Voice 21 Oracy School

January 2021

Easthampstead Park Community School
Oracy Portfolio

voice 21

voice 21
Oracy School
2020-21

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The case for a high quality oracy education

Oracy is the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language. In school, oracy is a powerful tool for learning; by teaching students to become more effective speakers and listeners we empower them to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them.

Through a high-quality oracy education students learn through talk and to talk. This is when they develop and deepen their subject knowledge and understanding through talk in the classroom, which has been planned, designed, modelled, scaffolded and structured to enable them to learn the skills needed to talk effectively.
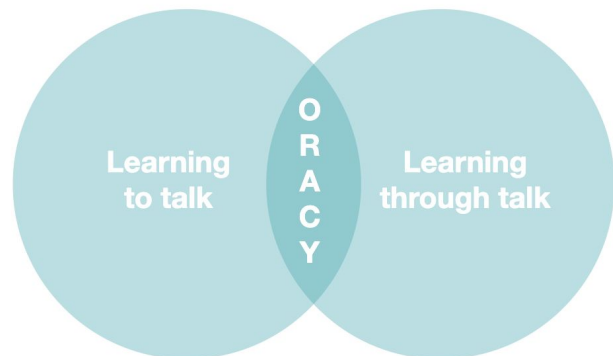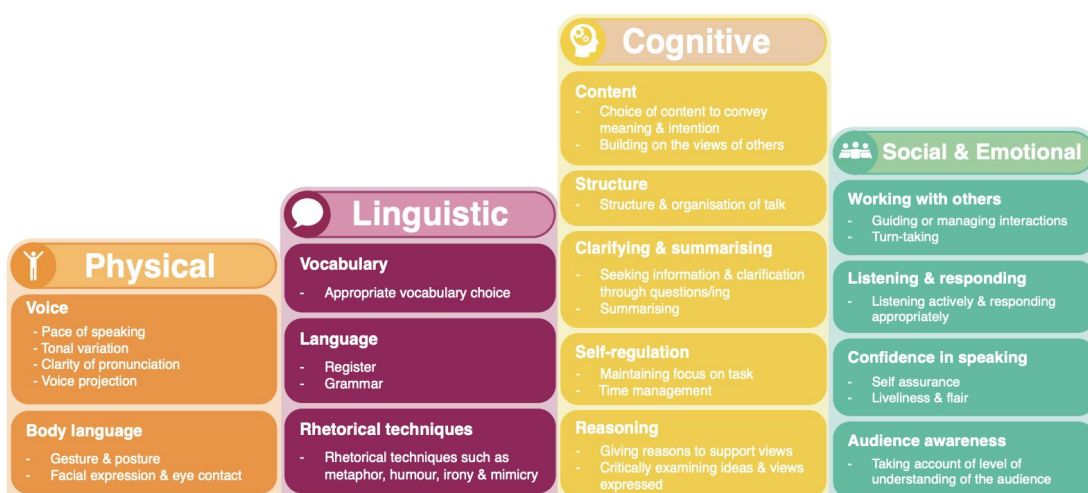

The deliberate, explicit and systematic teaching of oracy across phases and throughout the curriculum will support children and young people to make progress in the four strands of oracy outlined in the Oracy Framework.

These skills are crucial to children and young people's success in school and in their life beyond. It is therefore vital that in every school, an education in oracy is the responsibility of every teacher and the entitlement of every child.

The Oracy Framework

Use the oracy framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.

Cognitive

Content
- Choice of content to convey meaning & intention
- Building on the views of others

Structure
- Structure & organisation of talk

Clarifying & summarising
- Seeking information & clarification through questions/ing
- Summarising

Self-regulation
- Maintaining focus on task
- Time management

Reasoning
- Giving reasons to support views
- Critically examining ideas & views expressed

Linguistic

Vocabulary
- Appropriate vocabulary choice

Language
- Register
- Grammar

Rhetorical techniques
- Rhetorical techniques such as metaphor, humour, irony & mimicry

Physical

Voice
- Pace of speaking
- Tonal variation
- Clarity of pronunciation
- Voice projection

Body language
- Gesture & posture
- Facial expression & eye contact

Social & Emotional

Working with others
- Guiding or managing interactions
- Turn-taking

Listening & responding
- Listening actively & responding appropriately

Confidence in speaking
- Self assurance
- Liveliness & flair

Audience awareness
- Taking account of level of understanding of the audience
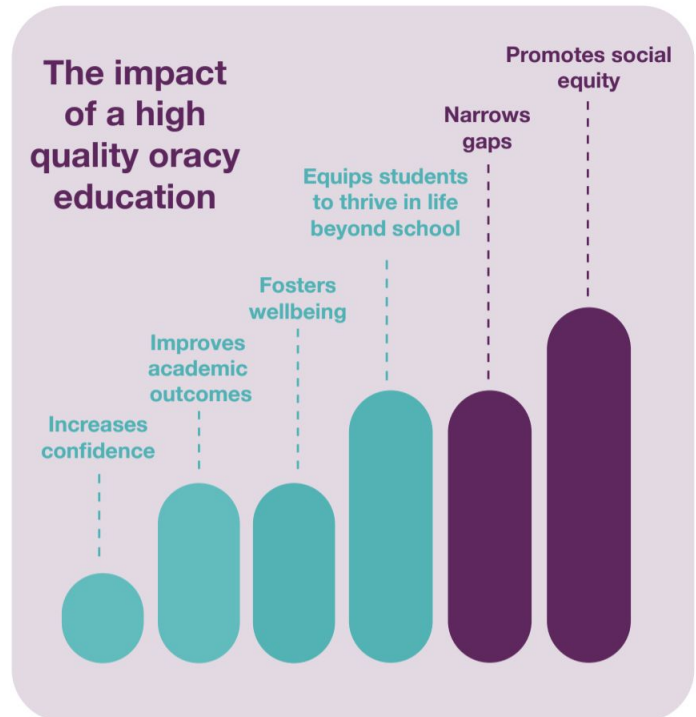
The case for a high quality oracy education

Oracy

Increases confidence, empowering students with the belief that their voice has value, developing the ability to articulate thoughts so others will listen

Research has shown that structured talk in class benefits students' confidence and self-esteem[1]. Sometimes, teachers tell us that when they began working on oracy they were worried shy or quiet children would be left out. But as they continue planning talk into lessons, these children 'come out of their shells' - clear expectations, scaffolding and modelling of talk allow all children to succeed, not just those who were confident talkers to begin with.

