



*Believe. Achieve. Succeed Together.*

# **Iver Village Junior School**

## **Philosophy Policy**

### **2023 - 2025**

Review Date	Reviewed by	Changes
September 2020	SCA + SS	Added the four types of P4C thinking
October 2023	SCA	No changes required

Written By: Mrs S Chapman-Allen  
This policy was adopted: December 2017  
The policy is to be reviewed by: December 2024  
Version 3

## **Rationale**

At Iver Village Junior School we strive to help our pupils to be effective, critical and creative thinkers and to take responsibility for their own learning in a caring and collaborative environment.

We aim to do this by providing enquiry-based activities and Philosophy for Children (P4C) where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and find the answers through discussion, thereby developing the ability to recognise differences and explore these constructively. P4C strengthens children's understanding and speaking and listening skills.

## **Key Principles of P4c:**

The key practice that starts and drives the whole thinking process is enquiry (interpreted as going beyond information to seek understanding). The key practice that results in significant changes of thought and action is reflection.

These aims and processes can be made more explicit if the teacher asks appropriate questions. These can range from a general invitation (such as: Can anyone respond to that?) to more specific calls that require a considered response. There are ten key elements the teacher can introduce to elicit a considered response.

1. Questions (What don't we understand here? What questions do we have about this?)
2. Hypotheses (Does anyone have any alternative suggestions or explanations?)
3. Reasons (What reasons are there for doing that? What evidence is there for believing this?)
4. Examples (Can anyone think of an example of this? Can someone think of a counter-example?)
5. Distinctions (Can we make a distinction here? Can anyone give a definition?)
6. Connections (Is anyone able to build on that idea? or Can someone link that with another idea?)
7. Implications (what assumptions lie behind this? What consequences does it lead to?)
8. Intentions (is that what was really meant? Is that what we-re really saying?)
9. Criteria (what makes that an example of x? what are the things that really count here?)
10. Consistency (Does that conclusion follow? Are these principles/beliefs consistent?)

## **Four types of P4c thinking**

In P4C, four types of thinking are central to our values and practice. It is one of the most important aspects of P4C

These are the four types of P4C thinking:

**Caring thinking:** this is all about respect for others in the community of inquiry and respect for the subject of the inquiry. Students can display caring thinking by showing that they are listening well to others and that they value their contributions.

**Collaborative thinking:** this is about helping the community as a whole to progress. Students show that they are thinking collaboratively when they communicate well with each other and build on each other's ideas.

**Critical thinking:** this is about questioning and reasoning well. Good critical thinking involves giving good reasons, looking for evidence, testing out ideas, seeking understanding and making valid judgements.

**Creative thinking:** this involves making connections and suggesting ideas. A good creative thinker makes comparisons, provides examples and suggests alternative lines of thought.

### **Thinking skills and philosophical enquiry:**

Thinking skills, especially those relevant to creative and critical thinking, are seen as a good thing, because without them there is a danger of not applying one's critical faculties to the whole idea. Another critical point is that skills of any sort are worthless if one has neither the inclination nor the good sense to use them. We need above all to help children develop the general disposition to think better.

### **Aims:**

- To help children and young people develop into effective, critical and creative thinkers and to take responsibility for their own learning in a caring and collaborative environment by providing practical ways of developing good thinking, questioning and communication skills.
- To create a caring classroom situation where children; learn to listen to and respect each other and make links between matters of personal concern such as; love, growing up, friendship, bullying and fairness. And more general philosophical issues such as; change, personal identity, free will, space, time and truth.
- To encourage children to challenge and explore the beliefs and values of others, and to develop their own views and experience quiet moments of thinking and reflection
- To encourage children to learn to be clear in their thinking and to make responsible and more deliberate judgements.
- To encourage children to learn to be more thoughtful by basing their decisions and actions on reasons.
- To strengthen the common purpose of School e.g. Why are we here? Education of moral, values, ethics and dialogue
- To have high expectations of children's abilities to think critically and creatively and to develop morally and socially.
- To use P4C to help to enhance the quality of learning and raise standards of attainment and achievement.
- To develop higher levels of self-esteem, greater independence and improved behaviour through the development of caring attitudes towards peers and to boost intellectual confidence.

### **Expectations:**

- Each class has the minimum of a fortnightly P4C session (ideally weekly, where possible).
- P4C is used as a generic teaching and learning tool to deliver many aspects of the curriculum.
- A cross-curricular approach is encouraged.
- Where possible, P4C is used to deliver the PSHCE curriculum and careful planning is used to make explicit links.
- Assessment of P4C is mainly through observation

## **What does P4C look like at Iver Village Junior School?**

### **Elements of P4C:**

Warm up;  
Introduction to stimulus;  
Creating the questions;  
Voting for a question;  
Re-cap of rules;  
Enquiry (Discuss the question);  
Summing up & final thoughts.

### **Warm up examples:**

Would you rather: Have a line down the middle of the carpet space, class teacher to ask a would you rather question, for example would you rather be a monkey or a lion? Children to choose what they would rather be and then the class teacher ask different children to explain their choice. Yes, but and but – go round the circle with a sentence e.g. The chocolate looks good and children will then response with yes, but .... And but ....

### **Stimuli:**

Stories;  
Pictures;  
Music;  
Video clips;  
Statements;  
Objects;  
Poems.

### **Ask a question (from the children):**

To which you know the answer;  
To which no-one knows the answer;  
To which there may be more than one answer;  
Which you could find the answer by looking in a book/on the internet;  
Which you can answer without really thinking;  
Which you couldn't answer without really thinking;

### **Vote for question:**

Once the children have come up with some different questions they vote for their favourite question.

### **Summing up:**

- When the allotted time is up, or the session has come to a natural end, the children get the opportunity to share their final thought about what they think the answer to the question is;

- Pass an object around the circle. The children who do not want to say anything should feel free to pass the object on without saying anything;
- This is often a time when children who have not said anything during the discussion share their thoughts.
- Write down any final thoughts into a book – often giving children that are shy the opportunity to express how they are feeling.

### **Feedback:**

At this point you can either finish the philosophy session or use this time as a chance for children to give positive feedback to others who, they feel have made a valuable contribution to the discussion.

### **Role of the Facilitator:**

Questioning: Asking good questions to provide a focus for the enquiry

Reasoning: Requesting reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements

Defining: Clarifying concepts through making connections, distinctions and comparisons

Speculating: Generating ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking

Testing for truth: Gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples

Expanding ideas: Sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument

Summarising: Abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instances.

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA:**

#### **Children are able to:**

Ask good questions to provide a focus for the enquiry

Give reasons or evidence to support arguments and judgements

Clarify concepts through making connections, distinctions and comparisons

Generate ideas and alternative viewpoints through imaginative thinking

Test for truth by gathering information, evaluating evidence, examples and counter examples

Expand ideas by sustaining and extending lines of thought and argument

Summarise by abstracting key points or general rules from a number of ideas or instance

