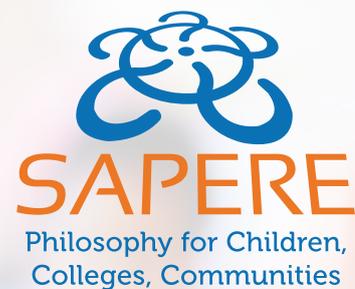


P4C for Trainee Teachers • Improving Writing •
P4C in Pupil Referral Units • Engaging the Disengaged •
Character Development • Global Learning, and more...



newsletter

2015

Society for Advancing
Philosophical Enquiry &
Reflection in Education

Chair's report by Liz Jones

SAPERRE's mission and strategy

Our mission is to advance the educational, social and personal development of children, young people and others in the UK through the practice of philosophical enquiry and reflection. Our particular strategic focus over the last few years has been on children and communities who are disadvantaged.

Our primary beneficiaries are the children, young people and members of community groups who participate in P4C sessions. We reached nearly 60,000 additional primary beneficiaries this year. Our secondary beneficiaries are the teachers, educational professionals and community group leaders, of whom we trained over 3,000 this year.

We have strengthened the charity in many ways during the course of the year. We sharpened our strategic focus to emphasise delivery in schools, again with particular emphasis on areas of economic and educational disadvantage. We improved governance, developed and rolled out courses and materials, and have

had successful outcomes on existing programmes and projects with a number of new ones being launched during the year.

Principal developments during the year

Building on foundations laid in previous years, we have had an intense focus this year on the development of our courses and support programmes:

- We have developed SAPERE's Going for Gold programme. This programme offers a planned and structured approach, usually over a three year period, to help schools develop and sustain P4C in the longer term. Its intention is to embed high quality P4C in schools, and to help schools progress to SAPERE's Gold Award standard in an ambitious but achievable time frame;
- We have comprehensively redeveloped the Award Scheme during the year and the new Award Scheme criteria now provide clear progressions for the pupils, teachers and schools as a whole through Bronze, Silver and Gold award levels;

- We have restructured the Level 2 course into two 2-day modules: P4C Advanced Course Level 2A is designed for teachers who want to advance their own facilitation skills and to support colleagues with less experience in P4C. P4C Advanced Course Level 2B is designed for teachers who want to develop a leadership role in P4C;
- We have developed the P4C Tools for Thinking Together for those who want to reinforce or refresh their P4C practice;
- We are continuing to develop and promote the Initial Teacher Education and P4C in Teaching Schools programme;
- There has been an active programme of trainer events during the year involving Maughn Gregory, Pieter Mostert and Phil Cam, all leading thinkers in the international P4C community. SAPERE also supported the Hampshire Advanced P4C Seminar organised by Pat Hannam;
- We have established a collaboration with Thinking Schools International to deliver combined training and

promote the mutually reinforcing benefits of our respective programmes. The programme will be launched to schools in March 2015;

- We have invested in the development of on-line support tools including a guide to help Level 2 participants complete their coursework and a Getting Started with P4C guide for newly trained teachers.

These new courses were formally launched in January 2015. Please encourage your contacts in schools and colleges to get details from the SAPERE web-site or call the office on 01865 408 333.

Projects and programmes

The Education Endowment Foundation is funding a trial into the effectiveness of P4C in increasing the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The project is testing P4C in 50 primary schools in areas of high deprivation across the country. Professor Stephen Gorard of Durham University is evaluating the project's impact through CAT and SATS tests and a survey of non-cognitive outcomes. We expect to receive the report on the outcomes in the treatment schools in early 2015. With backing from the Nuffield Foundation, Durham University will run further research in the control schools on the non-cognitive impacts of P4C.

SAPERE is delivering a further two year phase of the askit strand of the Open Futures Programme in nine schools. In addition askit training has been given to the entire teaching faculty of Central Bedfordshire College, with around 180 staff trained in total.

The William Wates Foundation is funding a 3 year project to deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of P4C in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in Havering, Lambeth and Croydon. This project is showing that P4C can deliver real benefits, even in the challenging environment of a PRU. We have secured funding to extend this project to another 5 PRUs in the coming year.

M&G Investments has funded a 2 year P4C project in Kingsford School, a large secondary school in Newham, East London, focusing initially on year 7 pupils, but now extending into year 8 and across the whole curriculum. This project is proving to be an excellent example of the effectiveness of P4C in secondary settings. Following the success of this project, M&G Investments has generously provided funding to support the roll out of SAPERE's new Going for Gold programme in 10 East London schools.

The Camden Project for Educational Excellence has funded a 2 year project at Gospel Oak primary school in Camden, designed to evaluate the effectiveness of P4C as a tool to enhance educational attainment.

The London Schools Excellence Fund is funding the delivery and evaluation of P4C in four schools, three primary and one secondary, in Islington. An extension to the project has recently been approved to deliver and evaluate P4C in four more schools in Islington over the coming academic year.

The Young Philanthropy Syndicate (YPS) has chosen SAPERE as its sponsored charity and is funding P4C in two London primary schools. The delivery of P4C will be accompanied by Raising Aspirations work from the YPS to expose pupils to a professional services working environment. Members of the YPS are participating in P4C training and are co-facilitating enquiries with the schools' teachers.

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation funded the development and roll out of a P4C training course for community leaders. The Community Philosophy Facilitator Training Course was piloted in North West England, West Yorkshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester with approximately 350 community beneficiaries participating in community enquiries. This project is now complete and has developed a comprehensive set of tools to support Community Philosophy.

The primary focus for trustees and staff in seeking funding for new projects is now aimed at supporting local hubs of five or more schools (preferably covering primary and secondary) in implementing the Going for Gold programme in areas with high levels of deprivation. We already have the East London hub signed up, and are in discussions on several further possibilities. Members are encouraged to put forward suggestions for groups of schools who might be interested in this.

Quality Assurance

There are a number of ways in which SAPERE seeks to ensure excellent delivery of services and excellent practice of P4C in schools, colleges and communities.

SAPERE has for some years had a Professional Development Committee (PDC), which was consulted and assisted in developing all the above-mentioned developments. During this year it was decided by the trustees that the consultation and development

work would be better served by having a Professional Development Panel with wider membership, sub-groups of which will work with staff on developing new courses and materials as required. This should allow us to capture the widest possible amount of experience and input from trainers and others.

SAPERE has a Professional Standards Board (PSB), which has been extended to twelve members including trustees, trainers, teachers, advisers and independent members. The PSB has met twice during 2014 and has vetted and approved all of the above-mentioned developments.

The trustees are most grateful to the members of the PSB and the PDC, who give their time and expertise to SAPERE without charge.

All SAPERE trainers undergo an extensive programme of training and mentoring before they can be accredited to deliver P4C training under the SAPERE name. Training delivery is monitored through course evaluations, peer observations and observations by the Courses Manager who is responsible for overall quality assurance. A programme of professional development events is offered to trainers each year.

I have already mentioned above the SAPERE School Award Scheme. This is a central component underpinning all our programmes, and encourages schools to embed high quality P4C. As well as being a vital quality assurance tool, the new award framework gives schools a valuable road-map to plan and review the development of their P4C practice. The Award Scheme criteria can be found on the SAPERE web-site. We now have a total of over 40 schools at Bronze Award level, 5 at Silver, and 3 at Gold.

Membership

SAPERE has a current membership of 705, including 63 registered SAPERE trainers. Our members receive monthly bulletins including resources and case studies to keep members up to date with P4C in the UK.

Finance Report

The report covers the statutory accounts for the year from 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014.

We made a surplus of £11,439 on total incoming resources of £475,262, an increase of 13% over the previous year. Resources expended were £463,823, an increase of 10% over the previous year. This has allowed the charity to continue to grow its activities by developing

courses and materials, and to support the various projects and programmes.

The charity has three principal sources of funding – income from training, project funding and grants or donations. The charity remains reliant on projects and grants or donations to help cover overheads, and the expected future income from these sources is considered carefully when reviewing overhead levels and commitments.

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. They have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be sufficient at all times to discharge fully the charity's liabilities. In addition to this the charity intends to add to reserves from its annual surplus every year in order to build up sufficient financial strength to allow for some security of activity, should the charity encounter funding difficulties in future years.

The required level of unrestricted reserves set by the trustees is £38,000. The charity has met this target, with unrestricted reserves increasing to £52,089 during the year. The trustees review reserves, and the reserves policy, annually as part of the budgeting process, and revisit it as necessary during the year should the actual or expected funding or financial performance deviate from plan.

The charity has a number of existing projects and programmes that will continue into the 2014-15 financial year, which, along with grants and donations which have been secured, give us confidence that overheads can continue to be covered, with a surplus of £5,000 budgeted for the year to 31 August 2015. The budgeted incoming resources for the year are £539,000, the majority of which is expected to come from revenues associated with our training and support activities. £69,000 is expected to come from other donations, all of which have been received at the time of writing. Budgeted expenditure for the year is £534,000 of which £254,000 is overhead expenditure with the remainder being direct costs of delivering our services.

Governance

George Macdonald-Ross has been President of SAPERE throughout the year. We thank him for his support of SAPERE.

