

Through our commitment to oracy, we seek to cultivate a community where dialogue is rooted in respect, dignity, and listening, and where students learn to articulate their thoughts with clarity, wisdom, and humility. We encourage our pupils to use their voices not only for academic success, but also as instruments of service, justice, and advocacy for the common good.

Grounded in Catholic social teaching, we promote:

- The dignity of every person by ensuring all voices are valued
- Solidarity through collaborative and respectful dialogue
- The pursuit of truth through reasoned, thoughtful discussion

In developing confident speakers and attentive listeners, we prepare our students to contribute meaningfully to society, to stand up for what is right, and to live out their vocation as faith-filled, articulate citizens of the world.

Rationale

Research consistently shows that high-quality classroom talk improves:

- **Attainment** (EEF: +5 months impact for oral language interventions)
- **Literacy development** through vocabulary and reasoning
- **Cognitive development** via structured dialogue and metacognition
- **Equity**, particularly for disadvantaged learners

Core Strategic Strands

We will embed high-quality oracy across the curriculum and beyond, ensuring every student develops the confidence, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills to speak and listen effectively. Through structured classroom practice, rich enrichment opportunities, and targeted support, we will empower all learners to articulate ideas with clarity, engage respectfully in dialogue, and use their voice with purpose in school and beyond.

1. High-Quality Classroom Talk every lesson - non-negotiables

- Planned opportunities for structured talk planned into curriculum maps
- Use of group roles for discussion (*facilitator, challenger, summariser*)
- Explicit modelling of high-quality, subject specific spoken responses
- Regular use of wait time (minimum 3–5 seconds)
- Structured talk routines and active participation strategies (see appendices)

2. Oracy Across the Curriculum - each curriculum area will define:

- Subject-specific vocabulary for spoken use – planned into curriculum maps
- Each classroom to have a ‘Speak like a...’ display with subject specific tier 3 vocabulary
- Opportunities for:
 - Explanation
 - Argument
 - Justification

3. Enrichment Opportunities – learning beyond the classroom

Whole School Offer:

- Poetry Slam (ESP)
- Drama Club (LCO)
- School podcasting (MKE)
- Assembly speaking (HKI Celebration of the Word)
- Pupil Leadership (ABE)

- Executive leadership team
- Pupil parliament
- Mental Health Lead
- Lead Prefect
- Student Chaplain

External Opportunities:

- Archdioceses Champions Public Speaking Competition (CRP)
- Mock Cop 31- (HKI)
- Song Writing and Storytelling workshops – Jacob Billington Trust (SMQ)
- LIPA Q and A sessions following performances (SMQ)

Cultural Capital Development

- Visiting careers speakers with question-and-answer opportunities (PRO)
- Visiting music and theatre productions (SMQ)

4. Targeted Intervention Strategies - staff and parents can make referrals to the SEND and Inclusion team based on

- Low participation in class talk
- Weak vocabulary / language deficits – teacher assessment of communication skills (Voice 21 Framework)
- SEND / EAL needs

Tiered Intervention Model

Our mission is to identify and support students with weaker oracy skills through timely, targeted intervention. We will provide structured opportunities, explicit teaching, and personalised support to develop confidence, vocabulary, and fluency, ensuring every student can participate fully, express themselves clearly, and succeed across the curriculum.

Tier 1: Adaptive Teaching

- Scaffolded sentence stems
- Front loading vocabulary/providing word banks
- Pre-discussion rehearsal

Tier 2: Small Group Interventions - weekly oracy groups working with pupils who have been referred and discussed at the Inclusion meeting. These may focus on:

- Lego Therapy – turn taking
- Better Reading – expression and prosody
- Reading Development Programme – vocabulary and fluency
- Reading Plus – vocabulary development

Tier 3: Intensive Support

- SALT referral/Sefton Local offer

Assessment Framework

We will assess the oracy needs of all Year 7 students by the end of the Autumn term, using clear and consistent measures of speaking and listening. Through this early identification, we will ensure that every learner receives the support they need—so that no child slips through the cracks and every voice is recognised, valued, and included

English Teachers will assess across four strands and use the *Voice 21 Framework*:

1. **Physical** (voice projection, clarity)
2. **Linguistic** (vocabulary, structure)
3. **Cognitive** (reasoning, coherence)
4. **Social/Emotional** (confidence, interaction)

Physical

Level	Descriptor
4 – Expert	Speaks clearly, confidently, and audibly; excellent pace, tone, and expression
3 – Secure	Mostly clear and audible; some variation in tone and pace
2 – Developing	Sometimes unclear or too quiet; limited variation in delivery
1 – Emerging	Difficult to hear or understand; hesitant or unclear speech

