

Entry Number: 1
Heading: Trickey and Topping systematic review of P4C studies
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, reading, logical reasoning, self-esteem, addressing disadvantage
Dates: to 2004
Synopsis: A review of studies into the impact of P4C over the past three decades in primary and secondary schools. Studies were subject to stringent criteria for selection including whether or not they showed experimental/control group design and whether tests used were norm-referenced. Ten studies met the stringent criteria for inclusion, measuring outcomes by norm-referenced tests of reading, reasoning, cognitive ability and other curriculum-related abilities, by measures of self-esteem and child behaviour, and by child and teacher questionnaires.
Main Findings: All students showed positive outcomes. The mean effect size was 0.43, with low variance, indicating a consistent, moderate positive effect for P4C on a wide range of outcome measures. The implications for practice, policy and future research were explored. At the time of the study it is not possible to say if the findings above would be replicated if P4C were rolled out to a larger number of pupils. However, there is much in the studies to support the findings of the more general study by Locke, Ginsberg and Peers (2002), which concluded that the development of spoken language should be a priority for all young children and that this emphasis is particularly beneficial for children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.
Contacts: Trickey, S and Topping K.J. 2004, 'Philosophy for Children: a Systematic Review.' <i>Research Papers in Education</i> . Vol 19, issue 3, pp365-380
Locke, A. Ginsberg, J. and Peers, I. (2002) Development and disadvantage: Implications for the early years and beyond. <i>International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders</i> , 37 (1), 3 – 15

Studies included in the Trickey and Topping survey of 2004

Entry Number: 2
Heading: Philosophy in the Classroom- Lipman & Bierman Study
Dates 1970
Keywords: Philosophy for Children,reading, Logical reasoning.
Synopsis: First reported evaluation of P4C. Utilized pre/post test design. Sample size relatively small (two groups of 20). Time involvement of experimental group is given but not of control group. Tests used are not regularly used now. Theoretical rationale underpinning the study is discussed.
Main findings: Provides encouraging early evidence regarding outcomes arising from the use of P4C through a systematic study involving a control group. Text points out that committed P4C professionals were involved in the study which thus does not allow researchers to make claims about general application. Note gain in reading scores was regarded as significant two and a half years after trial.
Contacts: Lipman & Bierman (1970) in Lipman,M. Sharp, A.M. & Oscanyo, F. (1980) <i>Philosophy in the Classroom</i> . Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Entry Number: 3
Heading: Philosophy in the Classroom – Haas Study
Dates: 1975
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Reading, Critical thinking, Emotional intelligence
Synopsis: 200 children were assigned to each of the experimental and control groups. Sessions were led by teachers rather than P4C professionals. Few details about how schools were chosen or matching of control and experimental children.
Main findings: the study concluded that the children achieved significant improvements in reading, critical thinking and interpersonal relations but was inconclusive about impact of P4C on curiosity, logical thinking and the use of questions. Suggests teachers can improve reading outcomes using P4C if given appropriate support.
Contacts: Haas (1975) in Lipman, M. Sharp, A.M. & Oscanyo, F. (1980) <i>Philosophy in the Classroom</i> . Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Entry Number: 4
Heading: The ETS study
Dates: 1978 to 1980
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Reading, mathematical skills, Creative thinking, Logical reasoning.
Synopsis: 200 experimental and 200 control students aged 10 to 13 participated over 2 years. A range of measuring instruments were used to measure changes in areas of development. Teachers were given two hours training per week in the first year and students exposed to the programme for two hours per week. Little detail on how schools were selected. Alternative activities for control group were not discussed.
Main findings: Significant improvement made by experimental group in reading, mathematics, creative thinking and logical reasoning.
Contacts: The Education Testing Service (1978) in Lipman, M. Sharp, A.M. & Oscanyo, F. (1980) <i>Philosophy in the Classroom</i> . Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Entry Number: 5
Heading: The Derbyshire Study
Dates: 1993
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Reading, Collaborative working
Synopsis: Williams evaluated the effects of 27 one-hour sessions of philosophical enquiry on 15 students aged between 11 and 12 years compared with a control group of 17 pupils who were not involved. Williams used Lipman's philosophical novel 'Harry Stottlemeir's Discovery' as the stimulus material. The teachers received two days training and met to discuss progress throughout the year. Williams used pre and post tests with pupils rating themselves in some questionnaires. He also used the London Reading test to compare the gains made by two groups, one which undertook P4C and the other had extra English. A third evaluative approach utilized videotapes of pupil discussions to triangulate his findings. Williams took care to balance the experimental and control groups and recognised the limitations in using analysis of videotape material.
Main findings: Overall, the Williams study provided encouraging evidence that supports a range of positive outcomes arising from regular but short-term use of P4C with 11 and 12 year old pupils. The London reading test differences were statistically significant (suggesting that doing P4C might be more effective than extra English). Teacher observations suggested improvements in interpersonal relationships in the experimental group.
Contacts: Williams, S. (1993). <i>Evaluating the Effects of Philosophical Enquiry in a Secondary School</i> . Derbyshire, England: Derbyshire County Council.

