

The Spoken Word at St Monica's School

"Speech has power. Words do not fade. What starts out as a sound ends in a deed."

Abraham Joshua Herschel.



"The most fundamental life skill for children is the ability to communicate. It directly impacts on their ability to learn, to develop friendships and on their life chances." The Rt Hon John Bercow Speaker of the House of Commons in *Bercow: Ten Years On*.

During Foundation Stage at St Monica's School

From Reception upwards, we encourage children in the development of the skills they need; to communicate how they feel; to talk about themselves and their experiences; to hold conversations with adults and other children; to develop their own narratives and form questions and demands to cater to their own needs. There is a strong emphasis on adults modelling speaking clearly, in full sentences using standard English. Children are encouraged to use, join in with and learn nursery rhymes and short poems; to take part in role-play; to retell stories; to share ideas; to narrate their actions etc so that they develop the fluency, confidence and vocabulary they need to be able to access and talk about their learning. They are also encouraged to read their own writing – to speak it aloud both in preparation for mark-making and forming written words and also afterwards to make good connections between writing and meaning.

The children all take part in a Christmas Nativity which encourages the development of good Speaking and Listening skills.

During Key Stage 1 at St Monica's School

Continuing the good foundations established in the Foundation Stage, children in KS1 are also encouraged to develop confidence and fluency in expressing themselves for a range of purposes and audiences.

Through English lessons, children are encouraged and supported to join in with stories, retell them and paraphrase them orally. This not only helps them with developing their speaking but also supports understanding of text and provides rehearsal for writing their own versions of the narrative. Staff are expected to reinforce and model speaking in full sentences using appropriate tone, volume and timbre so that children begin to understand how the spoken word can impact upon and engage an audience. Children are taught strategies for memorisation and are expected to learn poems and rhymes off by heart; to read aloud; to take part in drama and role play in front of an audience as a means of developing public speaking and performance skills. The children all take part in a Christmas Nativity which encourages the development of good Speaking and Listening skills. Each class will perform an assembly to their parents and the whole school each year. There are also opportunities for developing their confidence in Speaking and Listening through Rejoice assemblies and Acts of Worship led by the children.

Classroom activities leading to writing often involve the use of discussion; debate; paired talk activities and whole class recital (also evident in the wider curriculum). Through their activities in RHE and all lessons across the curriculum, children are encouraged to express their thoughts, opinions and feelings clearly and succinctly and to be able to explain, persuade and entertain through the power of speech.

During Key Stage 2 at St Monica's School

As children grow and progress through the school, the demand on them to express themselves more volubly for a range of purposes and audiences increases. They are taught about the different and appropriate choices of vocabulary, tone, timbre and register of formality. They are encouraged to read and speak aloud in one-to-one situations, in pairs, in groups and to larger audiences and the school curriculum facilitates opportunities for discussion, debate, persuasive speaking and delivering anecdote and social small talk. In KS2, children are expected to learn poetry and rhymes off-by-heart in order to perform them and to develop their performance skills through drama, debates and reading aloud. They are expected to articulate themselves with confidence and fluency. They are taught about the need for clear diction, received pronunciation and expression.

As always, the staff model these expectations and make the most of both formal and informal opportunities to encourage children to be able to explain, persuade and entertain through the power of the spoken word.

As in earlier years in the school classroom, activities leading to writing often involve the use of discussion; debate; paired talk activities and whole class recital (also evident in the wider curriculum).

Children take part in class assemblies, liturgies and leading Acts of Worship.

<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an anthology of rhymes and poems provided for each year group to provide modern and traditional texts for learning off-by-heart. • Plans for lessons in all subjects incorporate opportunities for children to read aloud, to use the spoken word to explore and express their ideas, their learning and their opinions. 	<p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers follow a teaching and learning cycle for all subjects that includes opportunities for exploring ideas through the spoken word in paired and group activities; whole class performance; group work; role-play and drama. • Teachers are expected to model the appropriate register of formality, use standard English and demonstrate the expectations we have of the children when reading aloud and talking for different purposes and audiences in the school context. • The English curriculum provides for creating close links between speaking and listening skills, the development of vocabulary, reading skills and writing.
<p>Marking and feedback</p> <p>Whilst not marked, the spoken word still requires feedback so that children can develop and improve their skills. It is a hallmark of this feedback that it is sensitive and courteous regardless of who is providing it. Feedback focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct use of received Standard English • Appropriate register of formality for purpose and audience • Fluency, volume, timbre and expression appropriate to purpose and audience 	<p>Resourcing and display</p> <p>There are a wide range of texts available for children to read which provide opportunities for reading aloud and preparing role-play and drama activities.</p> <p>Staff provide opportunities to learn the skills of debate through their curriculum provision.</p> <p>Each class has the opportunity to prepare and perform an 'assembly' for an audience of their peers and parents and there are 'whole year group' performances throughout the school year e.g. Christmas performances, A Star is Born, Reception Graduation, Mother's Day, music festivals and the Year 6 End-Of-Year performances.</p> <p>An anthology of specially selected poems, prose texts and rhymes is provided for each year group for the express purpose of children learning them 'off-by-heart' or preparing them for performance and children are encouraged to read their own written work to an audience of their parents and peers.</p>
<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children in EYFS undergo baseline assessment for Communication skills. Their progress is assessed and recorded through the documentation linked to the Early Learning Goals. Teachers and nursery nurses/TAs make observations regarding the pupils' development in this subject. • Children are assessed where necessary for intervention and support for Speech and Language and their progress recorded and assessed through documentation linked to their SEND provision, the assessment tools linked to SEND, Speech and Language • Children's reading is regularly and systematically assessed through one-to-one reading aloud with an adult and through whole class reading, PM Benchmark and Star Reader. • Pupils are informally assessed to measure progress against the National Curriculum objectives. • Children are assessed for participation skills and presentation and performance skills. 	<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Monitoring is undertaken by the subject leader and SLT during the school year. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning walks during lessons where speaking and listening activities take place • formal and informal conversation with pupils • monitoring activities linked to the school focus on cultural capital and personal development