

Issue No 9: Summer Term 2025

Abbey Multi Academy Trust **Oracy Newsletter**



In Partnership to **Educate, Nurture, Empower**

Welcome

Celebrating a transformational year of talk

A year of Oracy impact across our Trust

As we reach the end of a successful academic year, it's the perfect moment to celebrate the remarkable strides we've made in embedding oracy at the heart of teaching and learning across Abbey Multi-Academy Trust.

This year has seen oracy evolve into a shared expectation... no longer a bolt-on, but a central pillar of classroom practice. Our Trust-wide research project has clearly demonstrated the power of oracy to transform learning: when mapped with purpose and embedded with precision, structured talk drives confidence, critical thinking and deeper understanding.

We are proud to share evidence of that transformation in the recent research journal available through your oracy lead.

Among the year's many achievements:

- Christ Church Upper Armley became our first primary to achieve full Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence accreditation.
- Abbey Grange Academy earned its place as our second accredited academy, a milestone with four years in the making.
- Bishop Young Academy was re-accredited and featured in the national Voice 21 10-Year Impact Report, warmly welcomed by prominent national figures including Dame Estelle Morris.

Our work in vocabulary instruction has also deepened through the rollout of the 100 Words Model, now embedded from primary through to secondary. The impact is visible in classrooms Trust-wide: richer discussion, sharper thinking and pupils empowered to articulate ideas with clarity and purpose.

This newsletter brings together highlights from each school, a celebration of voice, confidence, and community. The depth and diversity of our oracy work is something to be truly proud of.

Our shared ambition remains clear: To be a leading voice in building a national oracy generation.

Talk point: Should we be assessing the oracy of our young people?



Recommended Read this Month

The Talking Point Summer 2025:

<https://voice21.org/voice-21-launches-the-talking-point-2025/>

Spotlights from across the Trust

Abbey Grange Academy



A Culture of Voice

V21 Accreditation – Four Years of Commitment

We are thrilled to celebrate Abbey Grange's accreditation as a Voice 21 Centre of Excellence, recognising four years of sustained development, collaborative practice and whole-school belief in the power of structured talk. From dialogic classrooms to debating competitions, pupils now engage in learning as confident, respectful communicators. This achievement marks not an endpoint, but a defining moment in our ongoing journey.

Culture Day – Celebrating Identity Through Oracy

Our annual Culture Day stood as a vibrant testament to student voice. Whether in heartfelt prayers spoken in Cantonese, a beautiful Portuguese solo, or powerful presentations, pupils embraced their identities and shared them with the whole community. Oracy was the lens through which we explored heritage, built empathy, and created connection.

When students are equipped with the tools to speak, they find their voice—and the whole community listens.

Oracy in Art – National Champions Again!

Congratulations to Sophie Cayley-Wykes (Year 10), who took first place in the national *Discover ARTiculation* competition with a compelling talk on Henry Moore's "Two Forms". Competing against schools from across the UK, including the Isle of Wight, Sophie showcased Abbey Grange's strength in public speaking.



Well done also to finalists Freya Smith and Sophie Powley. Our oracy-first approach continues to prove its impact beyond the classroom and on national stages.

Spotlights from across the Trust

Lightcliffe Academy



Structured Talk, Clear Gains

Year 7 pupils have made measurable progress through deliberate teaching of the Voice 21 oracy framework. By explicitly teaching physical and linguistic oracy skills, from posture and eye contact to talk tactics, pupils have grown in confidence, precision, and clarity. The result? Engaged classrooms and more thoughtful learners.



Bishop Young Academy

Oracy in Action

From leading primary workshops to hosting the Great Oracy Exhibition, BYA students have embraced every opportunity to speak, lead, and inspire. Student oracy champions led a Greek mythology-themed workshop for Year 3s at Manston Primary, introducing talk tactics, the Harkness method and more.