Entry Number: 6
Heading: The Canadian Study
Dates: 1994
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Self Esteem, logical reasoning
Synopsis: Pre-post test design with experimental group of 124 pupils and control of 96. No details given of how the groups were selected or how they were matched. The control group was not given any compensatory activity. Teachers were given 12 hours of training in P4C prior to the study and four days during the five month span of the project. The researcher, Sasseville, includes a full discussion of the concept of self-esteem in the study.
Sasseville's results show an overall statistically significant gain in both self-esteem and logical reasoning made by the experimental group with the largest gains in both being made by those pupils with the lowest self-esteem initially. Sasseville explains this in terms of the fact that the community of enquiry approach was seen by low self-esteem pupils as a way of finding value in themselves through being listened to and taken seriously by their peers.
Contacts: Sasseville, M. (1994). Self-Esteem, Logical Skills and Philosophy for Children. In <i>Thinking</i> , 4 (2), 30 – 32.

Entry Number: 7
Heading: The Dyfed Study – Improving Reading in Primary Schools Project
Dates: 1994
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Reading, Listening skills, Self esteem, critical thinking and creative thinking.
Synopsis: The project focused on year 1 pupils and employed a whole class approach utilizing ‘Teaching Philosophy with Picture Books’ (Murriss 1992) as a stimulus for discussion. Eighteen schools were divided into three groups of six schools each. One group used P4C and reading activity, one just reading activity with small groups and one group, a control, where there was no intervention. The schools were randomly selected from categories balanced for size and whether they used Welsh or English language. A total of 229 pupils were given pre-intervention screening and assessments. The group using P4C had two one-hour sessions each week for two and a half terms. The teachers were provided with three days in-service development, between each of which regular visits were made by the project team to provide support. Evaluation took place through teacher questionnaires, changes to pupil attitudes to reading based on pupil questions, a miscue procedure, comprehension questions, and two tests from the British Abilities Scales, ie the word recognition test and the matrices test, the first a standardized reading measure and the second a measure of non-verbal reasoning using geometric designs. Much use was made of qualitative methods such as questionnaires and observation schedules. Statistical techniques used are not well spelled out.
Main findings: The project concluded that the children in the group using P4C gained in thinking, listening, language skills and self-confidence, particularly when discussing ideas. The project further concluded that children gained from both P4C and the reading activity but gained most when the two were used together as in the first group.
Contacts: Dyfed County Council (1994). <i>Improving Reading Standards in Primary Schools Project</i> . Dyfed County Council, Wales

Entry Number: 8
Heading: The Fields Study.
Dates: 1995
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Reading, mathematical skills
Synopsis: This study aimed to evaluate the outcomes of philosophical approaches with 123 children aged from 7 - 8 years over a period of one academic year. Experimental and control subjects were randomly selected from two schools, matched for intelligence quotient, age and sex, and assigned pairwise to conditions. Details were provided of the materials used to stimulate discussion and inquiry. The study used an independent observer who completed proformas recording the behaviours of randomly selected subjects. It would have been useful if this paper had provided more detail of the evaluation and of the selection of the groups, size of groups and other experimental details.
Main Findings: Fields concluded that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group on measures of reasoning, i.e. Ravens Matrices, the New Jersey Reasoning Test and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (Wechsler, 1974). She did not find any difference in reading ability or fluency or on the Standard Attainment Mathematical Task profiles between the two groups.
The independent observer recorded a considerable decrease in name-calling and sarcastic comments and physical contact during the third term by the subjects who had experienced philosophical inquiry. The observer also recorded a discernible increase in the 'displayed self-confidence' of those subjects who on completion of the study were identified as having introvert personalities. (This may link with the Sasseville finding above that the largest gains in self-esteem following involvement with Philosophy for Children took place with children with the lowest self-esteem). The study also elicited teacher observations through a checklist. The experimental groups were perceived as displaying markedly more motivation, curiosity, commitment and concentration.
Contacts: Fields (1995) Empirical Data Research into Claims for Using Philosophy Techniques with Young Children. <i>Early Childhood development and Care</i> , 107, 115 –128

