

St. Peter's National School

English Oral Language Policy

Introductory Statement

Following consultation with staff members, this English Oral Language Policy was composed. The policy will be implemented in full from October 2018 and reviewed periodically from that date. The Oral Language Policy will be closely integrated with policies in other English Curricular areas and with the school curriculum as a whole. The policy will reflect our particular school context and the needs of our school.

Rationale

At St. Peter's National School we acknowledge the potential of language as an essential learning and teaching medium. We recognise that language skills are essential in consolidating reading and writing activities. Language is given a central role in developing the child's conceptual framework and body of knowledge - as well as learning language, children learn through language. Therefore we see the development and implementation of a co-ordinated programme of learning in the area of language as essential.

AIMS

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured sequential programme for teachers to:

1. Children and their lives

- enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language and language learning to enhance their language learning
- encourage children to embrace Irish positively, and promote our cultural identity through the use of the Irish language
- encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and to share their heritage
- recognise the wide variation in experience, ability and language style which children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.

2. Children's communications and connections with others

- embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different languages, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situations
- encourage and enable children to communicate effectively in both the first and second language of the school and to communicate in their heritage language for a variety of purposes
- enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.

3. Children's language learning and development

- promote a positive disposition towards communication and language by fostering within children a lifelong interest in and a love of language learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment
- broaden children's understanding of the world through a rich variety of language experiences and through fostering an awareness and appreciation of other languages and cultures in an enriching learning environment
- encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts
- support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing

- nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages and acquire a basic understanding of the history of languages and other cultures.

The structured approach consists of five components, which are to:

- Create a language learning environment.
- Develop listening & speaking skills.
- Teach and extend vocabulary and conceptual knowledge.
- Teach a variety of spoken texts.
- Promote auditory memory.

Elements of Oral Language Learning:

- Developing communicative relationships through language
- Understanding the content and structure of language
- Exploring and using language.

LANGUAGE NEEDS WITHIN OUR SCHOOL

We as a staff are aware that there is diversity in the oral language skills of children entering our school. Therefore, the pivotal role of oral language as an integrating factor in all aspects of the English programme is recognised.

FIVE CONTEXTS OF ORAL LANGUAGE

Teachers help children to develop their oral language through the following five contexts;

- Talk and Discussion
- Play and Games
- Poetry
- Story
- Improvisational Drama

ORGANISATIONAL SETTING

There is an emphasis on classroom organisation and methodologies that provide children with an opportunity to learn the form and structure of language and to use language discursively through questioning and for coherent expression. Teachers will incorporate a variety of organisational settings into the teaching and learning for development of Oral Language such as pair work, group work, whole class discussion, formal and informal debates and circle work.

PRESENTATION

Children are encouraged to present their work to a range of audiences such as classmates, other teachers, and school visitors.

APPROACH TO ORAL LANGUAGE

The school's agreed approach to Oral Language will draw on three areas of content:

1. Discrete Oral Language

Form, structure, use of language and grammar are addressed during Discrete Oral Language time. Children are encouraged and taught to use correct pronunciation, grammar etc. when speaking. On occasions this may need to be done discretely by the teacher. Teaching strategies are carefully selected with the ultimate aim to develop children's confidence in speaking in small group/large group situations.

2. Integrating Oral language through the Reading and Writing process

The following oral language activities and skills will be developed through the teaching of reading and writing - comprehension strategies, language experience approach, brainstorming at the pre-writing stage, peer-conferencing and conferencing with teacher, children in author's chair, use of novel, writing process, etc.

Sometimes oral language is used as an alternative to written exercises in developing children's comprehension skills. In an effort to develop higher order thinking skills the teachers use questions:

- To gain maximum information
- To seek and to give explanations
- To discuss different possible solutions to problems
- To argue a point of view
- To persuade others
- To examine fact and fiction, bias and objectivity etc.
- To develop critical thinking skills

3. Integrating Oral language across the curriculum

Oral language skills will be targeted in an integrated way e.g. turn taking, expressing opinions. Vocabulary and terms specific to all subjects will be taught as part of the teaching of individual subjects. Talk and Discussion will be a core methodology in these subjects:

- Numeracy: Guided discussion in developing elements, the problem-solving process, and reporting on the process subsequently

- P.E.: Use of terminology, e.g. football/rounders/basketball terms; Use of sports' events to promote language development.
- S.E.S.E.: Use of terminology, process of investigating and reporting on findings, exploration of cause and effect
- SPHE: Exploring relevant themes through the medium of talk and discussion
- Visual Arts: describing their own process as well as appraising the work of classmates and artists
- Music: listening skills

ORAL LANGUAGE RESOURCES

Junior/Senior: Starlight oral language posters (Folens)

Prim-Ed exercises in listening and Oral Comprehension

Time to Talk

Aistear role play area

1st/2nd: Starlight oral language posters (Folens)

Oral language games - Articulate, What am I, 20 Questions.