Linguistic

Level	Descriptor
4 – Expert	Uses precise, subject-specific vocabulary; ideas well-structured and articulated
3 – Secure	Uses appropriate vocabulary; mostly clear sentence structure
2 – Developing	Limited vocabulary; ideas not always clearly structured
1 – Emerging	Basic vocabulary; fragmented or unclear responses

Cognitive

Level	Descriptor
4 – Expert	Ideas are well-developed, reasoned, and supported with evidence
3 – Secure	Gives clear explanations with some reasoning or examples

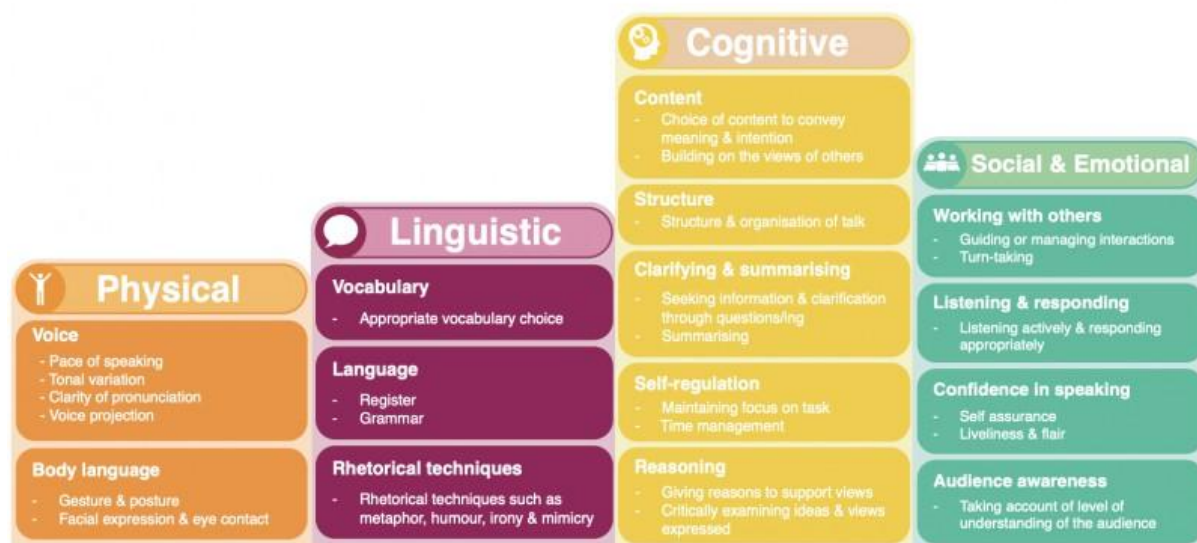
2 – Developing	Ideas are simple with limited explanation
1 – Emerging	Ideas lack clarity, reasoning, or relevance

Social/Emotional

Level	Descriptor
4 – Expert	Actively listens, builds on others' ideas, and responds thoughtfully
3 – Secure	Participates appropriately and listens to others
2 – Developing	Some participation but limited engagement with others
1 – Emerging	Rarely contributes or struggles to engage with others

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.



