

Philosophy for Children (P4C) Policy



Through respect we will work together in
Christ to develop the whole child

Written: September 2021

Date of review: September 2022

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St Matthews Policy for Philosophy

This policy explains our approach to the teaching of Philosophy for Children (P4C) and its contribution to the curriculum at St Matthew's 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 St Matthew's Catholic 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.

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.

We strive to help our pupils to be effective, critical and creative thinkers and to take responsibility for their own learning in a caring and collaborative environment. We aim to do this by providing an enquiry based curriculum and Philosophy for Children (P4C) where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and find the answers through discussion, thereby developing the ability to recognise differences and explore these constructively.

Aims

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School we aim to:

- Develop the skills of enquiry, investigation and analysis.
- Encourage critical thinking.
- Develop the knowledge of, and evaluate, different types of questions.
- Adopt a holistic, all inclusive approach to the development of the children.

Planning

At St Matthews, P4C is imbedded within our school curriculum. P4C is delivered regularly through all areas of the curriculum but is also taught through stand-alone lessons.

Termly planning is provided by the P4C coordinator linked to different areas of the curriculum including **RE, Geography, History, English, Music, Art, PSHE and Science.**

The length of the session depends on the age of the children and the topic being discussed. They typically last between 15 minutes (EYFS), 30 minutes (KS1) and 60 minutes (KS2). P4C activities can also be integrated into the core subjects in shorter time periods.

Assessment

Each lesson ends with an evaluation of the enquiry. During this time, the children reflect and comment on what has worked well and what could be improved. The children complete self and peer assessments to recognise their new learning and understanding. Each lesson allows the children to develop their P4C and communication skills as well as allowing them to explore different areas of the curriculum through different mediums. Progression of skills is evident throughout the school through the children's ability to form and answer complex questions.

As P4C is taught across the curriculum, each lesson is evidenced in the workbook related to the topic at hand. Eg a P4C lesson associated with a history topic is recorded in the children's history book. This is titled and stamped accordingly. Further evidence is acquired through videos and pictures of different parts of the enquiries which are often evidenced on the school website/Class Twitter pages and/or on class displays.

Staff use this, together with assessments made during class discussions, to assess the children. Teachers then annotate plans after each session with the names of the children who are exceeding and working towards the objective.

Subject and school leaders monitor the impact of our curriculum provision through completing regular monitoring of evidence, analysing assessment data collected by class staff and through listening to the voice of our children.

Structure

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

Children learn through the 10 steps of philosophical enquiry:

1. Getting Set - a group activity
2. Presentation of a Stimulus
3. Private Reflection
4. Shared Reflection
5. Formulation of questions
6. Airing of questions
7. Selection of question (voting)
8. First Thoughts in response to the chosen question
9. Building Ideas Together - discussing the question in a group
10. Final Thoughts - their final reflection on the question supported by group discussions

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. The children record their thoughts in words, pictures and in video format.

P4C promotes an enquiry-based curriculum where students are encouraged to ask questions and find the answers through discussion. Children come together as a whole class for regular discussions about a wide variety of themes and topics. These sessions give children the opportunity to speak freely and

exchange and discuss ideas and opinions in a nurturing and safe environment. Children are encouraged to ask questions, explore alternative ideas and try to understand the views of others.

Special Needs

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

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. 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.

Appendix

Following the impact of Corona Virus/COVID-19, plans and content have been reviewed and will continue to be reviewed to ensure there are 'no gaps' on the curriculum pathway for children in P4C at St Matthew's and to ensure that milestones can be achieved appropriately. As P4C is imbedded within other areas of the curriculum, staff have and will continue to liaise with each other to ensure children will continue to receive a broad, balanced curriculum that helps with the assessment and achievement of all.