At the AGM a number of trustees stood down and were re-elected. The board meets 4 times a year and the current trustees are:

Daniel Baltzer

Alison Barne

Adrian Bruce

Jeannie Cohen

Rod Cunningham

Elizabeth Jones Q.C. (Chair)

Nikki Perry

Catrin Rees

Kit Thorne

Andrew Whitehouse

In my last report, I reported that our first priority this year would be to recruit trustees with accountancy, strategy and management skills. After a publicly advertised recruitment process, Adrian Bruce joined the trustee board. Adrian is a senior finance executive at Home Retail Group, and brings strong skills in all these areas. During the year we also identified the need for stronger fund-raising skills on the board. Daniel Baltzer, who has many years' experience in charity fund-raising and who has helped SAPERE on a voluntary basis for several years, also joined the trustee board this year.

As chair, I would like to thank all the trustees for a great deal of hard work during the year across a number of different areas of activity.

We will conduct a three year strategic review during 2015 which will be one of the trustees' principal governance aims during the year. This will set out the charity's development plans for the period 2015 to 2018 and establish the best way to fund the charity on an ongoing basis.

Staffing and volunteers

During 2014 the trustees and the SAPERE team have worked to develop SAPERE's operations and increase its impact in the schools and community organisations that we support.

The staff team has remained stable through the year. Bob House continues as Chief Executive and the board has confirmed this appointment for a further year. Alison Allsopp continues as Training Manager, Anne Churchill-Stone as Finance Manager, Alison Hall as Courses Manager, Lizzy Lewis as Development Manager, Jan Marples as Sales and Operations Manager, Kathryn Puncher as Administrative Assistant

and Sue Sweetland as Finance Officer. All staff other than Jan Marples are part time. We offer our fullest gratitude to our staff, who all go well beyond the call of duty on a regular basis.

The trustees would also like to offer their grateful thanks to all those who help in various different ways, often on a voluntary basis.

As mentioned above, the members of the Professional Standards Board (PSB) and Professional Development Committee (PDC) have contributed regularly to the running and development of SAPERE.

Roger Sutcliffe, Sara Liptai, Sue Lyle and Steve Williams have contributed generously in helping with course development and assignment marking. Many of our trainers have contributed to consultations on course development and on the development of SAPERE's strategy and Theory of Change. Steve Bramall continues to lead the Community of Scholarship which is reinforcing the academic rigour and innovation of our work. Nick Chandley regularly provides resources for the SAPERE bulletin. We would like to acknowledge the support and pro-bono consulting work provided to us through our relationship with Impetus-PEF the Golden Bottle Trust for its generous funding and Jerrina Eteen for her consulting advice..

We would like to thank the many trainers who have represented SAPERE at conferences, workshops and other events. In particular we would like to thank Will Ord for hosting the Oxford Introduction to P4C conference.

We frequently benefit from the support of our SAPERE award schools in promoting the benefits of P4C. We would particularly like to thank Lisa Naylor at Gallions Primary and Gurjit Shergill at Rokeby Secondary, and the pupils at both schools, who have been unstinting in their willingness to demonstrate P4C in action.

We'd like to thank Grace Robinson and Ellie Hart for their work in collaboration with the University of Bristol introducing and researching the impact of P4C in local schools.

And finally, thank you to you our members for continuing to support SAPERE and P4C. It's been an exciting year in 2014, and we are looking forward to bringing P4C to many more participants in 2015.

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SAPERE's board of trustees 2012- 2013:

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Rod Cunningham
Roland Farrar (Treasurer)
Elizabeth Jones (Chair)
Nikki Perry
Lisa Thomas
Kit Thorne
Andrew Whitehouse

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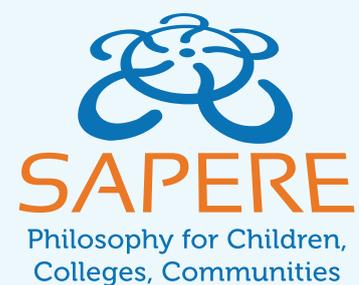
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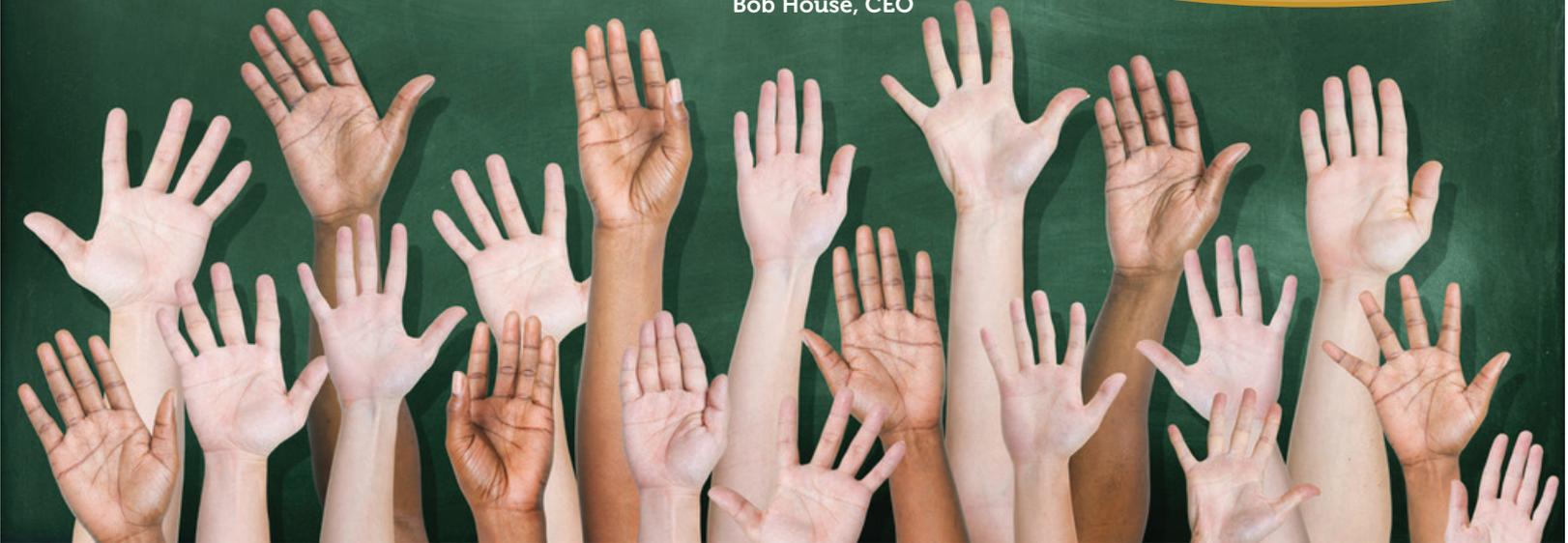


Hubs should become the new Gold Standard for P4C Implementation

Bob House, CEO



Gold
Philosophy for Children School Award



A world-leading project is under way in East London in terms of a concentrated long-term implementation of P4C. I hope that it will become the model for future implementation of P4C. Two secondary and nine primary schools in Tower Hamlets and Newham have come together to create the East London P4C Hub. Over three years SAPERE will work with these schools to bring the power of P4C to their 400 teachers and 5,800 students.

Why is the East London Hub important?

We have based the project on our Going for Gold programme. It embodies SAPERE's mission of supporting the educational, personal and social development of young people, particularly those facing disadvantage. It gives us an early opportunity to test the programmes, which we developed in last year's Theory of Change workshops.

Despite its proximity to the financial powerhouses of the City and Canary Wharf, the local area has high levels of deprivation. It is highly multi-cultural. The proportion of Free School Meals (FSM) pupils in the schools averages 42%, nearly three times the national average. The proportion of students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils ranges from 9% to 96%, with an average of 77%.

The schools involved are good schools. Two are rated outstanding by OFSTED: the others are all rated good. Two schools are in the Mayor of London's Gold Club for schools achieving outstanding results in areas of high deprivation. 60% of the FSM primary students achieve Level 4B or better at Key Stage 2, compared with a national average of 49%.

The creation of a P4C hub has given us the critical mass to raise funding for the project. Half of the £118,000 budget is

being funded by M&G Investments, a City of London fund management firm. The local concentration of schools creates opportunities for resource sharing and joint practice development.

How did the hub come about?

The hub built on existing interest in P4C in the area. George Green's secondary had made two prior efforts to raise funds for a P4C hub, and had cascaded P4C through its English faculty. Wendy Hick at Manorfield Primary had cited P4C on Radio 4's Today Programme as part of her strategy to move from special measures to outstanding in one year. Bygrove Primary had trained all its staff in P4C and was promoting P4C through its teaching school alliance. The head teachers at all but one school were already aware of P4C and its benefits.

Three local alliances, the Poplar Partnership, the Isle of Dogs cluster and the London East Teaching Training Alliance (LETTA), helped to recruit schools to the project. Their commitment persuaded M&G Investments to make a larger and longer term grant than usual. Three other schools in the area, Gallions Primary, Rokeby Secondary and Kingsford Secondary were instrumental in building momentum. They made introductions, hosted visits to see P4C in action and helped convince M&G of the impact of P4C.