Improves academic outcomes, developing learners who can think critically, reason together and have the vocabulary to express their knowledge and understanding

There is a wealth of evidence that oracy impacts students' academic outcomes across phases and subject areas[2]. Teachers have told us about the 'massive impact' they've seen oracy have on their students' writing. A Year Six teacher told us, of the use of oracy in maths, 'I was able to unearth more misconceptions and address them during the six-week [Action Research] project than ever before, knowing that what is going on in their heads is quite the revelation!"

The impact of a high quality oracy education

- Increases confidence
- Improves academic outcomes
- Fosters wellbeing
- Equips students to thrive in life beyond school
- Narrows gaps
- Promotes social equity

Fosters wellbeing, supporting students to build successful relationships, talk through issues, express feelings and resolve conflicts

The intuition that wellbeing is supported by talk, whether that's talking through a problem with a friend, or using talk to build strong relationships in the first place, is well supported by the research literature[3]. Teachers have told us about taking oracy from the classroom to the playground, dramatically reducing the need to resort to keeping students in supervision during breaks - instead, some Yr6 pupils used talk frames independently to mediate disputes: "Now let's stop. Tell him what the problem is and then he will respond and you have to listen!"

The case for a high quality oracy education

Equips students to thrive in life beyond school helping them to progress, access employment and engage in civic life

Discussion and debate are central to democratic life - the oracy skills needed to discuss complex or emotive issues with honesty and compassion are crucial. Greta Thunberg captured imaginations around the world, showing the power young people's voices can have. Oracy is also important for students to thrive in employment, with businesses frequently emphasising the value of teamwork and communication skills.[4]

Narrows gaps enabling disadvantaged students to fulfill their potential

Students from economically advantaged backgrounds, on average, start school ahead of their disadvantaged peers in terms of language and communication skills[5]. Without intervention, these gaps grow, as pupils with the strongest language skills make the most progress in all areas of the school curriculum. In contrast, a high quality oracy education can help to narrow this gap, breaking the link between a child's start in life, and their future success. The research shows that students from disadvantaged backgrounds make faster progress than their advantaged peers, when accessing a high quality oracy education.[6]

Promotes social equity leading to a fairer society where everyone, regardless of background, finds their voice for success in school and in life.

As Neil Mercer (Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge and Director, Oracy Cambridge) said, "You are the only second chance for some children to have a rich language experience. If these children are not getting it at school, they are not getting it."

1. See Millard & Menzies 2016, *The State of Speaking in Our Schools.* LKMCo & Voice 21 for a review of the literature.
2. Education Endowment Foundation, *Oral Language Interventions:* "On average, pupils who participate in oral language interventions make approximately five months' additional progress over the course of a year"; Mercer and Mannion 2018. *Oracy across the Welsh Curriculum. A research-based review: key principles and recommendations for teachers.* Oracy Cambridge
3. Early Intervention Foundation, 2017 *Language as a Child Well-being Indicator;* The Communication Trust, 2017, *Talking about a Generation*
4. CBI/Pearson: *Education and learning for the modern world: CBI/Pearson Education and Skills Survey Report 2019*
5. The Communication Trust, 2017, *Talking about a Generation*
6. Education Endowment Foundation, *Oral Language Interventions*

Your school:
Context & Motivations

Easthampstead Park Community School is a secondary school deeply rooted in its community, with high aspirations for all of its students. The school strives to ensure that every student, regardless of their background or ability, can achieve. They are dedicated to consistently providing dynamic, high quality teaching enriched with opportunities and experiences to challenge and stretch young people's learning.

There is a strong focus on preparing students for life beyond school and equipping them with the tools they need to successfully access further education and employment opportunities. Staff across the school understand the need to support students to develop a broad range of skills as part of a holistic learning experience. Oracy is seen as a whole school priority for Easthampstead Park, as a driving force for improved wellbeing, academic progress and lifelong opportunity.

Stemming from previous involvement with Voice 21, Easthampstead Park have already made significant strides towards providing a high quality oracy education for all of their students. Oracy sits on the whole school priority list and the oracy framework has been introduced to all staff and students. The icons relating to the strands have been prominently displayed and teachers of every subject have been encouraged to produce one scheme of work with embedded oracy outcomes.

Prior to national lockdowns and school closures, students at Easthampstead Park had begun to understand the language around oracy and the skills involved. However, there is now a need to renew the focus on oracy and reintroduce key concepts and strategies to staff and students.

"a driving force for improved wellbeing, academic progress and lifelong opportunity"

Working with Voice 21, Easthampstead Park will relaunch oracy and work to make it part of everyday pedagogy and practice. In the past staff have shown positive attitudes towards oracy but there is a need to ensure that oracy activities are consistently set up effectively to achieve specific oracy outcomes and student progress. The oracy lead at Easthampstead Park will be a driving force for this change and has already planned in CPD and prioritised sharing best practice across the school.

Easthampstead Park envisions a school where every student is a confident speaker with a developing vocabulary and an understanding of register. Students will be able to represent themselves in any situation and effectively articulate their ideas, feelings and opinions. Oracy will be harnessed to build students' confidence and make them active participants in furthering their own learning. These skills will continue to support them as they take their next steps into further education or the workplace, and throughout their lives.

Benchmark Report - start of the year

Our surveys are carried out with the following stakeholders and cover the following areas:

1. All school staff
- Oracy: confidence and knowledge
- Staff beliefs about the value of oracy
- Staff beliefs about the impact of oracy

2. Students
- Student self-perception
- Student perception of oracy

3. The Oracy Benchmarks
Carried out with all school staff
- The Teacher Benchmarks
- The School Benchmarks

Responses at your school

School name	Student responses (n)	All staff responses (n)	Of which SLT* (n)
Easthampstead Park Community School	20	48	6

*This category is primarily comprised of SLT, but also includes other non classroom-based staff

Oracy: confidence and knowledge

This page is about the confidence and knowledge of staff at your school, when it comes to ensuring all students benefit from a high quality oracy education.
On all the scales in this report, the higher the number, the better the score - so in the first bar chart, 7 is the most confident and 1 is the least confident.

