



# St. Mary's R.C. Primary School

## P4C and Mindfulness Policy

### Vision:

We believe that every child is a gift from God, therefore, we aim to provide an outstanding and happy Catholic education which develops the 'whole child' whilst enabling them to reach their full potential.

### Mission statement:

We love God ... so we follow the examples of Jesus

We love learning ... so we always do our very best in everything

We love each other ... so we treat each other as we want to be treated

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### **Aims and Objectives**

P4C and Mindfulness helps our pupils to be creative, critical and effective thinkers in an environment where they feel safe to have the freedom to explore and share their thoughts and ideas as well as being able to ask the 'Big Questions' in a relaxed and calm environment.

Our objectives in the teaching of P4C and Mindfulness are:

- to enable children to develop skills of enquiry and investigation
- to encourage critical thinking
- to provide an environment where pupils learn to listen, respond and respect
- to enable children to be calm, focused, alert and creative in the classrooms
- to encourage children to use these skills in all subjects

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

We believe in whole-class teaching methods and we combine these with enquiry-based discussion activities. We begin with a mindfulness activity where the children partake in meditation and breathing activities to enable the children to be in a focused, alert and calm state of mind. We encourage children to ask as well as answer a variety of questions. We offer them the opportunity to discuss a 'big question' to do with school or out of school issues. Children take part in the discussion in a safe and respectful way so everyone is encouraged to be involved. The Teacher is also part of the discussion but it is a student-led session.

We recognise the fact that there are children of different beliefs and learning styles. Therefore we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by having regular sessions with different stimulus' to get the children talking by

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses

- grouping children not by ability in the room so that the children work collaboratively in the first part of the discussion
- using Teaching Assistants to support the focus and attention of individual children or groups of children

### **P4C and Mindfulness Curriculum Planning**

Mindfulness enables the children to achieve a mental state by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique. We follow the agreed breathing and meditation techniques to begin our sessions.

Teachers use the same planning format which covers a range of elements such as warm up, stimulus, independent reflection, question making, question choosing, etc.

Each class Teacher creates a plan for each lesson. These plans list general learning objectives however, depending on how the session goes, this could change. The class Teacher keeps these individual plans and will annotate them at the end of the session where needed. Then they fill in their P4C diary to share with others their discussions.

### **Foundation Stage**

We teach P4C and Mindfulness in EYFS as part of circle times to encourage choice and sharing of ideas. We ask children to give an answer to a choice from the question board, using voting cards for yes or no, progressing to giving a reason why they have made a choice and to build up and sustain listening skills in a circle time. We also want the children to be familiar with the basic building blocks such as 'follow the listening rules and understand what they mean'.

### **The contribution of P4C and Mindfulness to Teaching in other Curriculum Areas**

#### **English**

P4C and Mindfulness makes a significant contribution to the teaching of English in our school because it actively promotes the skills of speaking and listening as well as critical and creative thinking. We ensure that there are texts available to use as part of the P4C sessions. For example, in Key Stage 1, we can use A story from 'Frog and Toad Together' by Arnold Lobel to discuss fear or courage. At Key Stage 2, we organise debates on a variety of issues, because we believe that these develop speaking and listening skills. We also use these issues as a way of developing the children's writing ability, by asking them to record information in the P4C diary and evaluations.

#### **Mathematics**

The teaching of P4C and Mindfulness contributes to Mathematics as we are developing critical thinking and ways in which children can use their skills to problem solve and to keep calm in difficult situations.

#### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

P4C and Mindfulness contributes significantly to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Firstly, the subject matter lends itself to raising matters of citizenship and social welfare. For example, children study the way in which we can react and behave in social situations. Secondly, the nature of the subject means that children have the opportunity to take part in debates and discussions. We allow them to organise the session on matters of concern to them, whether that is school or out of school-based.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

The whole session is focused on examining the fundamental questions in life through the medium of debate. Mindfulness develops the children's spirituality through our meditation activities. We encourage the children to reflect on the impact of our actions in social situations and by discussing their thoughts towards it helps to develop their moral compass. P4C debates can be about anything therefore a range of cultural issues can and will arise to discuss. This will help children to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures, so that they learn to avoid stereotyping other people, and acquire a positive attitude towards others. We help contribute to the children's social development by teaching them about how society works to resolve difficult issues of economic development. P4C and Mindfulness contributes to the children's appreciation of what is right and wrong by raising many moral questions to discuss.

## **P4C and Mindfulness and Inclusion**

At St Mary's, we teach P4C in accordance to our SEN and Equal Opportunities Policies. We recognise the fact that children are at a range of abilities. Therefore, we work collaboratively. We provide stimulating and suitable learning opportunities for all children to promote multicultural awareness and to provide a positive approach to equal opportunities in race, gender, ability and belief.

## **Assessment**

The Big Question from each class session will be gathered together and displayed in school on the question board for the whole school to discuss.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The coordination and planning of the Mindfulness and P4C sessions are the responsibility of the subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in P4C and Mindfulness and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject
- gives the Headteacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in P4C and Mindfulness and indicates areas for further improvement
- uses specially allocated regular management time to review evidence of the children's work, and to observe Mindfulness and P4C lessons across the school

The quality of teaching and learning in P4C and Mindfulness is monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations.

This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

**Date:** Sep 2015

**Signed:** Chair of Governors

**Reviewed:**