Philosophy for Children (P4C) Curriculum Statement

Intent

Pupil participation and the development of oracy are integral to Ellison Primary Academy's ethos and vision. Philosophy for Children (P4C) gives children a structured and safe opportunity to develop these skills alongside a range of others.

Our use of P4C in all classes is designed with the intent to allow all children to reach their potential; intellectually, socially, morally, emotionally and culturally.

We live in an ever-changing and often challenging modern world. P4C is a teaching methodology that helps pupils develop their critical thinking and enables them to engage with increasingly complex global issues. This will be beneficial to their mental health and wellbeing as it will provide them with a safe opportunity to explore issues that may be worrying them. When using P4C we are able to promote a forum for open dialogue in which children can ask open questions, refine arguments, explore alternatives and above all, try to understand each other.

Through our P4C session we intend children to be challenged to think independently in collaborative classroom communities. This will enable children to improve their reasoning ability alongside their communication skills. P4C is also a good way for children to develop their concentration skills and to boost their self-esteem by making positive contributions to discussions in a caring and supportive environment.

Implementation

At Ellison Primary Academy we deliver P4C sessions based around the model endorsed by Sapere. All teaching staff have been trained to P4C level 1 standard and the P4C lead teachers have received level 2 training in order to lead the development of the subject further.

P4C sessions are taught weekly in all classes. There is one hour built in to the timetable for each class for P4C. This may be split across two 30-minute sessions, particularly in EYFS and Key Stage One or in Key Stage 2 where appropriate, for example when used as part of a cycle of enquiry where skills building sessions take place. The P4C sessions are stand-alone sessions where specific P4C skills are developed but they may link to the curriculum unit being taught at the time. In addition, many P4C skills are transferrable and are used by staff and pupils in other subject areas.

Each session follows the '10 steps of philosophical enquiry' model. Children are presented with a stimulus which may be a picture, video, song or poem for example. The stimulus is often chosen by the teacher but it could also be suggested by a pupil or in response to current events. They then reflect on the stimulus and identify key concepts present. From those key-concepts they will formulate philosophical questions that they would like to explore. Children will then vote on a question to discuss. This is followed by the enquiry where children are

encouraged to participate in a reasoned discussion where they need to listen carefully to others and make carefully considered contributions in response. Each class follows their set of 'ground rules' which have been developed based on the 4Cs of thinking – caring, creative, collaborative and critical. At the end of each enquiry, children participate in a session of evaluation where they decide with the teacher how well they have developed skills and demonstrated the 4cs. This can then form a basis for the planning of the next session.

A record of enquiries including copies of children's questions, responses and session evaluations is kept in a P4C floor book. Each class in the school has their own floor book and all children able to make contributions towards it.

Impact

The impact of including P4C in our curriculum at Ellison Primary Academy will be that children are equipped for life in an ever-changing and ever-shrinking world. It will help their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and equip them with the tools to be active members of a diverse, yet inclusive society.

The children will be challenged to think independently and to see things from an alternative point of view therefore fostering a more reasoned approach to members of society that possess opposing views. This independent thinking and ability to reason will aid their learning across all subject areas.

Children will develop their self-esteem and be better equipped to be resilient within a modern society. They will become more reflective and able to use this to consider their own behaviour, therefore allowing for better choices in their own lives. Children will learn to encourage others whilst being able to demonstrate that they have an opposing view, remaining respectful at all times.

When children leave Ellison to move on to secondary school they will be equipped with the ability to think critically and articulate themselves confidently. They will have a sense of belonging to a community where they have been able to develop their confidence and skills to make decisions, self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.