

Philosophy for Children



Intent

At Eling Infant school, our intent is that all children become effective, critical and creative thinkers who can take responsibility for their own learning in a caring and collaborative way. We use the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach to help children develop these skills and attitudes.

Implementation

During P4C sessions, the children and their teacher share a stimulus. This could be a story, picture book, film clip, picture or object. The class then uses this as a starting point for their philosophical enquiry with the teacher facilitating a student-led discussion on a philosophical question. The children are able to explore a wide range of concepts in a safe, supportive environment. Concepts include: right and wrong; fairness; friendship; difference; good and evil; real and unreal.

The structure of the sessions helps to develop the children's skills in:

- Asking questions
- Active listening
- Giving reasons
- Making connections

With experience, children's questions get deeper and more thoughtful. They care more about what others say, begin to recognise differences and to explore their differences collaboratively.

We teach P4C across the school from the Nursery class and through to Year 2 and concepts are revisited at least three times during a child's time at the school. This means that children make good progress in developing the skills of P4C and they are able to build a deeper understanding of the concepts that are raised.

The P4C skills are taught in a structured way as the children progress through the school, starting in the Nursery class by encouraging them to make a simple choice then moving on in the Reception class to giving their own opinions on a topic and starting to ask their own questions. By the end of Year 2, children are able to create philosophical questions, compare and group their questions and listen carefully to the ideas of each other, linking back to what someone else has said during the enquiry.

Impact

P4C supports the school's ethos and values of creating a caring school and a classroom environment where children learn to listen to and respect each other as well as developing an understanding of equality and diversity. It provides a forum where our children can explore the British Values of: democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect; tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Higher order thinking is developed, as well as self-esteem, as children realise that their opinion is listened to and valued by others. Research has shown that using the P4C approach can raise attainment across the curriculum. We believe that the skills and attitudes fostered by P4C will help our children to become good lifelong learners.



Reviewed by Subject Leader (September 2024)