



January 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Oracy Skills

We would like parents and carers to be part of an exciting development in our year 7 and 8 curriculum.

As your child reaches adolescence, many of you will experience conversations at home where you get limited responses to questions about their day. We are hoping to change this by offering you supportive and constructive statements and guided questions that can be used as a tool to generate further conversation and develop oracy skills.

As you are aware Oracy (the ability to express yourself fluently and grammatically in speech) features in our year 7 curriculum for developing the following:

- Cognitive (thinking skills) development and learning in school.
- Preparation for participation in the wider world.
- Writing skills through increasing breadth of vocabulary and learning structuring techniques.

There are several projects taking place within school to make this a priority across all year groups. Year 7 students have Oracy lessons, during which they are taught the essential oracy skills that enable talking to learn and learning to talk. They also participate in a citizenship community project called 'First Give'. In year 8 they further develop those skills by working towards a national competition called 'Up for Debate', which as the name suggests, helps them develop skills in debating. Within every subject your child studies at Key Stage 3 there is an oracy strand to further develop the skills needed for the wider world.

The best way we can all work together to support your child is through having regular conversations. A weekly text message will be sent to you with a question and some discussion points that will link to something the students have been learning in school.

Some tools you might like to use are [cards](#) which give guiding questions. Your child uses these in Oracy lessons so will be familiar with the job roles as well as the [Oracy skills](#) document.

It is important to add that your child does not need to provide evidence of these discussions, all we are asking is that you encourage them to talk about their learning.

The first text will be sent by Mrs Stephenson, please look out for this. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Stephenson at fran.stephenson@biddenham.beds.sch.uk.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs F Stephenson
Head of Year 8

Miss E Simpson
Assistant Headteacher - KS3
Head of Oracy and Project Based Learning