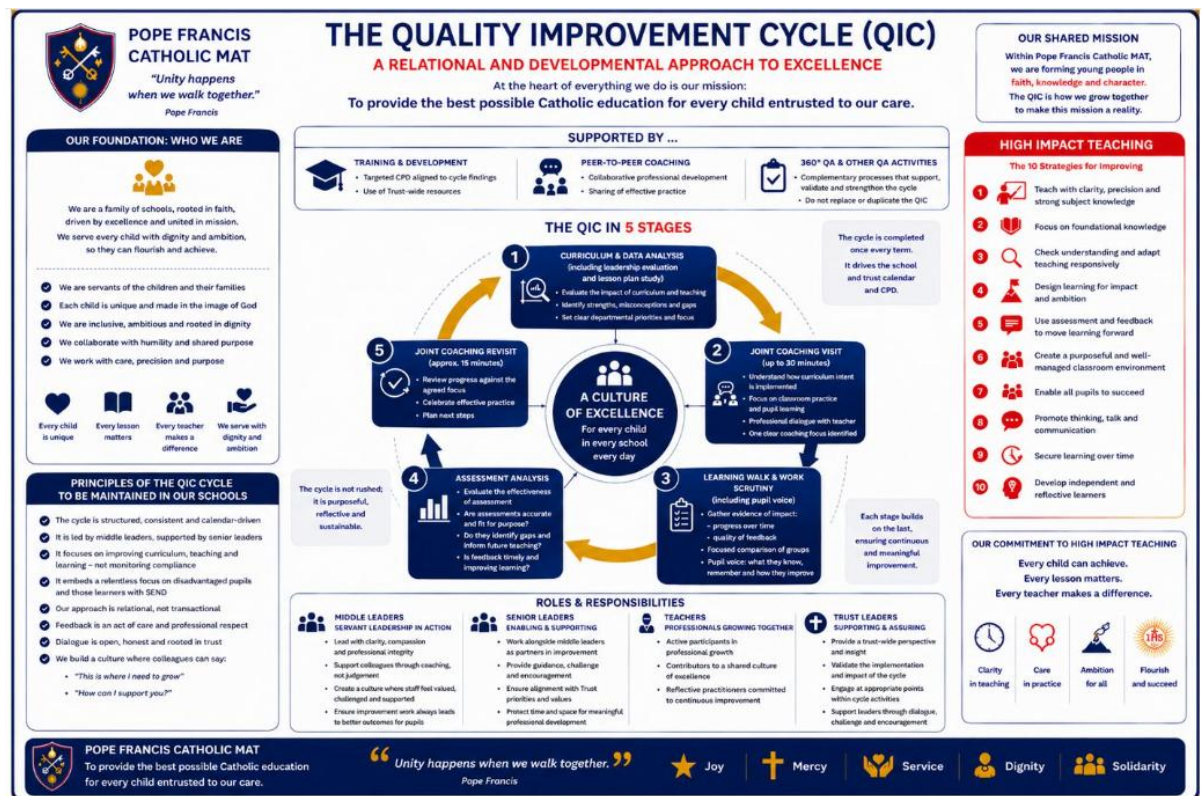
Staff Development

We will build a consistent and high-quality approach to oracy through a sustained commitment to staff development. We will equip all teachers with the knowledge, strategies, and confidence to explicitly teach and model effective talk, using evidence-informed practice. Through ongoing CPD, coaching, and collaboration, we will ensure that oracy is embedded across the curriculum, enabling every member of staff to play a vital role in developing articulate, confident, and thoughtful communicators.

CPD Priorities

- Modelling high-quality talk
- Designing structured talk opportunities
- Effective questioning techniques
- Supporting disadvantaged learners through talk

Implementation – PFC MAT QIC Model



Implementation Roadmap

Phase 1: Planning (Summer 26)

- Departmental-specific planning for oracy and vocabulary

Phase 2: Foundations (Term 1a)

- Whole-staff CPD – introduction of non-negotiables and talk routines
- Enrichment offer enhanced - building on 25/26 offer
- Assessment of Y7 pupils

Phase 3: Embedding (Term 1b)

- Begin targeted interventions
- Quality assurance of classroom actions

Phase 4: Refinement (Term 2)

- Strengthen assessment – Y8 pupils
- Ongoing quality assurance of classroom actions
- External Opportunities
- Expand student leadership in oracy

Phase 5: (Term 3)

- Evaluate impact and adapt

Key Success Indicators

Actions:

- Pupil voice taken for pupils who have participated in interventions
- English teachers to repeat baseline assessment which will show:
 - Improved student confidence in speaking
 - Increased participation across all cohorts
 - Improved written outcomes – extended writing improved through talk
 - Narrowing gaps for disadvantaged learners

Appendix

Classroom Actions

A. Teaching Talk Explicitly

- Teach types of talk:
 - Presentational talk
 - Exploratory talk
 - Debate and persuasion
- Model:
 - Turn-taking
 - Building on others' ideas – ACE questions/PPPB questions
 - Challenging respectfully

B. Structured Talk Routines

Examples:

- Think–Pair–Share
- Cold Calling (no opt-out)
- ACE questions and PPPB
- Debate protocols
- Group roles (facilitator, challenger, summariser)

C. Vocabulary Development Through Talk

- Front load key vocabulary – Language for Learning/See it, Say it.
- Sentence stems:
 - “I agree with... because...”*
 - “A further example is...”*
- Expect full sentences and academic register

D. Questioning Techniques

- Use a mix of:
 - Retrieval questions
 - Probe questions (“Why?” “How do you know?”)

- Stretch questions for depth
- Build sequences of questioning, not isolated questions

Mapping speaking in subject areas:

For example:

- *Science: verbal explanation of processes*
- *English: formal debate and interpretation*
- *History: argument using evidence*
- *Maths: reasoning aloud/narrating steps to success*

Documenting Speaking and Literacy:



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Task Used:

- Class discussion
- Class Debate
- Think, pair, share
- Presentation
- Role play
- Interview
- Peer feedback





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Paragraphs needed.	//
Capital letters missing.	CL
Spelling error.	SP
Punctuation missing.	P
Missing word.	^
Text does not make sense.	?
Formal writing needed.	F