Oracy Confidence

We asked teachers to rate "I have the knowledge and experience I need to ensure students at my school receive a high quality oracy education" from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

I have the knowledge and experience I need to ensure students at my school receive a high quality oracy education

Oracy Knowledge

This score is generated by combining staff responses to two items asking them to self-assess their level of knowledge. Again - higher is better, so "K4" represents the most knowledgeable staff.

knowledge category
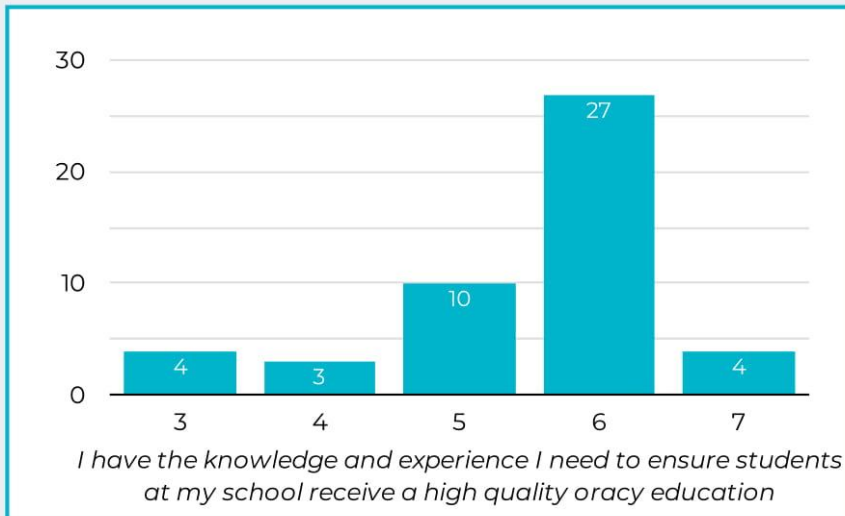
We know that if oracy is to become a part of everyday school life, all staff have to feel confidence in their oracy expertise.

Throughout the year, we will be working together to ensure that all staff have this confidence and expertise.

As school staff access professional development (cascaded from the School Lead and Oracy Champions, or through the Voice 21 Exchange), and see oracy in action, their confidence, expertise and enthusiasm will grow.

We encourage you to think about how all staff can be involved in your school's oracy journey - it's not just for teachers and it doesn't have to start and end at the classroom door: for example, previous Voice 21 Schools have ensured lunchtime supervisors have the skills they need to use oracy to support positive playground behaviour.
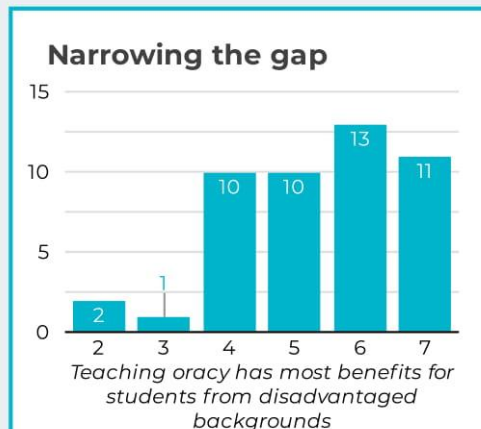
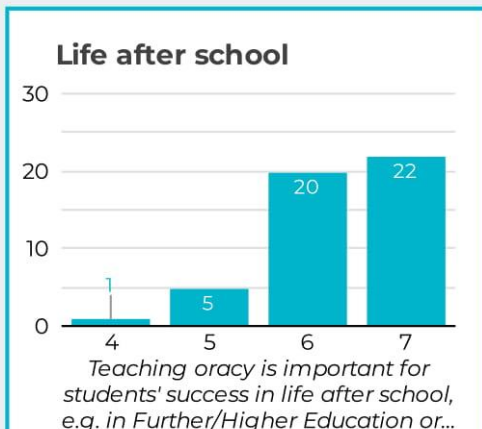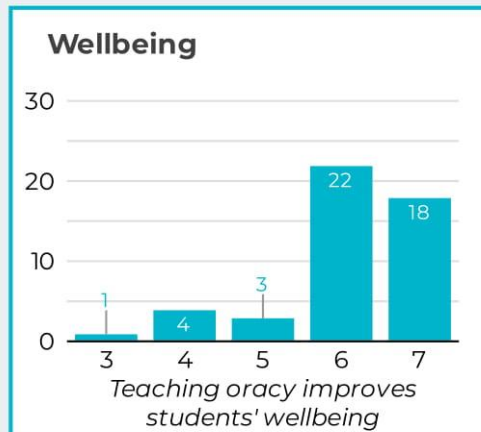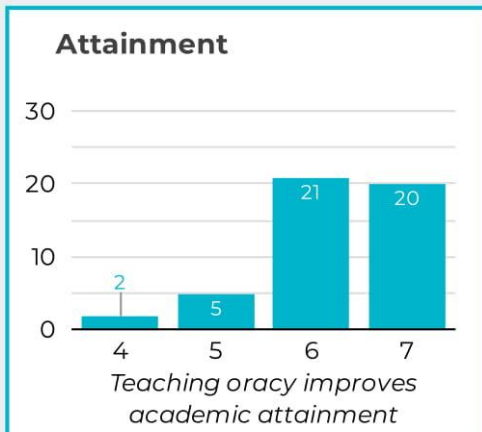# Beliefs about the value & impact of oracy

Here you can see what staff at your school believe about the value and impact of oracy. Respondents were asked to rate statements such as "Oracy is an essential part of teaching and learning" from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

The value of oracy:

Oracy in general

Oracy is an essential part of teaching and learning

Presentational Talk

Presenting and speaking about their learning is a good way for students to consolidate their unde...

Exploratory Talk

Group talk is a productive way for students to share and develop their ideas
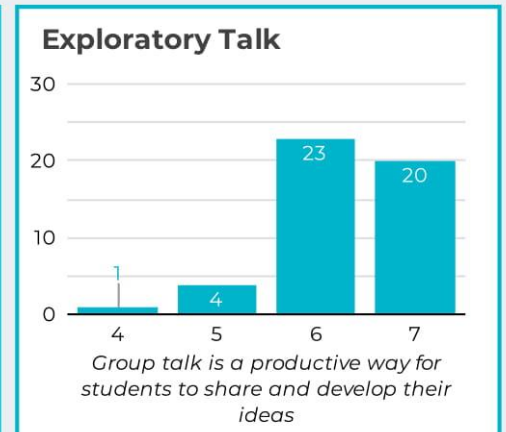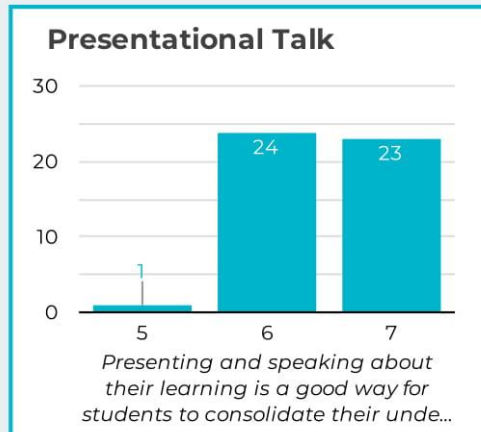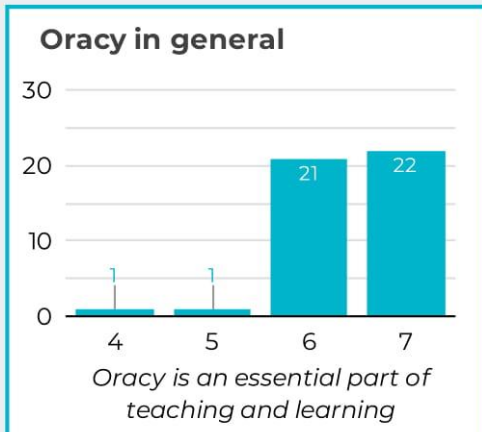
Responses go from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

The Impact of Oracy:

Attainment

Teaching oracy improves academic attainment

Wellbeing

Teaching oracy improves students' wellbeing

Life after school

Teaching oracy is important for students' success in life after school, e.g. in Further/Higher Education or...

