



MARISH

Academy Trust



SPEAKING AND LISTENING POLICY

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Speaking and Listening at Marish Academy Trust

1. Introduction

We believe speaking and listening to be fundamental to the achievement of the children at Marish Academy Trust schools through all the activities that go on in the classroom and other learning environments: the taught curriculum, the hidden curriculum, playtimes and lunchtimes, extra-curricular activities and the whole ethos of the school. Respectful and productive relationships between all who form part of the school community are crucial aspects of this ethos. As a staff, we therefore foster good communication amongst ourselves and with our pupils, their parents and carers, and with the wider community. We place a high priority on supporting the development of good speaking and listening skills amongst our pupils.

Our Literacy planning identifies four areas which we should plan for in order to promote appropriate skills amongst their pupils: speaking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama. These are the same strands as in the DfES pack 'Speaking, Listening, Learning' (2003) which also includes a wealth of resources and teaching strategies.

In September 2010, Marish Academy Trust began to implement an innovative framework for the delivery of PSHE, called R time. This is based on short partner discussion sessions held twice a week and has permeated across the curriculum, developing positive relationships and encouraging collaboration as well as enhancing social skills.

2. Aims for speaking and listening at Marish Academy Trust

During their time at Marish Academy Trust, we aim that children should become fluent and confident communicators, increasingly matching their style and responses to their purpose and audience. The skills of speaking and listening are therefore included in the key expectations for each phase.

Children should:

- be encouraged to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency
- recognise the value of listening
- be encouraged to have the self-esteem to be confident in the value of their own opinions and to be able to express them to others
- be able to adapt the use of language for a range of different purposes and audiences, including using Standard English
- learn to converse, sustain a logical argument and respond to others appropriately
- be encouraged to concentrate, interpret and respond appropriately to a wide range of listening experiences
- be prepared to be open-minded, to value the contribution of others and to take account of their views
- appreciate the diversity of languages, dialects and accents in the school and value the experience and contributions of children with a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds
- develop empathy through drama

2.1. Speaking and listening in the curriculum

Good speaking and listening are fundamental to good learning. From the first days in school, speaking and listening play a large part in a child's progress in all curriculum areas and teachers plan to develop these skills in a wide variety of ways.

The skills of speaking and listening are the foundation for the development of the higher order skills of group interaction and discussion, or collaboration. Through the R time PSHE Framework we use, we make provision to develop these skills, too, as part of our aim to encourage fluent speakers, who confidently operate in a wide range of situations. Speaking, listening and collaboration form part of the curriculum in all subject areas. Amongst the activities planned for are:

- weekly R time partner sessions
- circle time
- show and tell
- story time
- paired reading
- preparation for writing
- visiting speakers
- brainstorming ideas
- giving and receiving instructions
- paired work on the computer
- practical maths activities
- problem solving in Maths
- group Science experiments
- musical compositions
- paired constructions in DT

We recognise the importance of verbalising thoughts as a means of learning and plan for children to have opportunities to discuss and formulate their ideas before committing them to paper. These opportunities can take place in a whole class situation, with a partner, or in a small group. Paired work using the R time structure, or 'talking partners', is used as a powerful way in which to engage more children throughout the lesson and to support the development of their ideas and opinions.

However if a child is paired with an EAL child, who has very limited English, the experience can be frustrating for both. Some teachers experiment with 'talking trios' to ensure that all children have opportunities to participate in small group discussions. Within each trio is an EAL child at the early stages of language acquisition and two children who have good speaking and listening skills and social skills. They can model for the EAL child and he or she learns within the situation rather than not being able to access the task at all. The advantages for the other two children are obvious. Better still if the trios can be structured to include a bilingual child whose first language is the same as the new arrival's; as this values their own language and brings our commitment to diversity into reality.

2.2. Speaking and listening outside the taught curriculum

Children spend a large amount of time in school outside of taught lessons and we are keen to promote opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills at all times.

Some of the ways in which we aim to develop these skills are through:

- assemblies, including class assemblies
- school council meetings
- enrichment events

- concerts (by visitors and by children learning instruments)
- phase and class productions

2.3. Drama

Involvement in drama provides children with powerful means of expressing themselves and developing their ideas and understanding in a wide variety of situations and curriculum areas.

We stress the integration of the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, drama activities are used throughout the school in Literacy units and across the curriculum. These range from using hot-seating to develop insights into character, through to scripting and performing plays. Large scale performances are also an on-going part of school life and drama is sometimes offered as an extra curricular activity.

2.4. Planning for the needs of all our children

A large proportion of our pupils are learning English as an additional language. Their experiences and knowledge provide us with a rich resource on which to draw for the benefit of the whole Marish Academy Trust. However, tracking back to earlier year groups objectives may be necessary to provide the best differentiation for some of these children or other children with Speech and Language related SEN needs.

We are developing our provision of bilingual resources in terms of books, tapes and CDs, which, as well as supporting our bilingual pupils, promote an interest in language and languages amongst all our children.

Our EAL trained staff play particularly important roles in supporting both children and staff in this area.

Some of our children have visits from a speech therapist, and we welcome the expertise they bring to the school. Targets are usually set which are then worked on individually or in small groups.

Our experienced Teaching assistants work with individuals or groups of children specifically in the areas of speaking, listening and collaboration. Sometimes this may be to address an issue such as elective mutism, at other times it may be to encourage social skills.

2.5. Resources

We possess a wide range of resources appropriate to different age groups which support the achievement of our aims.

The use of puppets is particularly supportive in developing all listening and collaborative skills. We have purchased puppets for EYFS and Key stage 1 classes and continue to promote their value.

Story sacks and boxes are an invaluable resource for retelling of familiar stories and for oral rehearsal of writing and role play. We are hoping to start to develop our stock of these soon.

ICT provides ever increasing opportunities for children to apply speaking and listening skills eg. Multimedia presentations in YR6 with a recorded commentary.

2.6. Assessment, Record keeping and Reporting

Marish fulfils the statutory requirements for reporting by assessing children's skills in speaking and listening at the end of each Key stage. In addition, on going formative assessment is carried out in all four strands; speaking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama. This informs future planning at all levels, and helps to shape the curriculum.

2.7. Conclusion

We regard the development of good speaking, listening and collaborative skills as fundamental to the achievement of children who attend Marish Academy Trust schools. It is our belief that by teaching these key skills, we are equipping our children for life and work within secondary school and beyond. Moreover, at the same time we are promoting the development of positive relationships and social skills, that will enable these same children to lead fulfilled lives.

3. Governing Body Approval

This policy is reviewed by the whole staff team trust wide and Strategic Board on their recommendation.

Version	Approved	Next Review	Comments
1.0	September 2012	January 2014	
2.0	December 2014	December 2016	