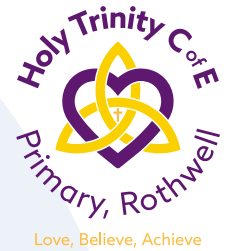
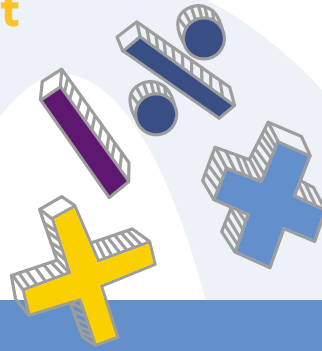


On July 2nd, the entire school stepped off-timetable for a full day of collaborative oracy activities, culminating in a powerful showcase judged by external guests from Leeds Beckett and Leeds Trinity universities.

Pupils spoke with confidence, led with passion, and listened with care.

Spotlights from across the Trust

Holy Trinity



Oracy in Maths

In Year 4, pupils used oracy frameworks to refine peer feedback during maths tasks. This focus on exploratory talk led to deeper understanding, greater engagement, and measurable gains in pupil progress. Oracy is now unlocking mathematical thinking and we're excited to scale this approach next year.

Manston St. James

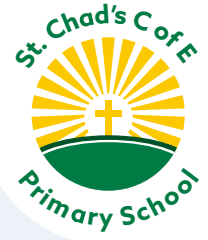


Talk to Think in Maths

This term, pupils used manipulatives as tools for talk, transforming maths learning. Supported by the Voice 21 & Oxford Owl maths benchmarks, pupils engaged in deep conceptual discussions—probing peers, using explicit vocabulary, and building strong mathematical understanding through structured dialogue. In Year 3, talk-rich model-making around 3D shapes became a standout moment of oracy in action.



Spotlights from across the Trust



St. Chad's

Putting vocabulary first

Oracy is becoming increasingly embedded at St. Chad's and recently we've introduced 'Big Questions' as part of our whole class worships to encourage oracy sentence stems and difficult talking groups, for example "what does it mean to be a family?". The growing vocabulary and structure is helping them express ideas more clearly, engage in discussions, and develop essential communication skills throughout the school whilst exploring thought-provoking questions.

Lightcliffe Primary



Pitch-Perfect Pupils



Year 6 pupils impressed in a recent Dragon's Den-style challenge. From persuasive pitches to dynamic Q&As, pupils demonstrated creativity, resilience, and polished public speaking. A powerful reflection of their oracy development across the years.

Spotlights from across the Trust

Christ Church Upper Armley: Planning purposeful talk

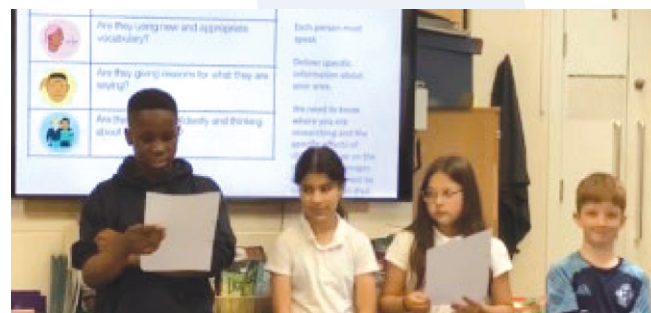


Developing Presentational Talk Through the Oracy Framework

This academic year, we have focused on developing students' presentational talk through dedicated oracy lessons. Using the Oracy Framework, we taught each strand explicitly, helping students to understand and apply the different aspects of effective spoken communication.

In Year 2, pupils have been learning about pioneering aviator Amy Johnson. They used a range of oracy skills to gather and discuss information, working collaboratively in teams to decide what they wanted to present to their peers. Using the Oracy Framework, the children gave thoughtful feedback to one another, helping to refine and improve their presentations. By the end of the project, all pupils confidently shared their learning with their classmates, demonstrating real progress in their speaking and listening skills.

In Year 6, students linked their Geography topic of climate change with presentational talk.



They planned and delivered presentations, using structured proformas to evaluate and give feedback to one another. As they near the end of their time at CCUA, Year 6 pupils are preparing their final presentation: the leavers' assembly. This special event is a culmination of the oracy skills they have developed throughout their time with us.

We are incredibly proud of their progress and confidence. As they move on to high school and beyond, we hope that the strong foundation they have built in oracy will continue to support them in the wider world.



Abbey Multi Academy Trust

The Moyes Centre
Bishops Way
Seacroft
Leeds
LS14 6NU

enquiries@abbeytrust.org
www.abbeymat.co.uk

