



Philosophy for Children (P4C) at The Sherwood School

Introduction

Through P4C we hope to engage our children in enquiry based learning where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and wonder about the world, other people and themselves. Our aim is to provide a holistic curriculum offer that supports children's personal development so that they grow to become active, thoughtful and considerate adults in the future. P4C sits perfectly alongside our work as a UNICEF Gold Rights Respecting School. As duty bearers of children's rights, our aim is to:

- advocate pupil voice and ensure that children learn to communicate their ideas clearly;
- teach children to respect that other people may have a different point of view;
- teach children to develop listening skills to enable them to discuss arguments in a safe and stimulating environment.

Principles of P4C

Through discussion with their peers, children develop a greater understanding of the questions they raise and the issues behind and within them. This helps them develop their ability to reason, recognise and appreciate similarities and 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 therefore an important element of teaching and learning for the 21st Century, developing questioning, reasoning and high order thinking skills.

It is our aim that a P4C session will be planned for and take place on a weekly basis, although it 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 (the 4Cs of P4C):

- **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

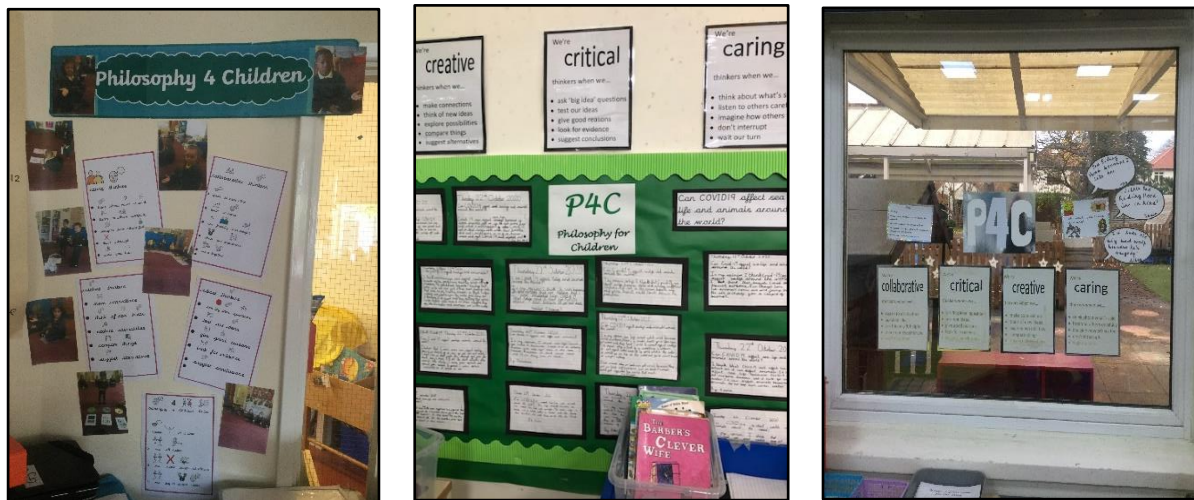
As well as promoting higher order thinking skills and reasoning skills, P4C develops children's ability to express their thoughts using mature vocabulary in both speaking

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 negotiated as a class. These rules are reflected on during each session.



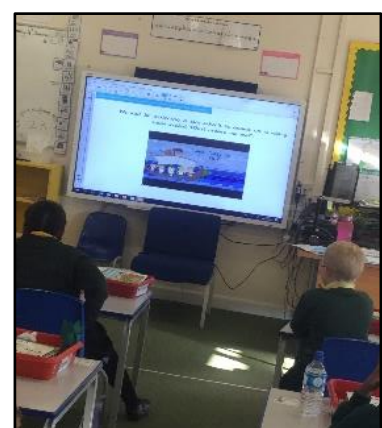
COVID-19

Pre Covid, the classroom is organised in such a way that children and adults are encouraged to discuss their ideas and thoughts during P4C enquiries both as a class and in groups, (usually in a circle). During Covid children will stay at their tables and turn to talk to others.

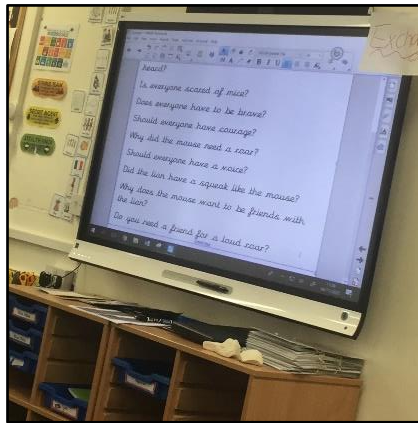
A typical P4C enquiry

Usually, P4C enquiries consist of a 10 step process:

1. **Preparation** – Recapping rules and aims. Building a sense of community.
2. **Presentation of Stimulus** - Something engaging, relevant and meaningful is presented to the children to inspire philosophical questions. This might be an object, picture, book, piece of music or film.



3. **Thinking Time** – generating thoughts on the stimulus.
4. **Question-Making** - creating questions as groups or individuals.



5. **Airing Questions** – A celebration of questions formed. Analysis, clarification, comparisons and differences can be noted.
6. **Question-Choosing** - A question is chosen – by the children - to focus on.
7. **First Thoughts** – Getting the enquiry started through dialogue
8. **Building the dialogue** – building on each other's ideas.
9. **Last Thoughts** – final words on discussions
10. **Review** – What went well (WWW) Even better if (EBI). Children reflect on how they did in relation to the 4 C's.

Equal opportunities / Inclusion

At The Sherwood we ensure 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 for P4C

At The Sherwood, P4C is planned for by class teachers on a weekly basis. Activities are chosen carefully to develop skills. When planning for the enquiry, teachers choose an engaging stimulus to foster the children's curiosity and challenge their 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. Philosophical thinking and the 4Cs should be interwoven and referred to throughout curriculum areas. Displays of the 4Cs are displayed in each classroom as a reference point.

The SAPERE Handbook is available to refer to as part of the planning process. The length of each session will depend on the needs and age of the children, as will the content.

Assessment

Progression in P4C is not something that can easily be assessed in the usual way, however teachers monitor children's development by noting how well they are able to participate, listen and share ideas, develop articulacy and language acquisition and engage with the session.

We believe that all our children will develop their thinking skills, their understanding of the world and their empathy through being involved in the sessions. For many, a verbal contribution shows progression in thinking. For others, a more private and personal progression might be noted by the teacher through individual responses. Each child will have the opportunity to be as involved as they wish to be, and children will have a clear expectation that they will be reflective in their thoughts, even if not contributing verbally.

Monitoring and evaluation

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

Evidence

Class teachers will support the P4C lead in collecting evidence through photographs, notes, children's questions, smart notebooks and children's writing. Teachers will also consider how to incorporate the 4 C's of P4C into planning for all subjects so that children are given opportunities to develop their thinking skills and articulacy across the curriculum. Children's work will be displayed demonstrating how the 4C's have been incorporated within the learning.