

Philosophy for Children (P4C) Policy

Date: June 2022
Review Due: June 2024

Reviewed Bi-Annually



"Children must be taught how to think, not what to think."
Margaret Mead

Philosophy for Children (P4C) Policy

“The aim of dialogue is to help participants become more thoughtful, reflective, considerate and reasonable individuals.”

(Thinking in Education by Matthew Lipman, 1991)

This policy explains our approach to the teaching of Philosophy for Children (P4C) and its contribution to the curriculum at Cayley Primary School.

Its purpose is to:

Assist members of staff in their planning and delivery of Philosophy for Children.
Provide a reference for staff, parents, governors, trustees, visitors to the school and Ofsted Inspectors.

Enable the Head and Governing Body to identify priorities related to the development of Philosophy for Children in the school.

Rationale:

At Cayley Primary School, philosophy enquiry underpins the ideas and values of the way we believe our school should be. We aim to create an environment where children feel that they have the freedom to explore ideas and ask questions in all areas of school life. Philosophy for Children is an important way of teaching and developing the questioning and critical thinking skills which are reflected in the National Curriculum. P4C activities can be used in all subjects across the curriculum and it is important that children learn to transfer their skills in other areas of their learning.

Aims:

P4C focuses on thinking skills and communal dialogue ('philosophising'), and aims to build a “community of enquiry” defined as: *a group of people used to thinking together with a view to increasing their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of each other.*

Within this community of enquiry participants develop four key types of thinking:

- *Collaborative: thinking with others*
- *Caring: thinking of others*
- *Critical: making reasoned judgements*
- *Creative: creating new ideas*

As well as promoting higher order thinking skills, P4C develops the pupils' ability to articulate their thoughts using mature vocabulary in both speaking and in writing. This has a significant impact on their development as speakers, writers and citizens. It teaches durable and transferrable thinking skills which have impact across the curriculum and allow pupils to make links between their learning.

P4C is an integral part of the school's curriculum and is a powerful tool in developing our pupils both academically and personally.

Planning:

Planning for the subject is the responsibility of the class teacher or may be done by a Year Group if the session is linked to another subject or a specific skill. P4C sessions take place each week in class from Nursery to Year 6, and cover a wide range of themes and concepts relevant to the age of the children. The length of the session depends on the age of the children and the topic being discussed. They typically last between 30 minutes (EYFS), 45 minutes (KS1) and 1 hour (KS2). P4C activities can also be integrated into other subjects in shorter time periods.

Structure

This structure is used as a guidance for P4C sessions at Cayley Primary School. Lessons are not restricted to this structure alone and should be adapted according to the activity/stimulus and year group being taught.

What does P4C look like at Cayley Primary School?

- Preparation (Warm up activities)
- Stimulus (Stories, pictures, music, video clips, statements, objects, poems).
- Thinking Time (Private Reflection)
- Conversation (Shared Reflection)
- Formulation of questions.
- Airing of questions.
- Selection of questions.
- First words
- Building dialogue
- Last words/shared reflection

Success Criteria:

When children are able to:

- Ask good questions to provide a focus for the enquiry.
- Give reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements.
- Clarify concepts through making connections, distinctions and comparisons.
- Generate ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking.
- Test for truth by gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples.
- Expand ideas by sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument.
- Summarise by abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

Role of the Facilitator:

- Questioning: Asking good questions to provide a focus for the enquiry;
- Reasoning: Requesting reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements;
- Defining: Clarifying concepts through making connections, distinctions and comparisons;
- Speculating: Generating ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking;
- Testing for truth: Gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples;
- Expanding ideas: Sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument;
- Summarising: Abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

Role of the Subject Leader:

It is the responsibility of the P4C leader to monitor the quality and teaching in P4C. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their facilitation of P4C and provide a strategic lead and direction for P4C in school.

Assessment:

Within P4C sessions, attainment is assessed through discussions and reviews e.g., when reviewing a session against the chosen 4C. Each class has a P4C display board/P4C floor book which shows what children have been learning. These are updated regularly to show the theme of sessions and chosen questions. In addition, each year group reviews and reports the progress of children each half term, focussing on the development of the types of questions asked and how philosophical the conversations are becoming. Pupil voice will also be used as part of regular assessment.

Links to Other Areas of the Curriculum:

P4C impacts significantly on all areas of the curriculum as it develops the critical thinking skills of pupils. This allows pupils to make connections between their learning experiences and apply higher order thinking skills across the curriculum.

English: P4C contributes significantly to the development of skills in spoken language in our school by actively promoting the skills of speaking and listening. Through philosophical enquiry children are provided with regular opportunities to make progress against all the statutory requirements for spoken language outlined in the National Curriculum. P4C also promotes standards in writing by broadening the understanding of and range of vocabulary available to the children and developing their ability to articulate and justify their ideas clearly to the reader. Reading skills are used as part of P4C as children need to recall, infer and deduce information about a stimulus, the opinions of others and of their own thoughts.

Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE): P4C makes a significant contribution to the teaching of PSHE. P4C gives children opportunities to explore moral dilemmas, debate and discuss key issues. By developing their skills as caring thinkers, they learn to value and respect the views of others even if they disagree with them. Children also learn to show sympathy towards others, take turns and encourage participation from all members of the community.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development: P4C offers children many opportunities to examine some of the bigger questions in life. It allows children to explore the definitions of concepts and consider what they mean to them personally. This allows children to develop their own beliefs and values which creates confident individuals who can express themselves articulately.

Whilst P4C enquiries that have cross curricular links can allow children to deepen their views and insight gain into other subjects, it is important that it remains a “**true enquiry**” through which pupils can explore ideas and does not become a vehicle used for delivering content.

Inclusion:

P4C will be taught in accordance with the schools Special Needs Policy. We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different abilities and backgrounds in classes and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

Equal Opportunities:

P4C will be taught in accordance with the school policy for Equal Opportunities and the requirements of the National Curriculum. P4C will actively promote multicultural awareness and provide a positive approach towards equal opportunities in race, gender and ability.

“Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.” (Margaret Mead)