Narrowing the gap

Teaching oracy has most benefits for students from disadvantaged backgrounds

We've set out the research evidence behind the value of oracy, and its impact on students, earlier in the Oracy Portfolio.

In this section of the Benchmark Report, you can see what staff at your school believe about the value and impact of oracy.

Your Oracy Consultant will work with you to focus on aligning oracy at school with your existing vision and goals - it's important to us that everyone at your school is able to see how providing a high quality oracy education fits into their pedagogy and what they aim to achieve in their classrooms, with their students.

Responses go from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

Students: self-perception

We asked your students whether they think they're good speakers and listeners so that you know where students feel more or less confident, and can see how this changes over the year.
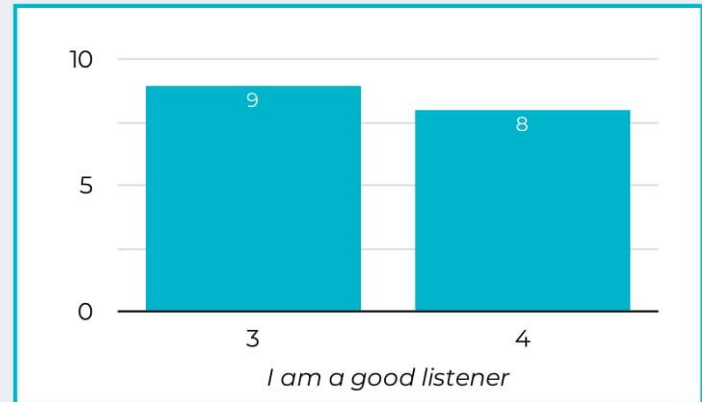We asked students to assess themselves against statements like "I am a good listener", from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Please note that this scale has no neutral option.

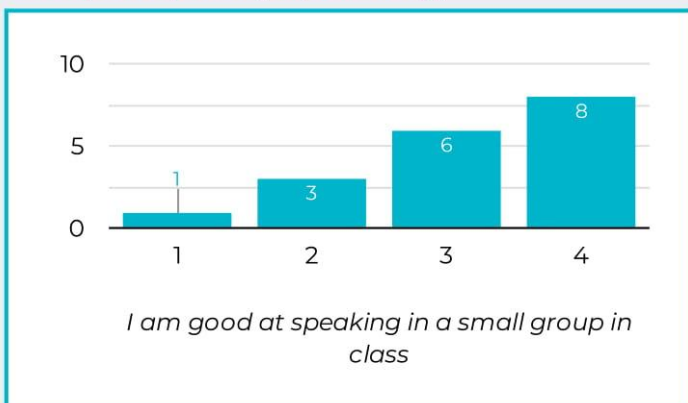*Self-perception (combined) is an average of the three other self-perception measures*

Self-perception (combined)
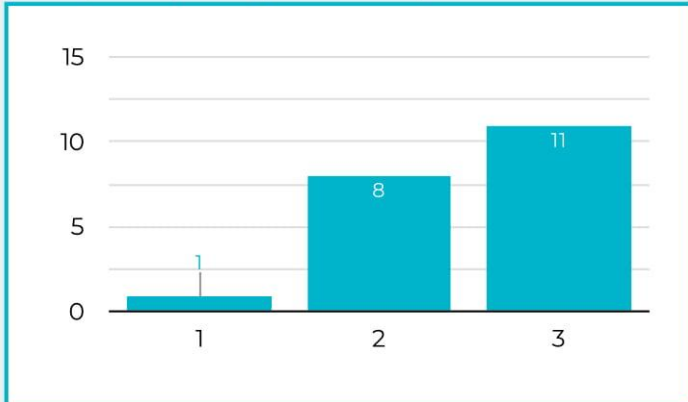
Self-perception (listening)

I am a good listener

Self-perception (exploratory)

I am good at speaking in a small group in class

What's exploratory talk?
Exploratory talk is a positive form of group talk, where there is a trusting environment and a shared purpose for talk. All participants are actively engaged, speaking, listening and thinking together.

"It's good hearing what other people think. Sometimes they think differently to me and that means we can learn from each other." - *Year 3 Student*

Self-perception (presentational)

I am good at speaking in front of an audience (e.g. presenting my work to the class)
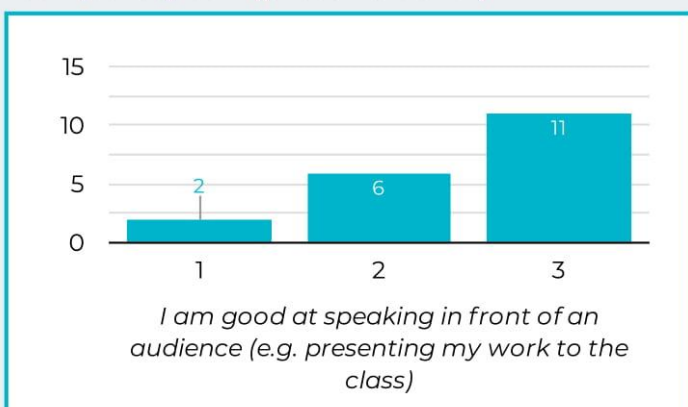
What's presentational talk?
Presentational talk is less concerned with the formation of new ideas. Here, the speaker focuses on engaging with an audience to help them understand their point of view. For example, a student may answer a teacher's question in class, or give a longer speech or presentation.

