

**Churchfields Infants' School
Nursery Unit and Language Facility**

Philosophy Policy

Rationale

The teaching of Philosophy for Children (P4C) in the curriculum can reap many benefits. There is evidence that it can raise attainment in the more traditional subjects such as maths and reading, but its greater strengths are applied across the curriculum as a whole through the skills acquired in philosophy sessions. These are carried out regularly throughout the whole school and our belief is that this has a positive effect on the children's emotional awareness and thinking skills as it encourages questioning and enquiry. It also reinforces respect and tolerances of one's own opinion, as well as that of others. It can help to boost confidence as well as eliminating the fear of 'getting it wrong'. The many benefits that we observe of Philosophy for Children (P4C) will equip our children well with valuable and rewarding life skills.

Aims

From Nursery to Year 2 it is our aim to;

- Create a caring and collaborative space where children feel valued and their ideas are respected.
- Develop children's caring, creative, critical and collaborative thinking skills.
- Encourage skills of enquiry, investigation and analysis.
- Develop knowledge of, and evaluate different types of questions.
- Provide enquiry based sessions which open up children's learning through the exploration of ideas in a safe environment.
- Encourage the children's ability to summarise by abstracting key points from a number of ideas.
- Foster the skills necessary to be clear in their own thinking so they can explain their ideas and give good reasons for their views.
- Give all children the opportunity to enquire and 'think outside of the box'.
- Empower the children to be able to think for themselves.
- Develop the skills necessary so that they can expand on their ideas by sustaining and extending their lines of thought and argument.
- Encourage their confidence to ask questions and learn independently through discussion.
- Boost the children's self-esteem and confidence.
- Value children's ideas and opinions and give them the skills to value others even though they may be different to that of their own.

Teaching and Learning in Philosophy

Most sessions are enquiry based and focus around a central question which is explored throughout the lesson. The adult facilitates the session but the direction this takes is very much led by the children's responses and ideas, especially as the children get older in KS1. The philosophy time is very adaptable so even though it is planned for it can veer away from the original direction if necessary. The children are

encouraged to listen and respond to the points made and are usually sat in a circle/horseshoe shape so that all of the children can visually connect with each other. Some topics discussed during a P4C session can be considered to have more of a sensitive nature; however it is always conducted in a safe and respectful environment. At the end of a session especially when topics have been discussed that are considered sensitive the children are always offered a space to talk about any final ideas and thoughts and if appropriate the adults will speak with specific children afterwards about what was discussed.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Teachers are responsible for providing experiences and activities that encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability, gender, race or religion.

Teachers should set high expectations for every pupil. They should plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief and other areas.

It is important that all children have the opportunity to speak during a P4C session and share their ideas. The adult ensures through various and appropriate strategies that everyone can share their viewpoint at some point during the philosophy time. Children who are more reluctant to share or find this harder are gently encouraged, and sessions are structured in such a way that these children can offer their viewpoint without necessarily needing to talk such as 'vote with your feet'. All children are reminded of the importance of caring thinking which involves listening to others ideas and opinions, making eye contact with the person speaking and responding in a friendly way even if they disagree with what is being said.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

A wide range of pupils have SEND. Lessons should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that these pupils will be able to study the full curriculum. The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice](#) includes advice on approaches to identification of need which can support this. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. Teachers will refer to the SEN and Disability Code of Practice to be clear about what should be done to meet their pupils' needs, in teaching, learning and assessment.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages. The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in the curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers

should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in music as in all subjects

Resources

The Philosophy Co-ordinator is responsible for maintaining an adequate supply of resources. Resources are stored on the school system and some books are stored centrally in the meeting room. It is the responsibility of all staff to make sure that books are returned to their correct places in the resource area. Every class has a copy of the 'Thinker's Games' book.

Assessment and Reporting

We use assessment to inform and develop our teaching. We give feedback verbally to children and observe and record their activity in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Staff assess children's level of attainment during P4C sessions on an on-going basis and this *may* be reported to parents during parent consultations. This informal teacher judgement will alter and affect the speed and direction of the current and future lessons.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Philosophy Co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy as deemed appropriate, by: monitoring planning to ensure it reflects the subject content; monitoring lessons and giving feedback to the teacher; discussing standards with the Headteacher and SLT.