



Philosophy Policy 2024

Intent

Philosophy for children (P4C) is an integral part of the teaching and learning approach at Minet Junior School. 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.* It gives children a structured and safe opportunity to develop four key types of thinking:

- Collaborative: thinking with others, responding and supporting, building on other's ideas
- Caring: thinking of others, listening and valuing, showing an interest in others opinions
- Critical: making reasoned judgements, questioning and reasoning, seeking meaning
- Creative: creating new ideas, connecting and suggesting, providing examples and explanation

Children are able to speak freely in P4C sessions, voicing their opinions and listening to their peers in a structured and nurturing environment. The aim of P4C is to develop children's oracy and vocabulary, increase their confidence when speaking in front of a group and develop their thinking skills, to enable the pupils to articulate their thoughts using mature vocabulary in both speaking and writing. We also aim to build respect between pupils through the opportunity to politely agree and disagree with thoughts and opinions. The approach fostered through P4C will help to develop higher levels of self-esteem and intellectual confidence for our children. Pupils learn the skills to be clear in their thinking so that they can explain their ideas, give good reasons for their views and develop their vocabulary. P4C teaches durable and transferable thinking skills which have an impact across the curriculum and allows pupils to make links between their learning. It also teaches patience, respect to others and a better understanding of the world around us.

Implementation

P4C promotes an enquiry-based curriculum where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and find answers through discussion of social values. Therefore, children develop the ability to recognise differences and explore these constructively. P4C is taught through stand-alone lessons as well as through opportunities for purposeful cross curricular links, for example; English, history and RE.

P4C is taught across Key Stage 2 and develops to encompass world and current affairs as well as social issues that may have a direct influence upon the children's lives. Children debate issues using their developing skills and language.

Children learn through the 10 steps of philosophical enquiry:

1. Preparation – getting the group into the P4C mood
2. Presentation of a Stimulus – an engaging, relevant and meaningful stimulus which contains some 'big' concepts and will inspire philosophical questions
3. Personal Response – time for children to independently reflect on the stimulus
4. Question making – groups share personal responses and create open, discussable questions
5. Question-aiing – questions are shared and any ambiguity or vagueness explained
6. Question-choosing – one question is agreed upon as the focus of the enquiry
7. First Words – getting the enquiry started
8. Middle Words – children build on other's ideas
9. Last Words – a chance for pupils to offer their final words on what has been discussed
10. Review – what went well and even better if – use this step for planning of the next session

A typical philosophy lesson starts with a game and then the children are given a stimulus, such as a picture book, a video or a piece of music or art. They will create a list of philosophical questions inspired by the stimulus – anything from, 'Are friends more important than family?' to, 'Is it ever okay to steal?' – and vote on which one to talk about. The class then has an 'enquiry' – an open dialogue – around that question.

Impact

Each lesson finishes with a debrief of enquiry. Here the children decide what has worked well and what could be improved. This is a fantastic opportunity for the children to self-assess themselves and their new learning and understanding. The progression of skills can be seen across the school through the children's ability to discuss more complex questions.

The impact of P4C is to help pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equipping them to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in an inclusive school and in a diverse wider society. It will also prepare them to enter secondary education with the ability to think and articulate their opinions independently. Subject and school leaders regularly monitor the impact of our curriculum provision including listening to the voice of our children.

Objectives

The teaching of P4C will enable children to:

- listen to and value the opinions of others
- respond to, encourage and build on the ideas of others

- make connections between ideas and speculate on alternative explanations
- be independent and adaptable in their thinking
- ask philosophical questions
- seek clarification, justification and supporting evidence
- evaluate the ideas and viewpoints of others
- develop discussion and debating skills through the use of structured sentences to build on the opinions of others.

P4C curriculum planning

P4C is an integral part of the curriculum at Minet. We have developed an overview of 'Golden Concepts' which are taught one per half term, per year group. They relate to a curriculum topic and are used as the basis for P4C discussions and planning during that term. They range in difficulty to show progression.

Golden Concepts

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Autumn 1	Change 	Commitment 	Diversity 	Home
Autumn 2	Safety 	Power 	Relationships 	Equality
Spring 1	Family 	Environment 	Courage 	War
Spring 2	Community 	Freedom 	Wealth 	Belonging
Summer 1	Friendship 	Charity 	Ethnicity 	Prejudice
Summer 2	Health 	Difference 	Appearance 	Change

An engaging stimulus is selected, such as a story, poem, short film, object or image. Teachers consider the key concepts that may arise from the stimulus and plan for opportunities to challenge thinking. Cross curricular links are planned for where relevant in order to immerse pupils more fully in their learning.

P4C in Key Stage 2

At Minet, we have a weekly whole school question for the children across the school to think about and share their thoughts. P4C skills are also developed through fortnightly enquiries that last from 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on the age and maturity of the children.

A stand-alone P4C lesson is expected to be taught once per half term – these can be linked to the weekly question, termly topic or be something linked specifically to the class. Two cross-curricular lessons are also expected per half term. Each P4C session should be recorded in the P4C floorbook.

All staff follow the 10 step P4C process to ensure consistency of approach and clear expectations for pupils, although all ten steps do not necessarily need to be covered in one session. For example, a teacher may decide to provide the main question whilst focusing on developing other skills or sessions may be split into two 30 minute blocks. Once this process has become embedded, creativity in delivering P4C is encouraged to ensure it remains an enjoyable and engaging part of our curriculum for all.

The teacher takes on the role of facilitator in order to support and challenge the children in their thinking, reasoning and dialogue ensuring these are of a high quality. The facilitator guides the groups towards a better understanding of the issue discussed and supports reflection on the effectiveness of the enquiry.

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.

The National Curriculum statutory requirements for spoken language states that all pupils should learn to:

- listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers
- ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge
- use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions

- give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including expressing feelings
- maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas
- speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of standard English
- participate in discussions and debates
- gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.

P4C also promotes standards in writing by broadening the range of vocabulary available to the children and developing their ability to articulate and justify their ideas clearly to the reader.

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

P4C makes a significant contribution to the teaching of PSHCE. 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.

Development of Skills

Years 3 and 4

- I can explain how ideas are linked
- I can explore a range of different possibilities
- I can suggest new and alternative ideas
- I can identify the 'big ideas' in a stimulus and ask questions related to these

- I can draw upon evidence and my own experiences to support my ideas and suggest reasoned conclusions
- I can understand how others feel
- I can show an interest in what others are saying
- I can encourage others to join in
- I can support and build on the ideas of others
- I can keep focussed on the matter at hand
- I can demonstrate a willingness to illustrate ideas with my own experiences

Years 5 and 6

- I can identify associated concepts, explaining their connections and relevance
- I can evaluate in some detail the range of possibilities
- I can ask questions of each other that support the progress of the enquiry
- I can evaluate the evidence offered by myself and others
- I can offer/evaluate a range of reasoned conclusions
- I can air feelings in a way that is supportive to the enquiry
- I can encourage others to contribute
- I can summarise the progress of the enquiry

Role of the Subject Leader

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

The P4C leader will regularly look at displays and the class P4C book to ensure high quality questions and enquiries are taking place.

P4C has the power to help children effectively combine their skills, knowledge, experiences and curiosity in their personal journey.