The student self-perception measure was first developed as part of a Voice 21 programme evaluation (Get Talking in PRUs), with input from the University of Sussex. Students' self-perception tends to correlate with their social self-efficacy: students who think they are good speakers and listeners tend also to feel confident in their ability to build and maintain positive relationships with peers or teachers.
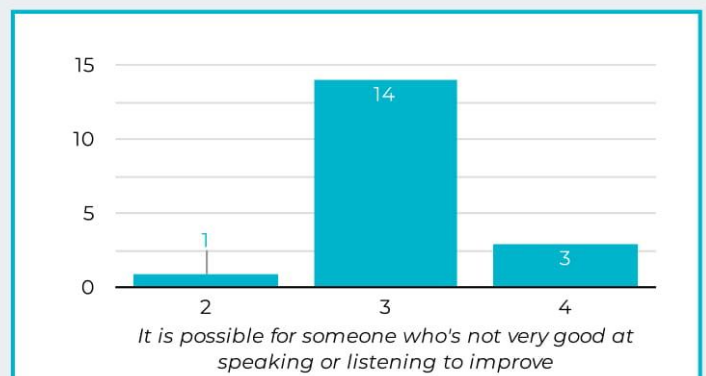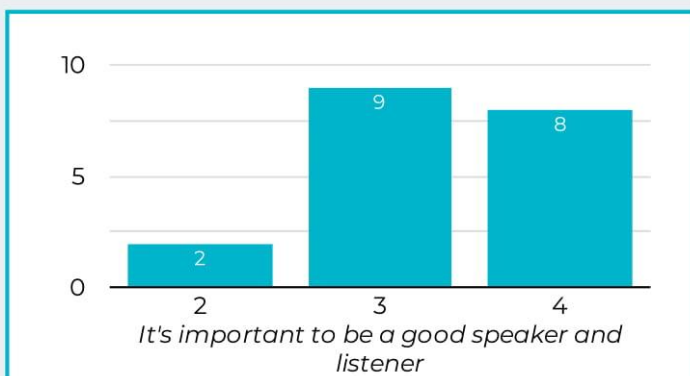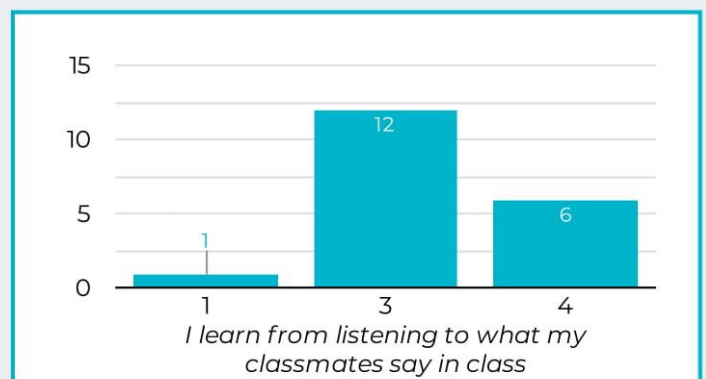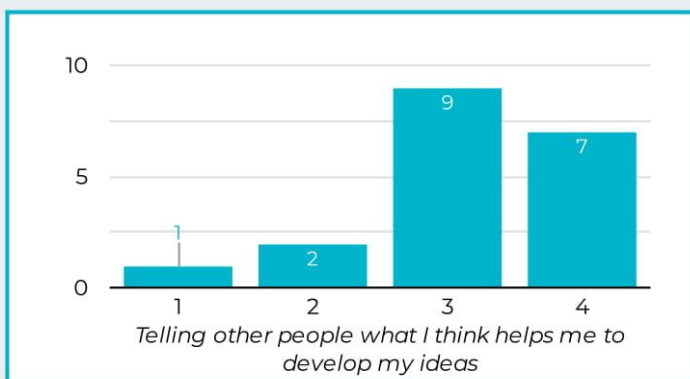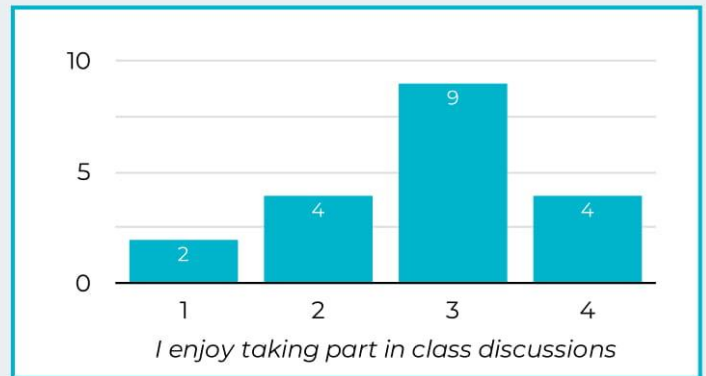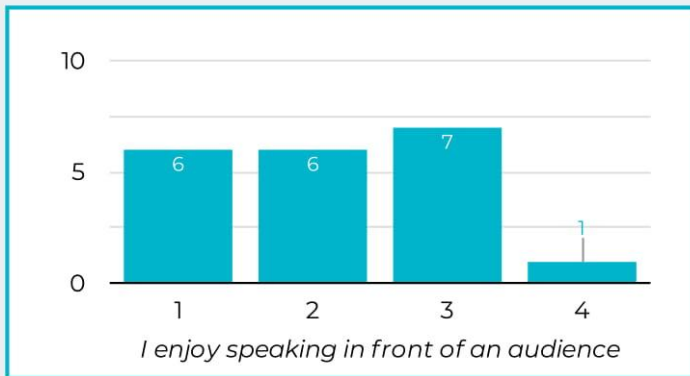
Students: perception of oracy

We asked your students what they think about oracy in the classroom. They were asked if they think oracy is enjoyable, helpful for their learning, important, and if they think it's possible to improve as a speaker/listener.

For each aspect, students were asked to rate a statement such as "I enjoy speaking in front of an audience" from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

Perception of oracy (combined)
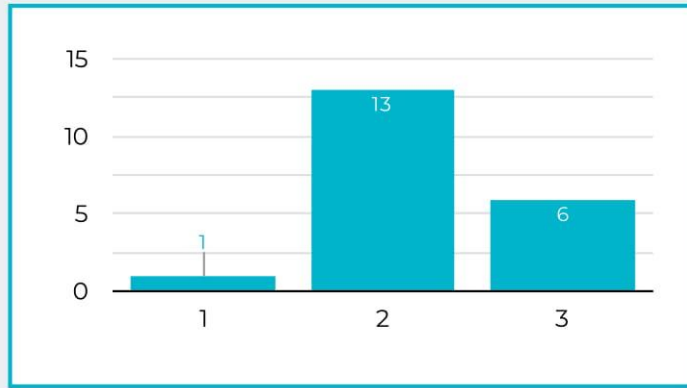
Perception of oracy (combined) is an average of the six other self-perception measures (below)

I enjoy speaking in front of an audience

I enjoy taking part in class discussions

Telling other people what I think helps me to develop my ideas

I learn from listening to what my classmates say in class

It's important to be a good speaker and listener

It is possible for someone who's not very good at speaking or listening to improve

Teacher Oracy Benchmarks: 1

The Teacher Oracy Benchmarks define excellent classroom practice for oracy. Teachers create the culture of their classroom and based on the needs of their students they make choices every day about what to teach and how to teach it.

