

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School

Philosophy for Children (P4C) Policy

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

Its purpose is to:

- Assist members of staff in their planning and delivery of Philosophy for Children.
- Provide a reference for parents, governors, visitors to the school, Local Authority representatives 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 Blessed Sacrament School philosophical 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. Philosophy for children 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.

P4C focuses on thinking skills and communal dialogue

('philosophising'), and aims to build 'communities of enquiry' where participants develop the 4Cs: creative, critical, caring and collaborative thinking skills.

Aims

At Blessed Sacrament Primary School we aim to:

- help children and young people develop into effective, critical and creative thinkers and to take responsibility for their own learning in a caring and collaborative environment, by providing practical ways of developing good thinking, questioning and communication skills.
- create a caring classroom situation where children; learn to listen to and respect each other and make links between matters of personal concern such as; love, growing up, friendship, bullying and fairness. And more general philosophical issues such as; change, personal identity, free will, space, time and truth.
- encourage children to challenge and explore the beliefs and values of others, and to develop their own views and experience quiet moments of thinking and reflection.
- encourage children to learn to be clear in their thinking and to make responsible and more deliberate judgement.
- encourage children to learn to be more thoughtful by basing their decisions and actions on reasons.
- have high expectations of children's abilities to think critically and creatively and to develop morally and socially.

- use P4C to help to enhance the quality of learning and raise standards of attainment and achievement;
- develop higher levels of self-esteem, greater independence and improved behaviour through the development of caring attitudes towards peers and to boost intellectual confidence.

P4C Structure

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

- 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
- Last words

Role of the Facilitator:

- Questioning: Asking good questions to support 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.

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.

Planning

P4C should be planned for at least twice each half term. There is a Blessed Sacrament planning template on the system. The lessons should be a mixture of stand-alone and cross-curricular lessons. Where P4C is taught through another subject a separate planning sheet is not needed (highlight on other plan). P4C can be integrated into other subjects encouraging children to use philosophical skills throughout their learning.

Assessment

Assessment is mainly through observation and recording in floor books. 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. Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques can be used to monitor children throughout a lesson. For example; monitoring children who might have changed their thinking since the beginning of an enquiry; or those who have had questions answered/still have questions to ask.