To a greater extent than in previous projects, SAPERE stressed that the schools needed to make a serious commitment to the project. We asked the schools to appoint a P4C leader at the outset and to write P4C into their development plans. Most importantly of all, we insisted on face-to-face meetings with each head teacher to make sure that they understood what the programme involved, and so that we understood what they wanted to get from P4C. We developed and signed bespoke plans for each school which set out the commitments that both parties would make to the project.

What are we hoping to see?

We want to see strong relationships emerge between the school and SAPERE. Each school has been assigned an experienced trainer who will become a trusted advisor to the school over the three years of the project, and hopefully beyond that. These relationships are emerging in those schools that have already started the programme. The key counter-party in the school is the P4C leader and this role is being taken seriously in all the schools. Bow School and Manorfield have gone as far as funding the role as part-time positions. We anticipate that these relationships will be as rewarding for our trainers as they will be valuable to the schools.

We want to see collaboration emerge between the schools. Manorfield and Bow are implementing a transition project that will see 90 primary students taking part in P4C at their local secondary. P4C champions from Rokeby led the P4C launch assembly at Bow. Teachers are being invited to participate in twilights at other schools. There will be a cluster-wide launch event in the summer term as all the schools start on their training programmes.

We have launched an online support tool, which will allow teaching resources to be contributed and shared, and which will provide a forum for teachers to share practice ideas. We will use the project to understand what it takes to make such resource provision accessible to busy teachers.

Most importantly, we want to see evidence of the impact of P4C on students, teachers and the whole school. We have introduced an evaluation package to track outcomes at these three levels. We are minimising the burden on the schools by tapping into existing data and by SAPERE processing the data.

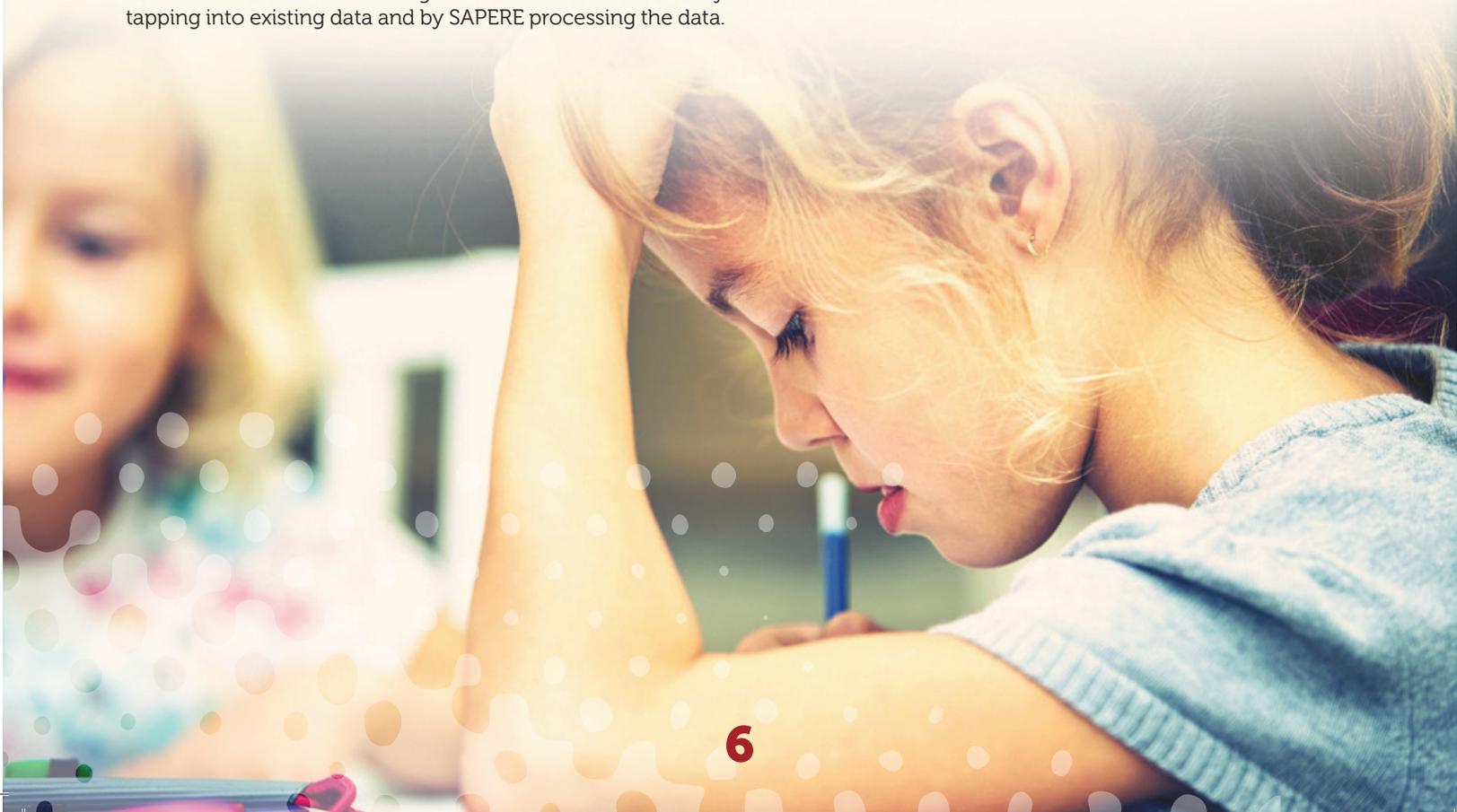
Evaluation has been difficult in other projects and it is too early to say how this will go. But we have made evaluation a clear up-front expectation of the project.

What does it mean for other areas?

SAPERE's strategy for targeting disadvantage and having deep impact in schools is based on the idea of establishing P4C hubs in areas of high deprivation. We envisage the ideal hub having 5+ schools and including at least one secondary. The lead school needs to be passionate about P4C and its head teacher must be willing to act as an ambassador for P4C with local peers.

Once we have identified a hub opportunity and have confirmed the interest of local schools, we can approach funders. The schools may well have their own ideas about possible funding sources. Our norm will be to seek external funding for half the programme costs. For a 3-year, 5-school hub, this means £12,500 a year of external funding. So far, we are finding that schools often do not see external funding as a must-have. Several schools are funding the £5,000 per year cost of the Going for Gold programme from their own resources. As the equivalent of only four or five pupil premium payments, this amount is within the reach of many of our target schools.

At the time of writing, we have interest in hubs in Southall, West London, Sheffield and Liverpool. We are working with local trainers and schools to materialise these opportunities. However - and this is a critical issue for those involved to realise - there is a lot of work involved in getting a hub up and running. A conservative estimate would be one full day per school involved and the same again to set up the structures and funding. SAPERE does not have the resources to support or fund this effort in all the areas where we would like to see hubs emerge. So we need to find trainers or members who would like to take on this role around the country - and to develop commercial arrangements that mean such effort is properly rewarded. I hope some of you may be interested: if you are, I look forward to hearing from you.





P4C for Trainee Teachers

by SAPERE Trainer, John Smith

A major SAPERE project running currently is the introduction of P4C into courses of ITE and Initial Teacher Training to Initial Teacher Education. P4C has already formed part of ITE for many years in those Higher Education Institutions, which employ SAPERE trainers on a full or part-time basis. However, the current project, led by Roger Sutcliffe and Lizzy Lewis, aims to make P4C much more widely available by training HE staff to teach a four hour module of P4C to their trainees as part of the general programme run within their institutions. This module will be licensed by SAPERE and will provide trainees with a basic understanding of P4C, which they can develop in schools. The module can be “topped up” by a further day of training led by a SAPERE trainer, which would then result in the equivalent of a Level 1 qualification.

I was fortunate to attend the most recent two-day course led by Roger in November at the Cheshire Campus of Manchester Metropolitan University. I attended as a participant-observer, a role I was particularly happy to take as I had run P4C at that university for a number of years before I retired in the summer. One of my hopes on leaving the university was that P4C would continue after my departure and so I was delighted that four of my former colleagues attended the course. They formed half of the cohort, which was completed by a colleague from Liverpool John Moores University, another from Chester University and two colleagues from VIA University College in Denmark. The course was very skilfully led by Roger who made a compelling case for the importance of P4C as part of ITE. Roger’s case was supported by a range of evidence, including the work on dialogic teaching, led by Robin Alexander and others, which many ITE providers are attempting to integrate into their programmes.

Evaluations by course participants confirmed that the course had had a very positive impact, both preparing them to teach the P4C module and allowing them to re-assess their own pedagogy in a supportive environment. A comment, which typified this reaction, was the following.

To say that I thoroughly enjoyed it would be an understatement. The spirit of collaborative participation and learning that Roger generated, for me, led to the best 2 days (work-wise) that I have had for years!

It would be unrealistic to expect widespread introduction of the P4C module to appear overnight. Providers of ITE face many challenges in constructing their programmes. All of the participants on Roger’s course though, left with a desire to see P4C more firmly established within their own institutions and at least one of these institutions is implementing changes only a few weeks after the course. I would strongly recommend anyone working in ITE to consider attending a future course, details of which can be obtained from Roger, Lizzy or any of the SAPERE team.