We asked two questions corresponding to each Teacher Oracy Benchmark, to see how teachers at your school assess themselves against these standards. Throughout the year, we'll work together to help all teachers meet these Benchmarks. Your whole school oracy team will use these measures alongside their own observations, learning walks and reflections to understand progress across the year.

For each Benchmark you can see the proportion of teachers emerging, meeting or exceeding, as self-assessed against each Benchmark (the chart on the right, 'Overall teacher scores'). This self-assessment is derived from teachers' responses to two statements (labelled 'a' and 'b', on the right), which they answered on a scale from 1-5, described below.
The figures on the right show SLT and student perspectives on each Benchmark: they were asked to rate analogous statements.

1. Sets high expectations for oracy

The teacher establishes and models ambitious and challenging norms for talk, ensuring that students understand the expectations for talk in their classroom. Opportunities for oracy are regular, purposeful, appropriately pitched and thoughtfully planned to ensure that students are well prepared to meet expectations.
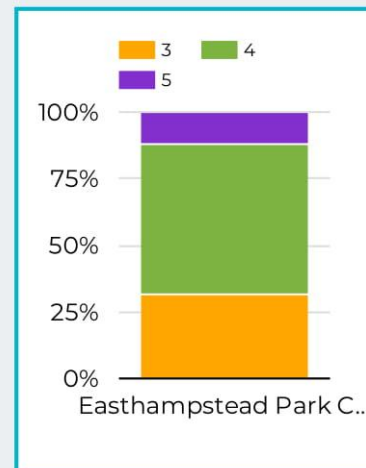
1. Overall teacher scores
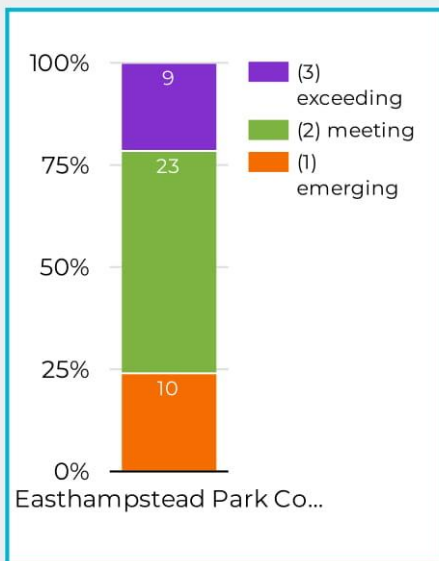
1a. Supporting students to engage in challenging oracy-based tasks
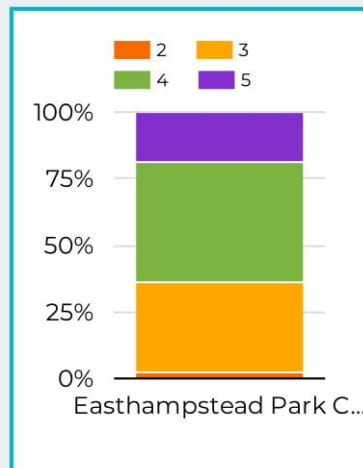
1b. Establishing and modelling ambitious norms for talk

These figures show the average score SLT and students gave against these Benchmarks (scale 1-5)

SLT (TBM1)
3.8

Student (TBM1)
3.8

Teacher Oracy Benchmark answer scale:

1 = I wouldn't know where to start

2 = I can do this but I'd rely on a lot of support from others (e.g. resources, lesson plans, advice from a colleague)

3 = I can do this but I'd need a little support from others (e.g. resources, lesson plans, advice from a colleague)

4 = I can do this without support

5 = I can do this and would be able to explain how to do this to a colleague
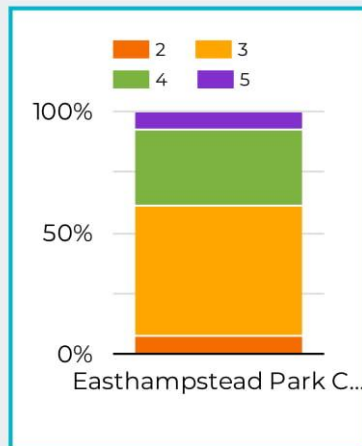
Teacher Oracy Benchmarks: 2&3

For each Benchmark you can see the proportion of teachers emerging, meeting or exceeding, as self-assessed against each Benchmark (the chart on the right, 'Overall teacher scores'). This self-assessment is derived from teachers' responses to two statements (labelled 'a' and 'b', on the right), which they answered on a scale from 1-5 (described on p.12).
The figures on the right show SLT and student perspectives on each Benchmark: they were asked to rate analogous statements.

2. Values every voice

The teacher supports all students to participate in, and benefit from, oracy in the classroom. The teacher listens meaningfully to students, encouraging them to develop their ideas further, and creates a culture in which students do the same.
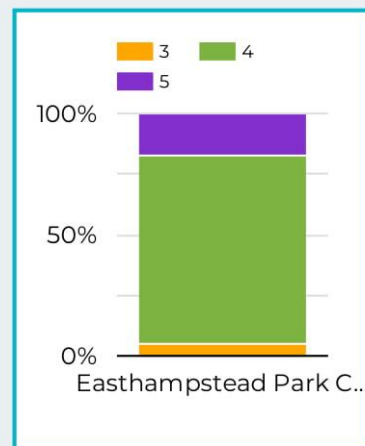
2. Overall teacher scores
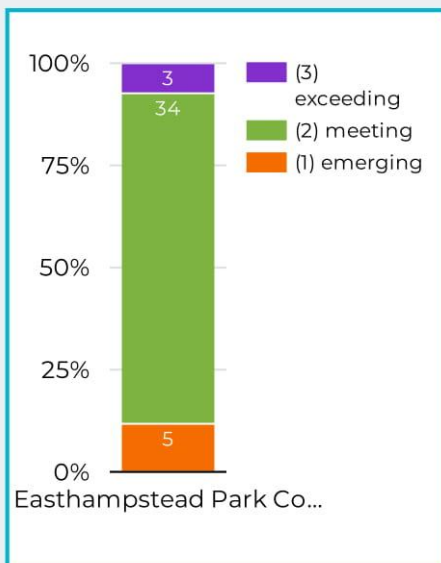
2a. Differentiating oracy tasks to ensure every student benefits

2b. Ensuring students know they will be listened to by their peers


These figures show the average score SLT and students gave against these Benchmarks (scale 1-5)

