



Garlinge Primary School and Nursery

PHILOSOPHY POLICY

Garlinge Primary School and Nursery is a Rights Respecting School. As part of our commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, please find below the Articles linked to this policy. Details of the articles can be found on the school website:

Articles 3, 4, 6, 13, 15, 17, 28, 29 and 31

Rationale

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery 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 enquiry based activities 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. P4C strengthens children's understanding and speaking and listening skills. 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 and critical thinking skills. Philosophy can be used in all subjects across the curriculum.

The Framework for Philosophy

The framework is based on P4C (Philosophy for Children) however there are no stand-alone P4C sessions but regular "mini-inquiries". Philosophy for Children is designed to develop thinking and reasoning skills and to enhance self-esteem.

Key Principles of P4C

The key practice that starts and drives the whole thinking process is enquiry (interpreted as going beyond information to seek understanding). The key practice that results in significant changes of thought and action is reflection.

These aims and processes can be made more explicit if the teacher asks appropriate questions. These can range from a general invitation (such as: Can anyone respond to that?) to more specific calls that require a considered response. There are ten key elements the teacher can introduce to elicit a considered response:

1. Questions (What don't we understand here? What questions do we have about this?)
2. Hypotheses (Does anyone have any alternative suggestions or explanations?)
3. Reasons (What reasons are there for doing that? What evidence is there for believing this?)
4. Examples (Can anyone think of an example of this? Can someone think of a counter-example?)
5. Distinctions (Can we make a distinction here? Can anyone give a definition?)
6. Connections (Is anyone able to build on that idea? or Can someone link that with another idea?)
7. Implications (What assumptions lie behind this? What consequences does it lead to?)
8. Intentions (Is that what was really meant? Is that what we're really saying?)
9. Criteria (What makes that an example of X? What are the things that really count here?)
10. Consistency (Does that conclusion follow? Are these principles/beliefs consistent?)

Thinking Skills and Philosophical Enquiry

Thinking skills, especially those relevant to creative and critical thinking, are seen as a good thing, because without them there is a danger of not applying one's critical faculties to the whole idea.

Another critical point is that skills of any sort are worthless if one has neither the inclination nor the good sense to use them. We need above all to help children develop the general disposition to think better.

Aims

At Garlinge Primary School and Nursery 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;
- strengthen the common purpose of School e.g. Why are we here? Education of moral, values, ethics and dialogue;
- 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;
- and develop higher levels of self-esteem, greater independence and improved behaviour through the development of caring attitudes towards peers and to boost intellectual confidence.

Expectations

The expectations at Garlinge are:

- P4C is used as a generic teaching and learning tool to deliver many aspects of the curriculum
- A cross-curricular approach is encouraged
- Where possible, P4C is used to deliver the PSHCE curriculum and careful planning is used to make explicit links
- Assessment of P4C is mainly through observation

What does P4C look like at Garlinge Primary School and Nursery?

Elements of P4C:

- Warm up
- Introduction to stimulus

- Creating the questions
- Voting for a question
- Re-cap of rules
- Enquiry (Discuss the question)
- Summing up & final thoughts

Warm up examples:

- Guess what I'm thinking: Choose a child to think of an activity they are doing; children take it in turns to say what they think the child is doing e.g. cooking dinner; child says what they were thinking about e.g. feeding a lion; other children must justify their answers e.g. I was right because you were cooking dinner so you could feed it to a lion;
- Would you rather: Have a line down the middle of the carpet space, class teacher to ask a would you rather question, for example would you rather be a monkey or a lion? Children to choose what they would rather be and then the class teacher ask different children to explain their choice.

Stimuli:

- Stories
- Pictures
- Music
- Video clips
- Statements
- Objects
- Poems

Ask a question:

- To which you know the answer
- To which no-one knows the answer
- To which there may be more than one answer
- Which you could find the answer by looking in a book/on the internet
- Which you can answer without really thinking
- Which you couldn't answer without really thinking

Ask children to justify their choices.

Vote for question:

Once the children have come up with some different questions they vote for their favourite question. The different methods are:

1. Omnivote – children have unlimited votes and put their hand up to vote for the Question they like the sound of. The question with the most votes is discussed;
2. Monovote – children have one vote each;
3. Blind vote – children vote for their favourite with their eyes closed.

Summing up:

- When the allotted time is up, or the session has come to a natural end, the children get the opportunity to share their final thought about what they think the answer to the question is;
- Pass an object around the circle. The children who do not want to say anything should feel free to pass the object on without saying anything;
- This is often a time when children who have not said anything during the discussion share their thoughts.
- Write down any final thoughts into a book – often giving children that are shy the opportunity to express how they are feeling.

Feedback:

At this point you can either finish the philosophy session or use this time as a chance for children to give positive feedback to others who, they feel have made a valuable contribution to the discussion.

Role of the Facilitator:

- Questioning: Asking good questions to provide 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.