



Philosophy for Children (P4C) Policy

Ethos

At Moorpark we enable children to 'reach' for their goals, 'explore', 'believe' in themselves and each other and therefore 'achieve'.

Through enriching, engaging and well differentiated lessons we aim to develop excited and eager learners who are inspired to achieve beyond their expectations.

Aims

We aim to do this by providing an enquiry based curriculum through Philosophy for Children (P4C), where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and wonder about the world, other people and themselves. Through discussion, children find answers, thereby developing their ability to reason, recognise differences and explore these constructively. 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 questioning, reasoning and high order thinking skills. Philosophy can be used in all subjects across the curriculum to challenge children to think deeply about their views through reflection and working collaboratively.

Within the enquiry children develop four key types of thinking:

- Caring = listening (concentrating) and valuing (appreciating)

E.g. showing interest in, and sensitivity to, others' experiences and values

- Collaborative = responding (communicating) and supporting (conciliating)

E.g. building on each other's ideas, shaping common understandings and purposes

- Critical = questioning (interrogating) and reasoning (evaluating)

E.g. seeking meaning, evidence, reasons, distinctions, and good judgements

- Creative = connecting (relating) and suggesting (speculating)

E.g. providing comparisons, examples, criteria, alternative explanations or conceptions

As well as promoting higher order thinking skills and reasoning skills, P4C develops the pupils' ability to express 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.

Teaching methodology and key principles of P4C

Every P4C lesson, each class has their own set of rules which are decided as a class.

These rules are reflected on during each session. The classroom is organised in such a way that people are able to discuss their ideas and thoughts as a class and in groups, (usually in a circle).

A typical P4C enquiry will look like this:

Getting Set

Presentation of Stimulus

Thinking Time

Question-Making

Question-Choosing

First Thoughts

Last Thoughts

Review

Equal opportunities / Inclusion

Moorpark ensures that all children gain equal access to the P4C curriculum regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability or individual need. A variety of teaching and learning styles are employed including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches within whole class sessions, ability and mixed ability groups, pairs and individual teaching and learning in order to cater for all individual needs. We enable all, to fully access the curriculum by making 'reasonable adjustments' to overcome any barriers.

Planning

P4C at Moorpark is planned by class teachers on a weekly basis. When teachers plan lessons, they consider a skills each week according to the needs of the class. Activities are chosen carefully to develop the skills. When planning for the enquiry, teachers choose an engaging stimulus to challenge thinking. Teachers then 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 fully in their learning. The SAPERE Handbook is vital to refer to as part of the planning process. The length of each session will depend on the needs of the children, as will the content.

Assessment

Progression in P4C is not something that can easily be assessed in a summative manner. We believe all children further their thinking skills, understanding of the world and empathy through being involved in the sessions. For many a verbal contribution, or articulation of thought shows progression in thinking. For others a private and personal progression might not be noted by the facilitator from individual responses, but giving each child the opportunity to be as involved as they wish to be, and always having a clear expectation that the children will be reflective, if not contributing verbally themselves, is the progression we would hope for.

Monitoring and evaluation

The subject leaders and senior leadership team take responsibility for monitoring the standards and quality of teaching in P4C. The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in their teaching. All staff will receive quality training to deliver effective P4C sessions.

Record keeping

Floor books are kept as a record of each enquiry. Within the floorbook, it will be clear what skills each year group are looking at as well as a record of their stimulus, questions and discussions.