



# **The Grange Primary School**

## **Philosophy For Children Policy**

**2022**

**Review: July 2023 - unless there are changes required sooner, in which case this policy will be reviewed earlier.**

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“The aim of dialogue is to help participants become more thoughtful, reflective, considerate and **reason-able** individuals.”

(Thinking in Education by Matthew Lipman, 1991)

### **Introduction:**

At The Grange Primary School (TGPS), we strive to give our pupils the tools to enable them to become creative, caring and collaborative learners. As a result of this ethos, our pupils learn how to become critical thinkers and confident speakers who challenge themselves as well as *challenging* the opinions and ideas of others.

In conjunction with our key curriculum drivers: Emotional awareness, Knowledge of the world, Enterprise and Independence, P4C has been adopted as a TGPS culture which raises pupil and staff expectations and promotes ‘can-do’ attitudes.

This policy will explain our approach to the teaching of Philosophy for Children (P4C) and its contribution to the TGPS curriculum.

### **Aims and objectives of P4C at TGPS:**

- To develop pupil ability in using and applying the core communication skills of speaking, listening, debating and reflecting and be confident to tackle philosophical questions.
- For staff to act as ‘facilitators’ in the classroom, where pupils are empowered to take the lead with their learning.
- To promote and embed the pupil use of the TGPS four ‘R’s: Resourceful, Reflective, Resilient and Reciprocal, in order to foster independent and confident learners.
- To ensure that pupils are provided with the tools and learning behaviours required to become tolerant, respectful and responsible members of an inclusive society.
- To encourage pupils to explore, understand and challenge the beliefs and values of others in a non-judgemental environment where all voices are equal.
- To use P4C to promote collaborative practice which broadens thinking and deepens learning, thus increasing progress and attainment across the curriculum.
- To develop high levels of pupil self-esteem and improved behaviour through fostering positive, caring attitudes and improving intellectual confidence.

“The most productive classrooms are those in which students work on complex problems, are encouraged to take risks, and can struggle and fail and still feel good about working on hard problems.”

(Boaler, 2015, p.177)

### **Intent of P4C at TGPS:**

At TGPS we promote an enquiry-based curriculum where pupils will apply the P4C skills of speaking, listening, questioning, debating and reflecting to a range of contexts. Staff will model a variety of questioning techniques to probe and promote deeper thinking/reasoning. Pupils will be challenged to

clarify and refine their responses as well as encourage debate through the 'challenge-build-agree' model. The consistent use of KAGAN structures will promote collaborative thinking and shared learning opportunities. At TGPS, we use the concept of the 'Learning Pit' to challenge pupils, build dialogue around their learning and foster a growth mindset (adopted following whole school training by James Nottingham – Learning Pit/Learning Challenge creator).

### **Implementation of P4C at TGPS:**

P4C begins in the Foundation stage, where children develop the communication and language skills of listening and attention, understanding and speaking. Through a balance of adult-led and self-initiated play opportunities, children in FS1 and FS2 will learn to question, share ideas, and reflect on their learning. 'Mystery bags' are used daily during Key Worker time as a shared stimulus to promote open-ended discussion, questioning and understanding of vocabulary. The 'project table' is a scientific, creative focus which promotes independent exploration and application of skills from children. Adults will use pupil interest and responses to plan the next steps for provision and focussed activities.

The EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning (Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creating and Thinking Critically) play a crucial part in laying the foundations for effective transference of P4C skills in the later stages at TGPS. Adults in FS1 and FS2 make daily, regular observations of these characteristics and look for ways to enable children to become independent, confident and imaginative learners. Children in the EYFS are encouraged to take reasonable risks in their indoor and outdoor play and display a 'can do' attitude towards their learning.

In Key stages 1 and 2, a typical lesson may have the following aspects of P4C:

- A shared stimulus such as an image, book or an object.
- Identifying the most interesting concepts.
- Creating thought-provoking questions about the concepts.
- Inviting the pupils to share their first thoughts.
- Encouraging the pupils to listen and respond appropriately.
- Identifying contradictions in the thoughts of the pupils who have contributed.
- Exploring alternatives and striving for meaning.
- Connecting ideas and explaining reasons.
- Constructing a more sophisticated understanding of the central concept.
- Reviewing the learning so far and looking for ways to apply new learning.

Example concepts (taken from whole school James Nottingham training):

Images of food, a torch and building bricks - Q What is a toy?

Images of a grown apple, a plastic apple and an invisible apple - Q How many 'real' apples are there?

The principles P4C are applied to many areas of the TGPS curriculum. Examples might include:

- Mathematical enquiry on representation of number.
- Grammatical enquiry on the meaning and use of word classes.
- Reading enquiry on deduction and inference from an illustration.

- Scientific enquiry on objects which are real / not real, alive/not alive/never been alive.
- Geographical enquiry on personal versus global trade.
- Historical enquiry on 'successful' invasion.
- Physical Education enquiry on the meanings of success/failure.
- Artistic enquiry on 'beauty' and 'meaning' in art.

The TGPS PSHE curriculum is implemented through effective whole school delivery of JIGSAW from FS1 to Y6. As quoted in the TGPS JIGSAW PSHE policy, the aim of JIGSAW is:

**“To provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills they need in order to reach their potential as individuals and within the community.”**

As such, the P4C ethos is clearly connected to the above aims of the PSHE curriculum and will be promoted and embedded as part of the weekly JIGSAW sessions.

Role of the adult as a 'facilitator' during the P4C process:

- Questioning: to provide a focal point for the enquiry.
- Reasoning: Asking for reasons or evidence from pupils to support their arguments and judgements.
- Defining: Asking pupils to clarify concepts through making connections and comparing differences/similarities.
- Theorising: Producing ideas and alternative viewpoints through creative thinking.
- Testing for truth: Collecting information, evaluating evidence, examples and alternative examples.
- Extending ideas: Maintaining and expanding lines of thought and argument.
- Summarising: Extracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

### **P4C differentiation and Access for pupils at TGPS:**

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the P4C approach, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping. All children will access the P4C approach at a level which is appropriate to their ability, building upon existing communication and social skills. As part of everyday practice, staff will differentiate activities and provide extension work or added support so that all children may access and enjoy the learning process.

### **Restorative Practice(RP) as a TGPS ethos:**

At TGPS, we promote and embed the use of Restorative Practice (RP) for resolving conflict and repairing harm. RP is closely linked to the P4C approach by empowering all pupils to have a voice and experience a fair process, building trust and positive relationships.

### **Impact of P4C at TGPS:**

Monitoring the impact of the P4C approach on pupil progress and attainment across the curriculum, as well as the quality of teaching the P4C approach, is the responsibility of the Inclusion team in conjunction with the other curriculum subject teams. This is done by:

- Planning scrutiny
- Book scrutiny/looking for evidence of enquiry-based learning and deeper thinking opportunities in other curriculum areas.
- Pupil interviews
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Twitter
- Tapestry
- Staff audits of skills/P4C knowledge

The Inclusion team are responsible for supporting the other subject teams in monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching P4C across school. The Inclusion team are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of P4C, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the approach in the school.

**Success Criteria: the impact of P4C specific skills across the curriculum:**

During observations from a range of contexts, pupils are able to:

- Question: maintain a focal point for the enquiry.
- Reason: Give reasons or evidence to support their arguments and judgements.
- Define: Clarify concepts through making connections and comparing differences/similarities.
- Theorise: Produce ideas and alternative viewpoints through creative thinking.
- Test for truth: Collect information, evaluate evidence, examples and alternative examples.
- Extend ideas: Maintain and expand lines of thought and argument.
- Summarise: Extract key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