More information on the SAPERE website



Philosophical Play in South Africa

Sara Stanley,
SAPERE Trainer

After 27 years of full time teaching and leadership in Early Years Education I have taken on the new challenge of consultancy in philosophical play and creating story worlds in the classroom. This path leads me overseas to South Africa 3 or 4 times a year. I am currently involved in programmes where I train, mentor and model methods of bringing stories to life through enquiry based play and dialogue. This involves guest lecturing and mentoring of Foundation Phase PGCE students at the University of Cape Town. The main bulk of my work is with the award-winning organisation, PRAESA, that put books into the hands and stories into the imaginations of children in the Western Cape.

PRAESA (the Project for the Study of Alternative Education), Times Media and a growing number of partners drive a multi-lingual literacy for enjoyment led organisation called Nal'ibali. Through sustained mentoring and collaboration with communities, reading clubs, literacy organisations and volunteers of all ages, Nal'ibali is helping to root a culture of literacy and citizenship into the fabric of everyday life in South Africa. Nal'ibali has initiated a number of successful reading clubs in many townships in the Western Cape and my involvement is in a new campaign directly aimed at young children aged 0 – 6 years old through storyplay.

Teachers in the townships and informal settlements of South Africa are an important part of the future for change, as are all organisations involved in funding and raising awareness of the importance of early childhood. These teachers have taken on a huge challenge and responsibility for changing lives. They are fighting to ensure that their children will not become another lost generation due to difficult, chaotic and often traumatic lives. My consultancy role is to support teachers, trainers, future teachers and student educators in good Early Years practice and to show how play is the way into natural philosophical exploration.

To all pre-school children the world is a new and strange place. Their world is one of inconsistency and challenges that they make sense of through play and experimentation, through trial and error both in role as a child and in the imaginary roles of heroes and villains. For the majority of the children I am working with in the townships and informal settlements of South Africa their world is also hugely complicated. In their communities the villains are often the role models that are seen as heroes. Gang warfare, violence, theft, rape and death are commonplace in their lives. Home life in a township can be chaotic and educational opportunities dictated not just by money but also by weather and the practicalities of day to day survival. Those children who have access to pre-school education are set off on an educational journey, which offers additional challenges. Early Years teachers are trained roughly to the equivalent of our nursery workers and often receive no further CPD. Principals or owners of many of these settings are often required to have nothing but the premises itself. The children are mostly instructed in English rather than their home language, which could be one of eleven languages spoken in South Africa. They are usually taught by teachers who also do not speak English as their first language outside the classroom.

As a consequence the main observation and concern is just how little language is heard in the settings. It is the instructional adult voice which is dominant and the children's voices are tentative echoes. Thinking can happen in silence but understanding requires communication. The challenge in these silent classrooms is to find a way to encourage voices in every language and the obvious solution is the common language of play and story.

There are many barriers to play in these settings, for example; lack of resources, knowledge and understanding of early childhood development, a directed curriculum and didactic teaching style, unsuitable learning environments and low

pay and status of staff. Teaching staff are dedicated and clearly frustrated by these restrictions. They are excited by the possibilities and liberation that an enquiry based learning approach can bring. In order to create a learning environment where genuine empathy, respect and development of ideas can grow we have had to move right back to the beginning. There are few opportunities for these children to play together as friends. Sharing is often seen as threatening, teachers don't allow children free play because play is violent and destructive, equipment gets broken and fighting over toys is common. Understaffing means that if a teacher has to leave the room the children are instructed to sit in silence or even face the wall. Routines are managed through rigid discipline, whistles are still not uncommon. Play equals anarchy.

The groundwork we have to lay for philosophical play is trust. We have to show teachers that children can engage through play and that they are able from a very young age to take responsibility for their thoughts and actions. In order to do this we have to first allow play and the conflicts it brings to become visible. Making the invisible visible is an important step in citizenship and responsibility. Change can only happen when we learn to address conflict without fear. With or without voices the early years setting is heavy with powerful philosophical issues. Most of these issues cause conflict and therefore educators often believe that only rigid control and discipline is the answer. This might work in the classroom but it certainly doesn't happen long term; the high crime rate bears testimony to the need for change.

The philosophy of "community" starts in pre-school and is already visible. The questions we have to ask before we can build a community based on trust, respect and shared values might include,

- Which children have power? Why, when and how?
- When is friendship more about empathy and human connection than respect borne out of fear?
- When can we use our voices instead of violence to challenge different opinions?
- How do we open up dialogue about issues such as death, fear, racism, poverty and human rights?
- What does equality in the classroom look like? Is there a difference between girls and boys?
- How do we make choices when freedom seems so restricted?

The reasons for conflict will occur throughout life, not just in the context of school readiness but in life readiness. We need to allow children time and opportunities to explore such questions as; Why do people fight? Why are some people always in charge? Why can't I play? What should I do when I am scared? and How do I know what is right or wrong?

Child and adult initiated play provides the vehicle to explore what it means to be truly human. Philosophical play is about sharing voices through taking on roles and responsibilities of imaginary characters such as big bad wolves and curious exploring cats. It might be about blue kangaroos and their adventures and fears. It is also about creating places where 'Wild Things' live and are ruled by small boys. Building worlds where grown ups have power but small children can still be Kings. When we show teachers how to provide and use

simple resources like dough and material, cardboard boxes, soil and pebbles they begin to remember what it was like to be a child with an imagination and curiosity. It is this reconnection with the wonderings of the young child that enables philosophical thinking to start.

Philosophical play is about allowing children to make connections with what they play and their 'real' world. It also develops understanding of the consequences and implications for a democratic classroom. A classroom based on trust, self-esteem, respect and a place where children are able to share and build on ideas. Philosophical play starts with teachers allowing play to happen in spaces designed to excite and interest children. A tiny matchbox containing a dead beetle or a mysterious treasure chest filled with things that might or might not be treasure. A trail of green claw prints or a tiny envelope containing a tiny wand. This curiosity is where language starts. The children's responses lead to the educational development of themes where children extend the learning opportunities; role-play areas, learning zones for construction, reading, mark making, exploration and investigation spaces inside and out.

The teachers are then asked to observe language and actions; not just what the children are learning but also what they are saying and thinking and the philosophical issues behind their play.

The stories observed being played out may involve big bad wolves, naughty fairies, lonely pirates or dead superheroes. There are many goodies and baddies whose boundaries are blurred by the child's imagination and the power of fantasy play. The adults are encouraged to capture moments of play by writing, recording or photographing them as they happen. These moments are then used as a philosophical stimulus. The teachers are encouraged to call them play stories. These stories are shared, re-enacted and embellished with elements of storytelling by the children and modelled facilitation by the adults. The facilitator brings philosophical play and fantasy to everyone's attention in a community of enquiry. This in itself is a challenge in these settings and cannot happen until children have developed trust amongst their peer group and teachers through playing together. It requires philosophical exploration and group accountability for listening, talking and thinking. Children have to be allowed to explain to others that they have the same rights in a community of enquiry as they do in negotiated play.

In summary my input is to provide evidence and reassurance for these Early Years teachers that even making small changes will build better learning, better relationships and a future generation of children who will be independent, creative and critical thinkers. My aim is to be able to show that children who have opportunities to experience philosophical play can become better citizens, enquirers, investigators and role models.

Further details about resources, case studies and ways to develop philosophical play in the EYFS can be found in Sara's publications *Why Think? Philosophical Play 3-11, Creating Enquiring Minds and But Why?*.

Information about training and Sara's work in philosophical play and thinking projects in South Africa and the UK can be found on her website www.sarastanley.co.uk

For more information about the organisations Sara is currently involved with in South Africa please visit and support www.nalibali.org www.praesa.org.za

P4C in Pupil Referral Units

William Wates Memorial
Trust funded SAPERE
P4C Project

Alison Hall, SAPERE Trainer
and Courses Manager



The project set out to introduce staff at 3 London Pupil Referral Units to P4C so that together, they and the project trainer could develop P4C practice to enhance achievement, (through a focus on questioning and reasoning,) oracy skills and reasonable behaviour.

After two years, we are beginning to see evidence of success. We have completed three rounds of staff training and half-termly / termly support visits to each unit focused on session facilitation, planning and review. Students in each unit are regularly involved in P4C sessions. At Manor Campus in Havering, P4C started out as part of the admissions and enrichment programme and is now being integrated into the English and PSHE/SMSC curriculum. At Park Campus in Lambeth, the English and Special Needs departments have integrated P4C at years 8, 9, 10 and 11. At Coningsby, the students in Y10 and 11 are introduced to P4C in their enrichment sessions and work often relates to the RE, English and PSHE curriculum, offering students an extra opportunity to talk through cross curricular concepts and questions. The project trainer has worked with staff to develop some session resources that relate directly to the learning outcomes of the IGCSE English curriculum, which are currently being trialled. We are also developing self-evaluations and ways of recording progress that are appropriate for the context.

