

## Philosophy for Children (P4C) at Roughwood

### What is P4C?

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an approach to learning and teaching which enhances children's thinking and communication skills, boosts their self-esteem, and improves their academic attainment.



In P4C, a stimulus (such as a story, video clip or image) is shared with a group of children. The children are encouraged by a trained facilitator, to generate engaging philosophical questions about the stimulus, that the whole class can discuss together.

### Why P4C?

P4C aims to create a caring classroom situation where children:

- learn to listen and respect each other
- learn to be clear in their thinking and to make responsible and more deliberate judgements
- learn to be more thoughtful by basing their decisions and actions on reasons

### How often do we do P4C?

At Roughwood, we aim to carry out at least one P4C enquiry every fortnight. In addition, we sometimes carry out joint, academy-wide P4C enquiries, sharing our class thoughts with the other schools across Willow Tree.

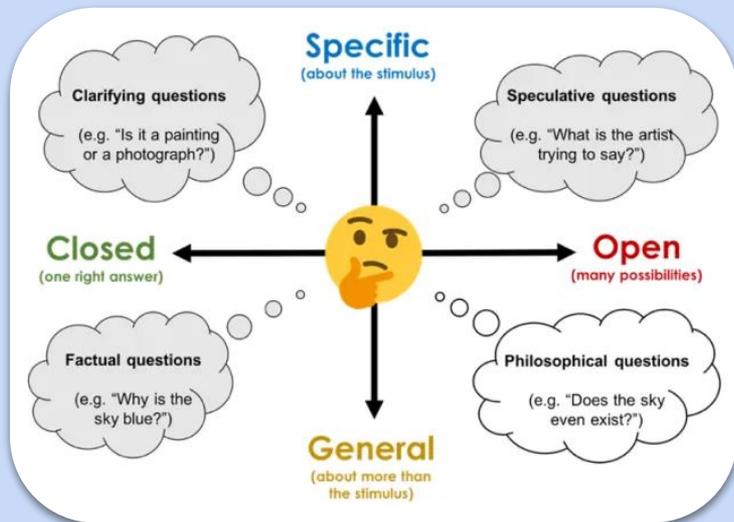
## What does a P4C session look like?

There are 10 steps to a P4C enquiry:

1. **Getting set** - this usually involves playing a game that will encourage children to listen carefully and to join in.
2. **Presentation of stimulus** - this is where the facilitator shares a book / video clip / photograph or other stimulus that will generate interest and discussion.
3. **Thinking time** - children will have time, immediately after the stimulus is presented to think carefully about what they have heard or seen.
4. **Formulation of questions** - children will then work in pairs or small groups to generate philosophical questions for discussion.
5. **Airing of questions** - each pair or group will then have time to share their questions with the rest of the class.
6. **Selection (voting)** - the class then decide which question we will discuss. It's really important to us as facilitators that the enquiry is led by the children, so they make the decision.
7. **First thoughts** - children share their first thoughts on the chosen question.
8. **Building** - the discussion builds. Children are encouraged to use sentence stems such as: I agree with ... because, I disagree with ... because... This is to encourage positive communication between children - it shows good listening skills to build on what someone else has said previously.
9. **Last thoughts** - the children share their final thoughts after listening to others. Have they changed their minds?
10. **Review** - the facilitator will then guide a final review of the discussion, ensuring all children understand what has been discussed.

## What types of questions are discussed in a P4C enquiry?

In P4C, children always generate their own questions for discussion - one of the key principles of P4C is that it is child-led, so children are the ones who lead the enquiry. However, facilitators will encourage children, during question formulation, to think of questions that are both open-ended and general, so that we will have lots to talk about. The question quadrant below helps us to do that ...



## How can I help my child at home?

After each P4C enquiry, we will ask children to share the discussion question with parents, carers, other family members and friends at home, to find even more points of view - understanding that everyone has their own point of view, and that each is valued and respected, is at the heart of every P4C enquiry. You can support us with this by simply sharing your opinion, listening to your child's thoughts and asking questions like, Why do you think that? How do you know? Did others agree/disagree?

## Benefits for children

There are countless benefits for children who regularly take part in philosophical enquiry. Some examples include:

- A way to open up children's learning through enquiry and the exploration of ideas
- Children realise that there is not always a right answer and all ideas are valued
- They have the confidence to ask questions and learn through discussion
- All learners (including teachers) have opportunities to genuinely enquire
- A chance to speak and be heard without fear of getting an answer wrong
- Intelligence and respect for others grows
- Gives all children a voice and chance to flourish
- Gives all children a chance to 'think outside the box' and to celebrate others inspiring ideas
- Raises children's self esteem and social responsibility

## For more information ...

For more information, visit SAPERE, the umbrella organisation for P4C in the UK:  
<http://www.sapere.org.uk>