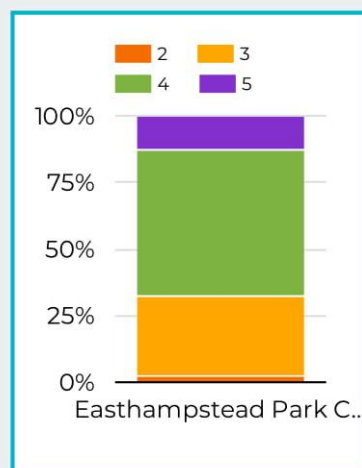| SLT (TBM2) |
|---|
| 3.7 |

Student (TBM2)
3.8

3. Teaches oracy explicitly

The teacher has a strong understanding of what constitutes good oracy in different contexts and is intentional in their teaching of oracy. They are deliberate and strategic in their planning for oracy teaching, and tactically exploit opportunities to ensure their students' skills develop over time.
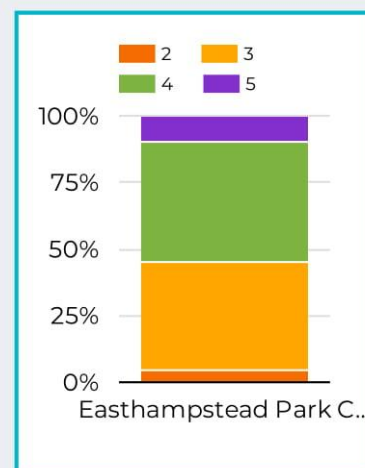
3. Overall teacher scores
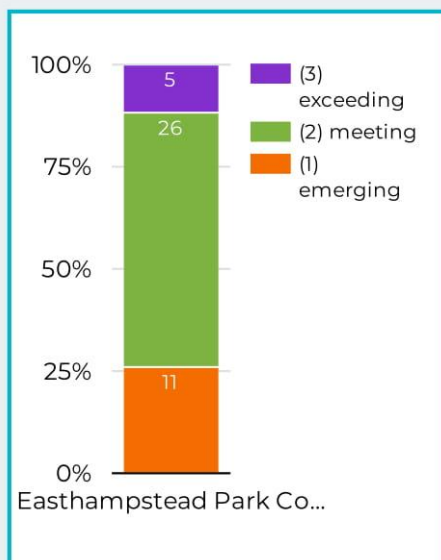
3a. Teaching oracy skills explicitly on a regular basis

3b. Planning lessons which sequentially build my students' oracy skills over time

SLT (TBM3)
3.3

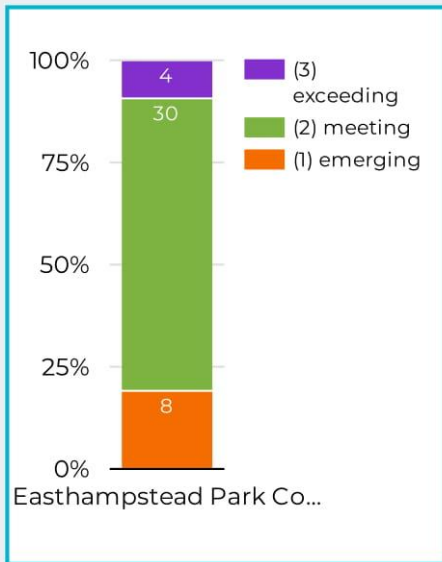| Student (TBM3) |
|---|
| 2.9 |

Teacher Oracy Benchmarks: 4&5

For each Benchmark you can see the proportion of teachers emerging, meeting or exceeding, as self-assessed against each Benchmark (the chart on the right, 'Overall teacher scores'). This self-assessment is derived from teachers' responses to two statements (labelled 'a' and 'b', on the right), which they answered on a scale from 1-5 (described on p.12).
The figures on the right show SLT and student perspectives on each Benchmark: they were asked to rate analogous statements.

4. Harnesses oracy to elevate learning

The teacher considers how oracy can deepen and enhance students' knowledge and understanding within a given subject, domain or context. As a result, students are engaged in dialogue, both with the teacher and their peers, which encourages them to articulate, justify and expand their ideas and have opportunities to share, develop and consolidate their understanding through talk.
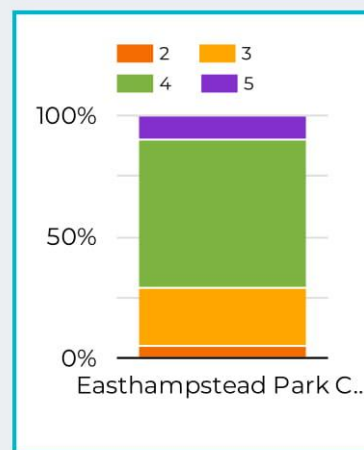
4. Overall teacher scores

4a. Supporting students - high-quality discussion that enhances curricular learning
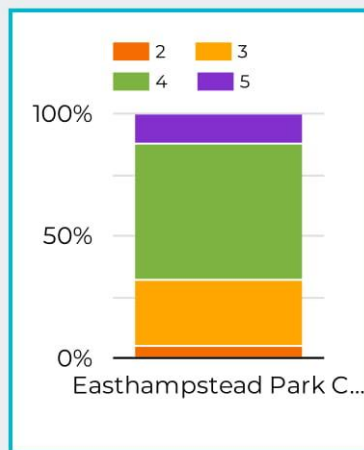
*4b. Supporting students - orally present their learning (consolidate/enhance curricular learning)*

These figures show the average score SLT and students gave against these Benchmarks (scale 1-5)

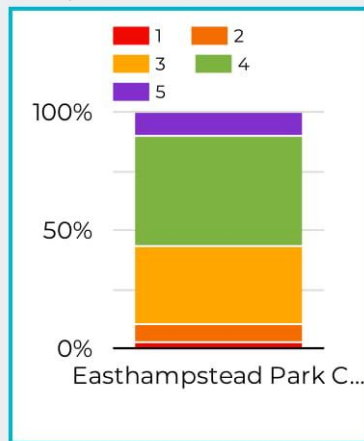| SLT (TBM4) |
|---|
| 3.4 |

Student (TBM4)
3.8

5. Appraises progress in oracy

The teacher evaluates their students' progress in oracy and uses this to inform their teaching. Opportunities are created for students to reflect on and receive meaningful feedback on their oracy, from both the teacher and their peers.
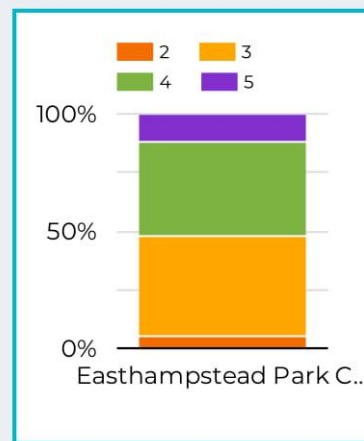
5. Overall teacher scores
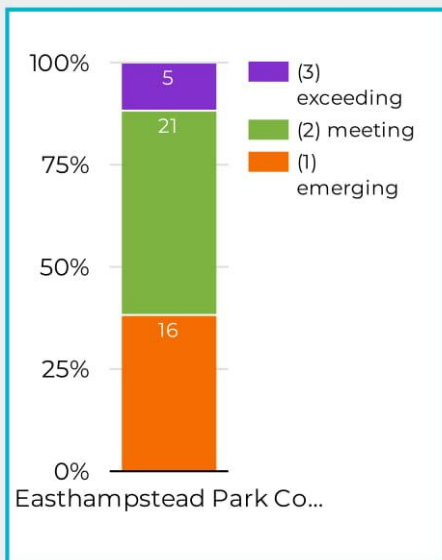
5a. Understanding students' strengths and areas for development and planning teaching in response to this