What we have learnt so far:

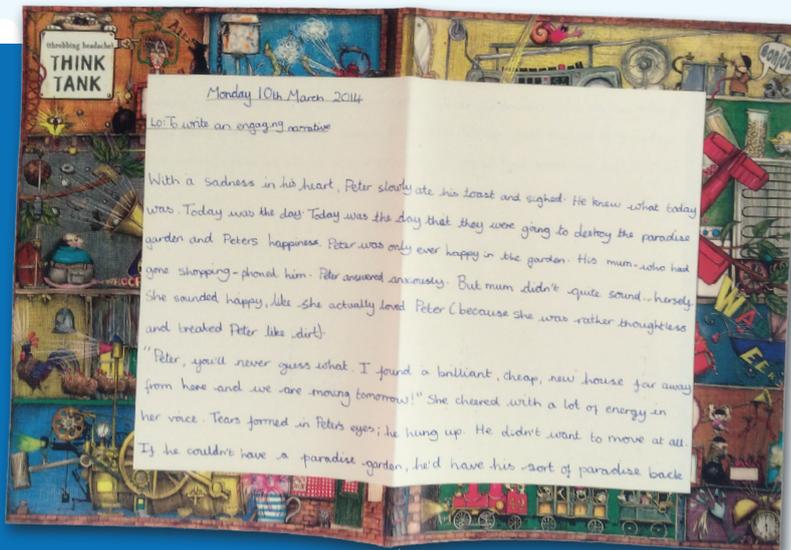
- Students engage well with philosophical discussion and most enjoy the lessons
- Students initially find it challenging to listen attentively to each other, but gradually this improves with support and practice
- Film, images and short news items are particularly popular resources and generate interesting concepts and comments to question
- An extended first thoughts phase offers plenty of time to raise comments
- Questions usually arise later, following discussion of comments
- Making explicit links between the topics discussed, student life experience and exam subjects helps students to integrate P4C experience meaningfully
- Structured exercises and short written activities help to consolidate learning
- There is a need for students to achieve a standard by the end of the year, so we are trialling a record of achievement, which may lead to SAPERE accrediting a certificate of competence in P4C at secondary level
- P4C is becoming a part of the way in which the PRU educators support their students to become more responsible, thoughtful people.

Next Steps

The Wates Family Enterprise Trust has been impressed with the pilot project and SAPERE will be recruiting 5 more PRUs during 2015, ready for a further funded project, to begin in September. We aim to involve the existing PRUs in the new project, as PRU hub schools, building on their experience of using P4C to enhance communication, collaboration and better questioning and reasoning.

Improving Writing with P4C

Alison Allsopp, P4C Leader at Alverstoke Junior School, Gosport, Hampshire



Many schools use the Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach as a way of developing speaking and listening, helping children to build their confidence in expressing their ideas and learning the language of argument.

Those teachers with a passion for P4C and English will have little difficulty in finding a home for philosophical enquiry within their English units of work. P4C engages children more with stories, poems and literary texts as well developing the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

At Alverstoke Junior School in Gosport, Hampshire, a SAPERE Silver Award P4C school, the P4C and English leaders are working collaboratively to make the links between P4C and English more explicit. This is particularly in respect of how the P4C enquiry approach can be used to prompt 'deep thinking' discussions around concepts, which arise from many of the stories, poems, pictures and texts already planned into the English curriculum. It is based on the premise, that if children engage with the text, are able to ask questions, ponder, puzzle, think and talk more deeply about important ideas in life, then their writing has more purpose, is richer, more conceptual and they can develop a better understanding of the story, plot, characters and meanings behind the story.

In short, what teachers are observing at Alverstoke, is that, incorporating philosophical enquiry into children's learning in English is helping to improve the quality of children's writing; children have the chance to articulate their thinking about concepts and share their ideas using the language of enquiry, which they then transfer to their writing.

The following are three examples of how philosophical enquiry has been used to enhance children's writing. All three examples started with a philosophical enquiry session, which then led to a writing outcome. Two of the stimuli also have links with other curriculum areas, including RE and PSHE.

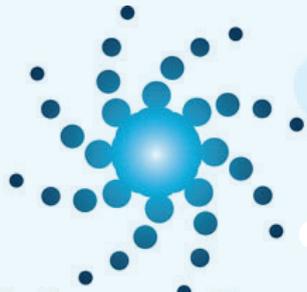
As a part of a unit of work in English in the Autumn Term 2014, Year 5 children have been reading the story *The Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*. In the initial P4C session, children's 'first thoughts' were to look for meanings within the story itself. The children's chosen question was, 'Can anyone perform a miracle?' First words centred around the meaning behind the question. In a follow-on enquiry session, the children explored further their understanding of the concept of a miracle, giving examples of what could be a 'miracle'. This led into subsequent English sessions where children wrote letters in the first person as Jonathan Toomey to his lost wife and son.

In Year 3, a painting was chosen as part of an English/RE related unit of work on 'Angels'. The children responded with their first thoughts, in their P4C journals, using the 'I see.... I think.... I wonder....' thinking tool. As the children were at the early stages of their philosophical enquiry, they were prompted with some 'big ideas' and asked if they could see any connections between the picture and their own ideas. The usual step of choosing a question did not happen as the final question which a child offered 'Can a human be an angel?' led to a sudden ripple of excitement and interest through the class and an interesting and passionate dialogue emerged. Following this enquiry, an English lesson was planned giving children the opportunity to write their own poems focusing on their thoughts and ideas surrounding this question.

A P4C day has become a yearly event at Alverstoke Junior School. In 2014 there was a timely link to 'World Book' day. *The Paradise Garden* by Colin Thompson was chosen as a starting point for a whole school enquiry. This was followed in the afternoon with opportunities for writing, giving the children the chance to make their own choice of writing genre. Year 5 started their enquiry by choosing a place they would like to be from four given images. After reading the story, about a boy who decided to escape from his hectic family life in the city and seek refuge in a garden, the children gave their first thought responses in terms of 'puzzling, pleasing and provoking' ideas. The question chosen was 'Should you run away from your problems and fears?'. Some children chose to write a narrative about the boy's thoughts and feelings, one of which described how the boy woke up one day to find that his mother was planning to move away and he would no longer be able to escape to the Paradise Garden. Others wrote a dialogue between the boy and his friend describing how events unfolded in the boy's family life.

Alverstoke Junior School intends to continue developing the links between philosophical enquiry and writing outcomes in 2015. They have planned an Inset day with English consultant and trainer, Bob Cox, to learn more about how children can engage with traditional prose, poetry and literature. Bob has recently published a book *Opening Doors to Famous Prose and Poetry*. He suggests a wealth of famous literature, prose and poetry along with inspiring practical ideas for planning lessons to engage children in writing at a deeper level and which provide ideal starting points for P4C.

If you are interested in finding out more about any of the ideas mentioned in this article, please contact Alison Allsopp, alisonallsopp23@gmail.com



Thinking Schools
International

Thinking Schools International(TSI) and SAPERE conference and collaboration

Roger Sutcliffe, SAPERE Founder and Trainer, TSI consultant

Ever since I first encountered TSI, in its original form as Kestrel, nearly 10 years ago, I felt that its ethos and aims were very congruent with those of SAPERE, the charity of which I was a co-founder in the early 1990s. And since becoming a TSI consultant 4 years ago, this feeling has turned into a conviction – not merely of the congruency, but also of the urgency of doing something to alert the hundreds of schools in each network of the value of engaging with the other network.

It is precisely to that end that the two organisations have organised a conference, on March 19th 2015, to give Thinking School teachers a fuller appreciation of P4C, and P4C teachers a fuller appreciation of the flexible, but importantly whole school, interventions advocated and supported by TSI.

I should like to highlight first the broad definition of a Thinking School, formulated by the late Bob Burden (with some boldening of text by myself):

'an educational **community** in which all members share a common commitment to giving **regular careful thought to everything** that takes place. This will involve both students and staff learning how to think **reflectively, critically and creatively**, and to employing these skills and techniques in the **co-construction of a meaningful curriculum and associated activities**. Successful outcomes will be reflected in students across a wide range of abilities demonstrating **independent and co-operative learning skills**, high levels of achievement and both enjoyment and satisfaction in learning. Benefits will be shown in ways in which **all members of the community interact with and show consideration for each other** and in the **positive psychological well-being of both students and staff**.'

Thinking School teachers will be familiar with these words, of course, though they represent a high ideal of which many may fall short in practice. But it is the very height of the ideal that makes the building of a Thinking School an ongoing project – not a once-for-ever accomplishment.

P4C schools/teachers, on the other hand, will readily endorse the aims and values in this definition, recognising its strong and proper emphasis on reflection and building community. The active encouragement of critical and creative thinking attunes with the 4Cs of P4C, and although Caring and Collaborative thinking are not mentioned specifically, they are implicit in references, respectively, to consideration for each other and well-being, and co-construction and co-operative learning skills.

All I should like to do now is note a few of the practical benefits that schools/teachers in each network might gain through attending the conference and engaging with the other approaches on offer.

