

Speaking and Listening

Intent:

At Our Lady of Grace, we believe that being able to speak and listen well is at the heart of learning and success. Through our focus on speaking and listening, we want every child to become a confident, articulate communicator — someone who can share their thoughts clearly, listen carefully to others, and use language effectively in any situation.

We aim to help children build a rich vocabulary and the confidence to use it. Speaking and Listening is not just something we teach — it is part of everything we do at school. It runs through lessons, playtimes, assemblies, and performances, helping children develop both their learning and their social skills.

We know that strong language skills support every area of learning. As children learn to think about the words they choose and how to adapt their speech for different audiences and purposes, they become better thinkers, writers, and problem-solvers.

By the time they leave Our Lady of Grace, we want our children to:

- Speak clearly and confidently in front of others.
- Use formal language when needed and vary their tone and expression.
- Listen carefully and respond thoughtfully.
- Join in discussions and share ideas respectfully.
- Ask and answer questions with interest.
- Use a wide and interesting vocabulary.
- Work well in groups, communicating effectively with others.

Implementation:

Speaking and listening is woven into every part of school life, from Early Years right through to Year 6. Our classrooms are full of purposeful talk — children are encouraged to question, discuss, explain, and share ideas every day.

Teachers model effective speaking and listening, and plan activities that help children practise these skills in meaningful ways. Lessons are carefully structured to give all children the chance to develop their confidence and find their voice.

Children experience many different types of talk, such as:

- Exploring ideas through discussion
- Negotiating and problem-solving with others
- Performing and presenting to an audience
- Debating and persuading
- Teaching or informing others
- Expressing creativity and emotion

There are also plenty of opportunities beyond the classroom to use and grow speaking and listening skills, including:

- Class and whole-school assemblies
- School and Eco Council meetings
- Pupil voice discussions across subjects
- Nativity plays and performances
- School choir and drama activities
- Year 6 leavers' assembly

We also encourage talk-based learning through activities like:

- Presentations and group projects
- Debates and hot-seating in drama
- Storytelling and book reviews
- Class discussions and collaborative problem-solving

Our classrooms are talk-rich environments, with displays that support speaking and listening. Every teacher makes time for discussion, storytelling, and performance to help children learn both *through talk* and *to talk*.

Impact:

By the time our children leave Our Lady of Grace, they are confident communicators. They can speak clearly and fluently in front of others, listen with understanding, and respond thoughtfully.

They use standard English where appropriate, express ideas with confidence, and adapt their speech for different audiences and situations. Most importantly, they leave us with the belief that their voice matters — and the skills to use it well.