Prompt cards for discussion - news, my favourite subjects.

Puzzles/riddles

Images/PowerPoint presentations

Stories and pictures books for discussion

3rd/4th: Posters - cross curricular

Oral exercises/debating topics from class reader

PowerPoint presentations

Chatterbox

5th/6th: Folens: Listening and Speaking (5th & 6th class)

Presentations

Class Debates

Activities/exercises from class reader

Oral Language: Methodologies for Junior & Senior Infants

Note: Many teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of oral language are inherent in the content detailed on the previous page.

- Giving of instructions in class and wider school context e.g. PE, school playground.
- Instruction games e.g. 'O Grady Says', 'Follow the Leader', Drawing and pupils giving instructions to each other in pairs, groups.
- Elaboration of pupils own news by teacher.
- Practice of social greetings e.g. introduce self and others, greet and say goodbye.
- Read to children daily emphasising tone of voice, facial expression in reading story, occasionally inviting outside storyteller / older pupil.
- Re-read the same story occasionally, pupils choose the story to be read, read stories on particular topics e.g. animals / pets.
- Pupils continue / finish the story e.g. 'what do you think happened next?'
- Teacher / pupils ask questions based on the story read, pupils invited to tell the story in their own words.
- Chinese whispers.
- Oral reports - reporting on a piece of work or as plenary of a lesson.
- Use of storytelling and anecdotes - telling stories, recalling events and relating personal anecdotes.
- Partner and small group work
- Conversations between pupils and staff
- Questioning and interviews
- Drama - role play and miming based on stories, poetry, rhymes, popular films / videos, home situations, shopping, school etc.
- Use of puppets and dress-up box.
- 'Close your eyes and describe what you see', giving a definite topic e.g. a beautiful garden.
- Name objects in the classroom, school bag, home etc.
- Expand vocabulary through addition of descriptive words e.g. big / small, heavy / light (Maths language), warm / cold (environmental language), run / walk / skip (P.E.).
- Listen to music (e.g. Religion programme) and ask 'how does it make you feel?'
- Show and Tell, encouraging pupil to use sentences e.g. 'This is my doll. She has blonde hair...'
- Describe a friend.
- Starters e.g. 'I like...' 'After school I...'
- Send pupil on a message e.g. 'May I have 20 copies please'
- Emphasise appropriate vocabulary / sentence structure when requesting and relating.
- Provide vocabulary required to describe people, places etc.
- Teasing out situations e.g. 'If you were lost, what would you do?'
- Encourage questions about the world around us (SESE).
- Use big books as a springboard for discussion.
- Circle Time, Stay Safe, Aistear.
- Picture and / or object stimuli to create a story, create a collaborative story.

- Listening to rhymes, tapes etc. alerting pupils in advance to listen for specific sounds.
- Listen to and learn poems, nursery rhymes, nonsense rhymes, jingles and riddles, reciting individually and in groups (revise regularly).
- Listen to, focus on and re-create sounds e.g. animals, imaginary and add sounds to a story.

Oral Language: Methodologies for 1st & 2nd Classes

Note: Many teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of oral language are inherent in the content detailed on the previous page.