Addressing, firstly, any P4C teachers: TSI consultants are experienced teachers and trainers (several of them former heads or deputy heads) who act as counsellors, in the best sense, for any schools wishing to raise the appreciation and application of good thinking in all aspects of their operations. They help schools construct their own journeys to becoming (more) Thinking Schools, for which there is an assessment and accreditation service provided by Exeter University. They can offer specific training in three particular pathways:

- **Visual Tools for Thinking, especially David Hyerle's 8 Thinking Maps – some of which can readily be incorporated into P4C practice, whilst others are useful across the curriculum**
- **Dispositions for Mindfulness, including Art Costa's Habits of Mind – most of which are routinely practised in P4C, but which could well be made more explicit and more applicable both in P4C and beyond**
- **'Questioning for Enquiry', which, as I shall explain shortly, can best be grounded in P4C practice, but which can also call upon other frameworks that can be used effectively across the curriculum, such as Bloom/Anderson's Taxonomy, Kagan's Q Matrix, and McTighe's Essential Questions.**

TSI trainers and teachers also demonstrate good use of other 'thinking' interventions, such as de Bono's 6 Thinking Hats, and Ryan's Thinking Keys. And in general the TSI ethos is to encourage schools and teachers to keep developing their approach to teaching FOR, OF and ABOUT thinking (using Costa's prepositions) – an aspiration which I personally assume all P4C schools/teachers share.

Addressing, secondly, TSI teachers: P4C is sometimes seen as a sort of glorified 'Circle Time', or (in secondary schools) as a low cost divertissement from an overly prescriptive curriculum – 'let them think thanks!' But this is to short change not only the approach itself but also the pupils whose lives, let alone learning, are almost always enhanced by P4C proper. Put more boldly, the regular practice of P4C in

Communities of Enquiry transforms not only attitudes to teaching but also the aspirations and ethos of whole schools. There are many reasons why this is so – and that is reflected in the depth and breadth of P4C training – but if I were to offer the three most important, they would be these:

- **P4C puts a premium on children developing their own questions, thereby nurturing (rather than stunting, as does most exam-orientated education) their curiosity**
- **It consistently encourages critical reflection, both on 'received' ideas and on one's own conceptions**
- **It opens up areas or spaces for wide and deep thinking that conventional parts of the curriculum simply do not provide for. This is the special nature of philosophical enquiry. It is not bounded by 'subjects', nor by 'objects' of thought, and – though it has deep respect for accuracy of information in the formulation of good arguments and judgements – it focusses much more on experience than on 'expert' knowledge. That makes it accessible to pupils of all 'abilities' and backgrounds. In short, philosophical questions are the best questions for maximising thinking practice.**

These three features all focus, properly, on what pupils can gain from the approach, but a few words should be said about what and how teachers can gain in the process. It is not unusual for teachers trained in P4C – whatever their specialist subject or age – to observe that the training makes a significant difference to their whole approach to teaching and learning. This can be put down in large part to their own development of questioning, and specifically Socratic questioning, but that, itself, leads to more open and dialogic learning environments, in which developing understanding and judgement are prioritised over knowledge acquisition and repetition. Which, of course, is what Thinking Classrooms stand or fall by.

Perhaps, even now, the reader of this article might be thinking, 'Well, you would say that, wouldn't you?' And, yes, I could not be expected to short change P4C myself! But I still urge you or your school to take the opportunity to attend the conference in March, to hear from P4C teachers themselves, and/or to investigate further the benefits of proper P4C training.

Finally, in reference to training, it has been acknowledged by both organisations that adding the standard 2 days of P4C Level 1 training on top of the training already provided by TSI in Visual Tools and/or Dispositions and/or Questioning was something of an obstacle to Thinking Schools taking on P4C proper. So, not the least benefit of the collaboration between the two organisations is that we have developed a joint 'pathway', whereby 'Questioning for Enquiry' can be undertaken as a two-day INSET and still qualify as P4C Level 1 training. Typically, the first of the two days will be run by a TSI consultant and the second day will be run by a SAPERE trainer. You won't get better collaboration (or training) than that!

www.thinkingschoolsinternational.com

Embedding P4C and Global Learning in the new primary Maths curriculum: using infographics as a stimulus

Jane Yates, Senior Teacher, Armathwaite Primary School, Cumbria



How did the project come about?

For the past year, Armathwaite School have been part of a national Global Learning Programme (GLP) funded by DfID. This is a ground-breaking new programme which is creating a national network of like-minded schools, committed to equipping their students to make a positive contribution to a globalised world by helping their teachers to deliver effective teaching and learning about development and global issues at Key Stages 2 and 3.

The aims of the programme are to:

- help young people understand their role in a globally interdependent world and explore strategies by which they can make it more just and sustainable
- familiarise pupils with the concepts of interdependence, development, globalisation and sustainability
- enable teachers to move pupils from a charity mentality to a social justice mentality
- stimulate critical thinking about global issues, both at a whole school and pupil level
- help schools promote greater awareness of poverty and sustainability
- enable schools to explore alternative models of development and sustainability in the classroom

The role of Armathwaite School has been as one of the programme's Expert Centres, providing a series of training sessions over a period of four terms to a group of up to 23 Partner schools, with the assistance of a Local Advisor for Global Learning. This model is being rolled out throughout England (with similar programmes also in Scotland and Wales) with 80 new Expert Centres each year for up to 5 years. Each of the training sessions provided to Partner Schools, focusses on delivering training around one or more of the four concepts of interdependence, development, globalisation and sustainability. P4C is a well supported methodology which is promoted to schools within the programme, in terms of stimulating thinking about global concepts. Prior to each training session, resources have been trialled with pupils from Armathwaite School, and then shared with their Partner Schools. Armathwaite School has a strong ethos of pupil voice and therefore pupils have often taken part in the sessions as an equal participant (see GLP website in the case study section on Global Learning and pupil voice for further details).

Why infographics: data and information?

The aim was to find and experiment with a range of stimuli that would show complex information quickly. It became apparent that infographics would not only serve that aim, but would also be a new type of stimulus for Armathwaite, from the usual photographs, pictures, texts, drama, stories or artefacts. Infographics are graphic visualisations of information, data or knowledge. They help people to visualise data through visual thinking, and they have the potential to reduce huge philosophical concepts. Infographics are also rooted in philosophy. They were created by Otto Neurath who was a leading figure in the so-called Vienna Circle of philosophers and literary figures, which had a strong focus on logical positivism, a philosophy based largely on the ideas of Rudolf Carnap and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Neurath was deeply sceptical of language, as he believed it was too influenced by ideology. Having little trust in words, he preferred symbols and charts. He is known for declaring: "words divide, images unite". He also believed that the only way to escape the limits of language was through mathematics, especially when used to represent logic and choice.

The introduction of the new primary maths curriculum was timely as the school was looking to find new ways of embedding Global Learning within the maths curriculum. Statistics (formerly known as data handling) has less of a role in the new primary curriculum, but there are the inevitable higher expectations. Not to be deterred by their lessening role, statistical data became the context for the maths and geography during the Autumn term of 2014 for Upper KS2 in a topic titled Global Statistics. This also tied in with learning about the UNICEF Convention of Children's Rights, as the school is working towards a Rights Respecting School Award.

Infographic: World Map Indexes

The first activity used a copy of the Global Peace Index infographic. As a starter activity, the pupils were given a copy of the map without a description and they had to make a logical guess about what the infographic represented, drawing on their prior geographical learning. As is often the case, it also served as a tool to assess their geographical knowledge and skills of the world. The pupils made relevant guesses before being told the actual index representation. The closest idea by pupils was that the map showed where wars were currently taking place. It puzzled and surprised the pupils that the focus was on peace rather than conflict – puzzlement is always a good ingredient for a philosophical enquiry. Next they were given a range of 10 countries, which

they were familiar with from personal experience or school learning, and asked to rank them in peacefulness. Finally, they got to see the complete Global Peace Index poster and were able to find out the exact order of these countries and others by using their place value and ordering of number skills. The pupils were highly motivated looking at the infographic and, being children who have done P4C since Reception, immediately started asking 'bigger' and more philosophical questions. A strategy the school uses across the curriculum when philosophical questions arise naturally is, as well as incidental philosophical dialogue, to ask the children to record their questions on the class whiteboard as they make excellent whole class plenary questions or provide future opportunities for enquiry. As part of this work, the pupils also explored other indices such as agricultural, resources, conflict, hunger and happy planet. The main focus for enquiry was around the question, "Is it possible to feel peace, even if where we live is not peaceful?"

Infographics: individual pieces of statistical data

The pupils also looked at individual pieces of statistical data. Many global organisations have a statistics section on their websites. We used WaterAid, The United Nations World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. The pupils had to select a single statistic that was interesting and raised philosophical questions. Learning in maths involved understanding 'big' numbers, expressing and converting numbers as fractions, percentages, decimals and ratios.

"748 million people in the world don't have access to safe water. This is roughly one in ten of the world's population."
WaterAid

"Some 805 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy active life. That's about one in nine people on earth." United Nations World Food Programme

As well as being stimulated by infographics provided by the associated organisations, the pupils also made their own colourful infographics. Not only did this increase their mathematical understanding, but also their visual thinking skills.

The main focus for philosophical enquiry during this section of the project was:

"If the maths says there is enough food to go around, then why are people still hungry?"

This has led to subsequent personal research by the pupils, driven by their desire to understand about food shortages both locally and globally.