5b. Supporting my students to reflect on their own and others' oracy skills

SLT (TBM5)
2.7

Student (TBM5)
3.0

School Oracy Benchmarks: 1-3

The School Oracy Benchmarks articulate the strategic decisions to be made by school leaders to ensure every child in their school benefits from a high quality oracy education. They reflect the key levers for change available to a school's leadership.

For each Benchmark you can see your school's final score (out of 7), which is based on responses from staff and in some cases (Benchmarks 1, 2 and 4), responses from students.

All staff rated the same statements (you can see these above the charts on the right) from "S1" (strongly disagree) to "S7" (strongly agree). Students rated analogous statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), although their aggregated responses are shown below as if on a 7 point scale, for ease of comparison.

1. Has an ambitious vision for oracy

School leaders value oracy as an integral part of how their school provides an effective education. They can articulate clear aims for oracy which guide decision-making, allocation of resources and planning. As a result, everybody in the school community shares in, understands their contribution to, and is motivated by, fulfilling the vision.

Final score (SBM1)	Student (SBM1)
5.8	5.2

Scores are given on a scale from 1-7

We have articulated as a school our priorities for oracy and the actions we need to take to improve further, e.g. oracy is in our School Development Plan
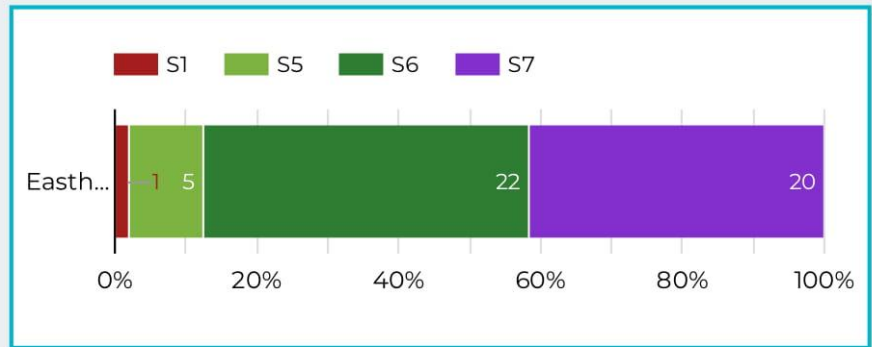
2. Builds a culture of oracy

The school maximises opportunities for oracy for all students; students use their voices in meaningful contexts in and beyond the classroom. Across the school community, oracy is nurtured by everyday interactions and is visible, showcased and celebrated throughout school life.

Final score (SBM2)	Student (SBM2)
4.9	4.7

Students at my school have regular opportunities to practice and showcase their oracy skills outside of the classroom, e.g. speaking in assemblies, speaking at school events, a speech day

3. Has a sustained and wide-ranging curriculum for oracy

The school's curriculum is intentionally designed to develop students' oracy knowledge and skills. As students move through school, the curriculum provides new challenges and opportunities for oracy which build on previous learning. As a result, students are taught how to engage in a range of different types of talk, varying the context and audience.

Final score (SBM3)
5.6

As students move up the school, they continue to develop their oracy through new challenges and opportunities, building on previous learning.

School Oracy Benchmarks: 4&5

For each Benchmark you can see your school's final score (out of 7), which is based on responses from staff and in some cases (Benchmarks 1, 2 and 4), responses from students.

All staff rated the same statements (you can see these above the charts on the right) from "S1" (strongly disagree) to "S7" (strongly agree). Students rated analogous statements from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), although their aggregated responses are shown below as if on a 7 point scale, for ease of comparison.

The most important thing to consider here is to compare your scores for one Benchmark to those for another, to find your school's relative strengths and areas for development.

4. Recognises oracy as central to learning

School leaders consider how oracy can deepen and enhance students' knowledge and understanding across subjects, contexts and phases, fostering common and domain-specific approaches to learning through talk. As a result, classroom talk is used skillfully to develop students' thinking and understanding.

Final score (SBM4)	Student (SBM4)
5.6	5.3

Scores are given on a scale from 1-7

Oracy is a central part of my school's approach to teaching and learning

5. Is accountable for the impact of oracy

School leaders proactively seek information to support their understanding of the effectiveness of oracy provision and its impact on students. This information is used to refine and improve the school's approach to developing oracy.

Final score (SBM5)
5.9

My school evaluates the impact and effectiveness of its oracy provision on students, e.g. student or teacher voice, learning walks or observations of student talk, tracking student progress in oracy

What's next?

Throughout the year, we will use the Oracy Benchmarks as a shared understanding of what it looks like to provide a high quality oracy education. As your Oracy Consultant, I'll help you to use this Benchmark Report as part of the creation of your implementation plan. Here are some areas of reflection for us to consider:
- It's great to see that students overwhelmingly see the value of being a good speaker and listener. Most feel confident and enjoy engaging in exploratory talk, but less so when it comes to presentational talk. Can we find a way to change the culture, equip teachers and scaffold children in order to shift this?
- Teaching staff's self-assessment against the benchmarks suggest that they feel confident in teaching oracy explicitly, but would need support with in particular differentiation for oracy (in Teacher Benchmark 2) and planning lessons which build students' oracy skills over time (TBM 3). Can your oracy champions model and share the strategies they are using to differentiate oracy tasks? How can you use the oracy framework to arm teachers with the understanding to plan lessons that build up students' oracy skills?
- If we look at the school benchmarks we can see that teachers recognise that Easthampstead Park is making oracy a priority. Looking at school benchmark 2, a number of teachers feel that this has not yet become a part of your school culture. How can you ensure that oracy is visible and present to students and teachers every day? How can you begin to create that common language around oracy? Can you ensure that expect to use talk as a part of their school day?