- Talk and discussion.
- Circle Time
- Consider advertisements, posters, themes of interest.
- Role play.
- Hotseating - one pupil takes on the role of a story / poem character and the pupils ask questions of him / her.
- Brainstorming.
- Wordwebs.
- Listening games e.g. Chinese whispers, auditory tapes / CDs / activities, Simon Says, clapping games.
- Story telling - rich and varied selection of texts.
- Cross-age tutoring and sharing stories.
- Visitors to school / classroom e.g. garda, rector, storyteller / poet, touring theatre.
- Newsboard - newspaper cuttings, photographs.
- Oral reports - reporting on a piece of work or as plenary of a lesson.
- Use of storytelling and anecdotes - telling stories, recalling events and relating personal anecdotes.
- Partner and small group work
- Conversations between pupils and staff
- Questioning and interviews
- Reciting poems and rhymes.
- Identifying word families, rhyming words, onsets and rimes.
- Call out a list of words twice omitting one the second time.
- Teacher gives a list of numbers. Pupils repeat. Repeat in reverse order.
- Teacher taps rhythm. Pupil repeats.
- Twenty questions.
- Pupils listen for the silly sentence / word that shouldn't be there.
- Listen to sounds inside / outside the classroom.
- Different child presents news / weather / area of interest each morning.
- Pupil takes turn for the day for answering phone, door, going with messages.
- Introduce new words e.g. night words, scary words, magical words.
- List new words on the wall.
- Presentations to own / other class e.g. project, poem.
- Follow a recipe.
- Kim's Game - identify the missing object.
- 'What would you do if...?' e.g. found an injured animal, found a €1,000 lottery ticket.
- Finish the story.

Oral Language: Methodologies for 3rd & 4th Classes

Note: Many teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of oral language are inherent in the content detailed on the previous page.

- General classroom conversation in all subject areas.
- Informal story-telling, life experiences, news, current affairs.
- Use of alternative words, phrases, sentence structures.
- Listen to commercial recordings / own recordings of stories and accounts.
- Chinese whispers.
- Pass on a story - each child adds on.
- Listening to and identifying sounds recorded on tape.
- Describing a process e.g. how to make a cup of tea, how to make a photocopy etc.
- Listening to and completing tasks e.g. in PE lesson.
- Turn down sound on TV - identify moods etc.
- Oral reports - reporting on a piece of work or as plenary of a lesson.
- Use of storytelling and anecdotes - telling stories, recalling events and relating personal anecdotes.
- Partner and small group work
- Conversations between pupils and staff
- Questioning and interviews
- Mime - charades.
- Use different tones of voice e.g. say 'I need a cup of tea' in 5 different ways.
- Display anger, sadness, joy, tiredness etc.
- Communicate using mime e.g. 'I'm going out'.
- Role play arguments as to why / why not e.g. I need a mobile phone.
- Listen to a piece of music, select words to describe it, make up a story behind it.
- View a short video clip, turn down the music, select language to describe the extract.
- Use drum-tapping to convey moods e.g. happy, sad, angry, agitated, excited etc.
- Hotseating.
- Word webs.
- Collect local expressions.
- Act out sections of the class novel.
- Relay role play i.e. pupil takes place of existing character in middle of role play.
- Engage local storytellers.
- Make list of questions - correct use of why, what, where, when as a reaction to a passage.
- Making of presentations on project work etc. followed by question and answer session.
- Social interactions - greeting / introducing visitor, answering the phone.
- Working in groups and introducing members.
- Verse speaking.

Oral Language: Methodologies for 5th & 6th Classes

Note: Many teaching methodologies appropriate to the development of oral language are inherent in the content detailed on the previous page.

- Discussion - local, national and global issues, sport, pupils' concerns and social issues.
- Debate topical issues e.g. homework.
- Instructions - giving, receiving, interpreting.
- Non-verbal communication.
- Assigning conversation to pictures.
- Character interviews.
- Character role plays - creating a story using a selection of characters.
- News telling.
- Narratives.
- Oral reports - reporting on a piece of work or as plenary of a lesson.
- Use of storytelling and anecdotes - telling stories, recalling events and relating personal anecdotes.
- Partner and small group work
- Conversations between pupils and staff
- Explanations.
- Story reconstruction - using sets of picture sequences, groups of pupils put the pictures into a logical sequence and practise retelling the story around the circle.
- Defending viewpoints.
- Story composition.
- Questioning.
- Creative inquiry - 'What if?'
- Questioning and logic.
- Comparing and grouping.
- Brainstorming and building knowledge.
- Description activities.
- Circle Time.
- Communication skills - clear, distinct, concise, coherent.
- Respectful for communication.
- Etiquette and social convention.

Updated: October 2018

Signed: John Clarke Date: 15th October, 2018

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: Rachael Blane-Hassett Date: 15-10-18

Principal