Sharing with other teachers

In previous GLP sessions we had used knowledge (or conceptual) infographics to explore the concepts of globalisation and interdependence. Interestingly, we had discovered that such infographics about globalisation were often presented with a negative perspective, while infographics about interdependence were more positive generally.

All work trialled about infographics using data and information has also been shared with the GLP schools and participants on P4C and GLP courses in Cheshire and Worcestershire. For example, on a recent Level 1 training an infographic of a map of 'Africa without Ebola', from the Washington Post, led to a lively enquiry around the concept of 'perception' of media vs. reality.

Where next?

It has been an exciting term of exploration and we feel we have only scratched the surface of the potential for using data and information infographics as a stimulus and to help embed P4C and Global Learning in our maths curriculum. It has certainly helped our pupils to recognise, and be familiar with, the complexity of concepts such as globalisation, sustainability, development and interdependence. It has also brought a stronger philosophical dimension to our maths learning and has led to much discussion and philosophical dialogue about the concept of statistics itself, especially in terms of validity. One of the advantages of infographics is they can quickly focus pupils on the concepts; however, getting to the concepts too quickly can have its own disadvantages, as they might not offer the contextual richness of a text stimulus. We are certain that we would not go as far as Neurath to say that images offer a less ideological form of stimulus for P4C – but moreover there is room for both. We would certainly welcome further discussion around the use of infographics in the use of Global Learning, and the maths curriculum.

A new film for teachers about Global Learning in the maths curriculum will soon be published on the GLP website, involving Armathwaite School teachers and pupils.

Armathwaite School is a Silver SAPERE P4C Award School and is currently working towards achieving Gold.

Jane Yates

Jane Yates is a Senior Teacher at Armathwaite School with responsibility for Upper Key Stage 2. She is a curriculum leader for Literacy, Philosophy, RE, Geography and PE. She has been teaching Philosophy for Children at Armathwaite School for over 15 years and facilitates a weekly session of P4C for all children from Reception to Year 6. Armathwaite School recently changed its status from being a first school to a full primary in 2011 and Jane is enjoying developing P4C into Upper KS2. Jane is the Co-coordinator for GLP at Armathwaite School and recently became accredited as a Lead Practitioner for Global Learning.

Websites

www.globaldimension.org.uk/glp Global Learning Programme (GLP)

www.armathwaite.cumbria.sch.uk Armathwaite School

www.janeyates.net Jane Yates

Websites with useful infographics

www.visionofhumanity.org Global Peace Index

www.fao.org Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

www.wateraid.org.uk WaterAid

<http://www.wfp.org/content/hunger-map-2014> World Food Programme Hunger Infographic

www.christianaid.org.uk World of Conflict Infographic

www.happyplanetindex.org Happy Planet Index

www.google.co.uk Infographics

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Engaging the Disengaged through P4C

Jason Ward, Liverpool World Centre <http://liverpoolworldcentre.org>



In 2009 the Liverpool World Centre, (a development Education Centre based in Liverpool) was given a small fund to work with pupils who had become disengaged with education. From this we worked with a school in Everton with 12 girls from Year 9 (age 13-14 years) who were on the edge of being permanently excluded from school. Using a variety of techniques the Liverpool World Centre worked with these pupils for 7 weeks. At the end of the project 7 pupils remained, as some had dropped out of the project. All 7 completed their GCSEs and moved onto higher education either taking A Level or vocational qualifications.

Carrying on from the success of the first project, the Liverpool World Centre started to work with new schools and, over six years, has worked across Merseyside with pupils who are categorised as being disengaged from school. Behaviour, bereavement, aggression, attainment and many more reasons were given for pupils being chosen for the project and we have now worked with over 100 pupils.

Over the years the project has changed; times of sessions, working with different year groups, and working with more complex needs have meant we have had to adapt with each coming year. However, one activity has remained a constant throughout the projects: the use of Philosophy for Children (P4C). P4C provides these pupils with an opportunity for self-exploration and development. No matter what reason pupils were chosen for the project, P4C has helped them to change and develop as people.

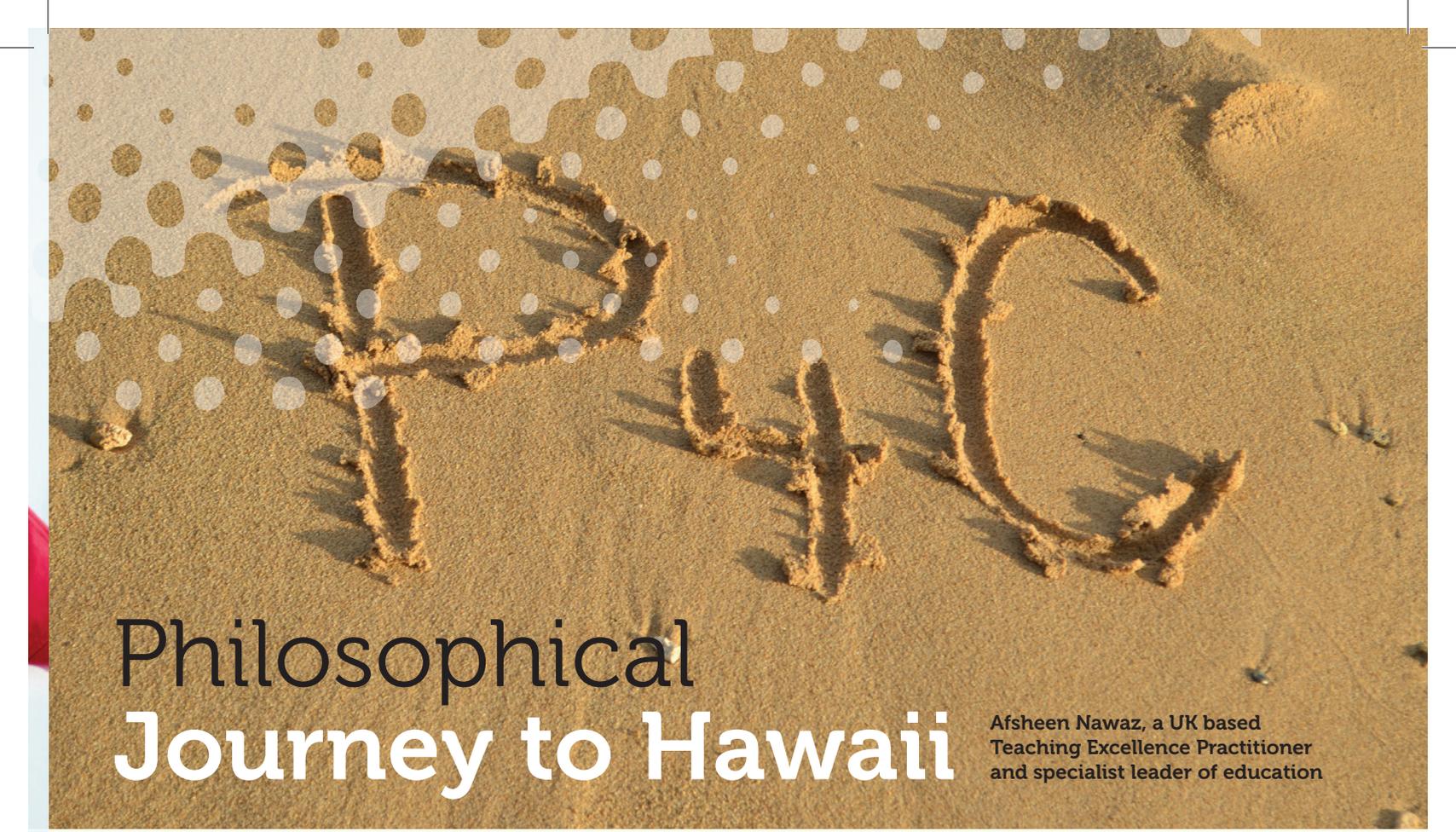
P4C has given a voice to children who otherwise did not have one. The subtle balance of children leading their own discussions and controlling its outcome has inspired children from different ages and backgrounds, that their opinion matters. Through this project we have seen children who were on the edge of permanent exclusion stay in schools to get their GCSEs and move on to further or higher education.

There are some children who struggle with the structure of P4C but they can be taught gradually to respect the ground rules of P4C. They develop and gain skills in self and peer reflection and the ability to analyse what has been presented to them. There they learn the fundamental skills that a child needs to survive school, that some of us take for granted.

Finally, there is a therapeutic element of P4C that has not gone unnoticed. In these spaces children are able to put their personal views on topics; views that that may have been silent in the past. The children have discussed topics such as images and perceptions, fears and bravery, death and bereavement. Through engaging with these topics, being listened to, and having their opinions heard and validated by their peers, is an experience that some of these children have never felt before.

From this knowledge the Liverpool World Centre is currently working on a resource on P4C and Engagement. The resource will be filled with activities, P4C discussions and case studies of how the sessions benefit disengaged learners.

Creating these safe philosophical spaces for children has become part of the Liverpool World Centre's core work. We are working on running this project with new schools and new groups every year, bringing P4C to new pupils and teachers and helping children find their voice through philosophical enquiry.



Philosophical Journey to Hawaii

Afsheen Nawaz, a UK based
Teaching Excellence Practitioner
and specialist leader of education

The Goldsmiths' Grant for Teachers allowed me to visit the Philosophy for Children (P4C) Academy in Hawaii and assume the role of philosopher in residence. This opportunity allowed me to conduct an international comparative study on Philosophy for Children (P4C) as an approach to teaching.

In March 2014, I embarked on a five week research visit to the University of Hawaii at Manoa to meet the members of the P4C Academy. Prior to my visit, I had drawn up clear aims and objectives to guide the direction of my research which I will summarise under the following categories:

- 1) Similarities and differences in the teaching of P4C across the phases (Foundation Stage – Secondary)
- 2) Examine staff training on P4C and realise how this correlates to the holistic scope of educational training and staff development on a whole school level
- 3) Focus group interviews with staff and pupils to elicit qualitative data on the impact of adopting a P4C approach

Similarities and differences in the teaching of P4C

I spent the vast majority of my time in classrooms and broader educational settings to gain firsthand knowledge and experience of witnessing P4C in action. I ensured that I was given a broad range of ages (Kindergarten – University) so that I could observe the developmental stages in relation to academic, social, emotional and philosophical progress. I was fortunate enough to take on numerous roles (facilitator, observer, active participant) within the sessions to gain a multidimensional perspective. My main findings in relation to similarities and differences in practice are as follows:

I was struck by the parallel nature of children. Despite the many differences in climate, culture, curriculum and provision they remained strikingly similar to my own pupils in England. They wondered about similar "big" philosophical themes and shared a similar enthusiasm and innate curiosity to explore the world around them (see blog, The Nature of Children 3rd April 2014).

The "Hawaiian" influence on the traditional Matthew Lipman model of P4C became abundantly apparent almost instantly. Central to the Philosophy for Children Hawaii (p4cHI) model is the notion that 'we are not in a rush'. This phrase was coined by Dr Thomas Jackson and is fundamentally about giving pupils of all ages the luxury of time to think deeply, ponder, listen to others and reflect on responses. This is especially important in the fast paced modern world we find ourselves in, where time is becoming an increasingly precious commodity. It was extremely clear that this concept was warmly welcomed by the pupils. A third grade pupil commented:

"P4C sessions are awesome because they are so different to anything else in school. We get time to think about things carefully without being rushed. We (pupils) decide what we are going to discuss and how long for." (Waikiki Elementary School Pupil Quote)

I also noticed that their approach to P4C was far more informal and relaxed. The sessions were not as structured as the traditional model, for example, many of their sessions started with 'wonderings' the children had as opposed to being presented with a stimulus. This approach nurtured a more authentic discourse and had a clear impact on the profundity and depth of questions the pupils subsequently discussed. (See blog If I ruled the world... 10th April 2014 for a more detailed commentary on the quality and depth of pupil enquiries.)

Pupils assume the role of facilitator at a comparatively earlier stage of community maturity. This is largely attributed to their explicit knowledge of using and applying The Good Thinker's Toolkit. The toolkit was developed as an instructional tool to help pupils form engaging philosophical questions. Accurately identifying the tools and developing a deeper understanding of them can transform passive, reactive thinking into active, probing, responsive modes of thinking. Pupils' early awareness of these specific 'tools' allows them to experiment with them in the confines of a safe classroom.

Read the full Philosopher in Residence Report on Afsheen's blog: <https://afsheennawaz.wordpress.com>

Character Development at Rokeby

With the current surge of DfE interest in building character, see how Gold Award School, Rokeby combines P4C into its wider strategy

By Gurjit Kaur Shergill: Deputy Head Teacher



Rokeby is an all boys' inner-city secondary in Canning Town, Newham. We draw students from 60 feeder schools. We have 66% FSM and 82% EAL students. 59% of local children live in income deprived households.

Building character is at the core of Rokeby's mission to "Dare to be the Best". Our values are Respect, Success, Passion for Learning, Personal Challenge and Harmony. Mutual respect is critical given our multicultural intake and high proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have been promoting Integrity with students for 5 years, examining its meaning and its implications.

We emphasise resilience, encouraging students to keep going even when success is difficult to attain. Activities to build resilience include motivational talks at assemblies by staff and external speakers. Recently I even read out my own less-than-glowing Year 10 report card, showing that it is possible to bounce back and succeed after a setback.

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is core to supporting character development and academic progress, based on:

- P4C values: caring, collaborative, creative and critical thinking;
- Philosophical questions: having no right or wrong answers gives an equal voice to less academically able students;
- Democratic process: empowering students to choose the topic of enquiry;
- Community approach: driving team spirit and respectful behaviour.

We run P4C across the curriculum. The entire school engages in philosophical enquiries for 60 minutes twice a term.

Next month we will focus on diversity and LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transvestite Questioning). This will be challenging in an all-boys school with many cultural and religious influenced backgrounds but it is important to tackle the issue. The ability to deal with controversial issues is a defining feature of our character development work.

Rokeby originated a P4C Student Champions programme in which we train year 10 and 11 students to facilitate enquiries and encourage student leadership. Students receive the same P4C training as staff and then plan enquiries themselves. They lead enquiries with younger student groups, in local primary and secondary schools and at teacher conferences. One of our P4C champions set up the Rokeby News Team working with the BBC: another is standing for Young Mayor of Newham. Both come from challenging backgrounds.

We work with the Outward Bound Trust and Outdoors Inner-City. The Outward Bound programme targets C/D borderline pupils in year 11 who need an extra push. The Outdoors Inner-City programme is for all year 7 students plus targeted pupils from other year groups to help with relationship building and team behaviour. We run Passport Days where pupils make outside visits to enhance their life experiences and build character. We have a programme with 'The Kids Company' to provide practical, emotional and educational support to the most vulnerable young people.

We have instituted a new reward system to manage and monitor behaviour improvements, following extensive consultation with students and staff. It includes behaviour reports, student voice surveys, staff surveys and statistics on behavioural incidents and exclusions



Letter from Rev Prof Dr W D Robinson, SAPERE Co-founder

I feel rather protective of SAPERE as yonks ago I started the whole thing off. Years took their toll and I was happy to leave the baby to younger, better people to carry on. May I say the result was much more, and much better, than I could have achieved; very gratifying.

The thing I would like to leave with you is that my P4C experience ranged from working with pre-school youngster on the hearthrug with their parents to unschooled druggies on Merseyside who worked surprisingly well, until break time that is. Then they were into the loo with spliffs and came back too 'high' to do anything.

School experience was another thing. I recall being asked, "Would you like the difficult ones or the flyers?" "The difficult ones, please." I can still feel Jo's hand clutching mine as we walked together at break time. She would never say anything until that amazing day when she uttered her first comment in class. They may have been 'difficult' but the basic P4C methodology worked well for them.

And so it did for the group of 'flyers' gathered from across the county; playing cowboys and Indians in their spare time but doing philosophy with the best. I think of the little lad of 9 years, taking A-level maths next year.

Then there were sessions with university philosophers, business company executives and (this was the thrill) the same methodology working with all. Of course, as Matt Lipman did in his original stories, the shared experience to begin the session had to be suited to the group's level. But, no matter who, Matt's basic structure fitted the need.

I'm afraid I've waffled on, but they were exciting times. I'd like to see more work with the 'flyers' of education and industry being catered for in your on-going programme.

**With sincerest good wishes to you all,
Will Robinson**

These programmes support our broader drive to develop character and behaviour through all our teaching. Our policy is to drive independent and collaborative thinking rather than simply transmitting content from the teacher. We have seen that spoon-feeding the students does not work, so we encourage teachers to take risks and hand over some control to students. Our video, "Why Rokeby?" shows how all this comes together in the school's culture.

We are extending our approaches into other local and national schools. Our P4C champions have facilitated demonstration philosophical enquiries in front of teacher and head teacher audiences at national conferences run by groups such as Teaching Leaders and Future Leaders. The same students have spoken at whole school assemblies for other local secondary schools and facilitated P4C enquiries with students in schools embarking on a P4C programme. We regularly host visits from other schools, both secondary and primary, to see people in action and to meet our school champions. The P4C champions usually take the guests round the school.

There's a mass of evidence to show that character education is effective at Rokeby.

- We have zero NEETS, a striking achievement given the high levels of deprivation of students coming into our school;
- We achieved 4 levels of progress in Maths for 50% of students, and 44% in English versus national averages of 32% and 30% respectively;
- Our students go on to make outstanding achievements in sixth form and beyond. Examples from our alumni page are:
 - Yusuf Sheylila: Recognised as a social entrepreneur by UnLtd, Changemakers, O2 & Vodafone Foundation
 - Umar Kankiya: UK Youth Parliament: London Region Coordinator
 - Omer Bashir: Humanities teacher at Rokeby
- We are the only SAPERE Gold Award secondary school for sustainable excellence in P4C, though we expect, and hope, that others will follow soon.

Links

You can find the following
on the SAPERE website:

Training
Courses
School Awards
Case Studies
Projects
Resources



SAPERE

Philosophy for Children,
Colleges, Communities

www.sapere.org.uk

SAPERE

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We are always pleased to hear from you and
particularly welcome contributions to the
online bulletins and newsletter