Entry Number: 9
Heading: The Doherr study.
Dates: 2000
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Cognitive Ability, Emotional Intelligence
Synopsis: Doherr's study evaluated the effect of Philosophy for Children on abilities necessary for Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Doherr developed her own assessment procedure of cognitive behaviour therapy ability (CBTA) that included the ability to name different emotions and the ability to link thoughts with feelings. Doherr acknowledged a number of limitations of her own study. These included the validity of her measure that linked thoughts and feelings and the fact that the pupils involved were self-selected (dependent on parental choice). She also acknowledged difficulty in controlling all the variables that may have influenced her results in this small sample of two schools. There does not appear to have been a pre-test undertaken.
Main Findings: Doherr found that children who had been regularly involved in Philosophy for Children outperformed children 'receiving standard tuition' on all elements of CBTA. She also found that, when individual IQ scores were matched, pupils who had used Philosophy for Children outperformed their controls on measures of CBTA. The study provided additional evidence of the beneficial effect of innovative teaching practice using philosophical enquiry on children's emotional well-being. It is interesting in that unlike the other studies that have been discussed, the Doherr study took place in a clinical psychology framework that linked the process of philosophical enquiry with the 'strikingly similar' process of cognitive behavioural therapy.
Contacts: Doherr, E. (2000). <i>The demonstration of cognitive abilities central to cognitive behavioural therapy in young people: Examining the influence of age and teaching method on degree of ability.</i> Unpublished clinical psychology doctoral dissertation, University of East Anglia.

Entry Number: 10
Heading: The Campbell study.
Dates: 2002
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Verbal Reasoning, self confidence, motivation, listening skills, talking skills, collaborative skills.
Synopsis: Jean Campbell's study in Clackmannanshire, Scotland, evaluated the outcomes of Philosophy for Children in two primary schools. The study considered whether the use of Philosophy for Children made a difference to pupil's verbal reasoning ability, their willingness to participate and their level of confidence. She also considered the impact of the use of Philosophy for Children on listening and talking skills. The study used an experimental pre-post test design using a comparison group, survey methods, focus groups, semi-structured interviews and observation. This study took place independently of the Trickey and Topping study also in Clackmannanshire. Campbell herself recognised a number of methodological difficulties in her own study. These difficulties related to sampling and the measurement of the children's performance in group-discussion. The lack of standardised measures raised questions over validity and reliability. The sample was small and there were questions over the comparability of experimental and control groups.
Main Findings: Campbell's study suggested that Philosophy for Children improved the children's ability to listen to each other and to engage in focussed and co-operative group discussion. Children and teachers reported gains in terms of the children being more ready to speak out in front of the class and to accept others' ideas more readily following discussion. There was some evidence of children giving more reasons when expressing opinions. Teachers reported an increase in pupil's willingness to enquire and believed that some of the gains had transferred to other parts of the curriculum beyond the Philosophy for Children sessions. The teachers also considered that there had been gains in social skills. Campbell also observed that conducting highly participative, open-ended enquiry, particularly with large groups, required substantial training and support for the teachers. What was evident in this limited sample was the perception of both pupils and teachers in the experimental group that qualitative changes had taken place in the classroom discussion as the initiative progressed. There was also a perception that there had been some transfer to other parts of the curriculum.
Contacts: Campbell, J. (2002). <i>An evaluation of a pilot intervention involving teaching philosophy to upper primary school children in two primary schools, using the Philosophy for Children methodology.</i> Unpublished M.Sc. Educational Psychology thesis, University of Dundee.

Entry Number: 11
Heading: The IAPC study.
Dates: 1993 – 1994, 2002
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, logical Reasoning
Synopsis: The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), based at Montclair State University, New Jersey, has provided a summary of quantitative and qualitative research on the Montclair University education website. This research arises from an experiment in 1993-1994 using the New Jersey Test of Reasoning Skills. This involved two experimental-control post-test only comparisons and one pre test-post test comparison for a single group. The reliability of the New Jersey Test of Reasoning Skills is discussed at length in the research paper.
Four experimental sites were selected that had used the programme for from five to fifteen years. The sites were selected for their demographic and geographic diversity in sites from Hawaii to New York and spanning various socio-economic backgrounds. However it is not clear from this publication what social disadvantage indicators were used to categorise these populations.
Main Findings: It was claimed that the research demonstrated that students who had used Philosophy for Children showed significant gains in reasoning ability. This research claimed significant improvements in test scores from pre-test to post-test in comparison to a control group. However no details were provided of the control group except that they were deemed comparable in terms of socio-economic status. It is also noted that the experimental schools were carefully selected on the grounds that they had committed to the Philosophy for Children programme for many years.
In summary the research carried out by the Institute of the Advancement of Philosophy for Children does provide additional evidence that Philosophy for Children leads to gains in reasoning skills.
Contacts: Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (2002) <i>IAPC research: experimentation and qualitative information.</i> http://www.montclair.edu/pages/iapc/experimentalinfo.html

Studies not included in the Trickey and Topping survey of 2004

Entry Number: 12
Heading: The Braunstone Philosophy for Children Pilot Project
Dates: September 2002 to July 2003
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Expressive language, Listening skills, collaborative working, creative thinking, critical thinking.
Synopsis: 30 one-hour sessions of P4C were conducted by the project leader with two classes of year 5 (9-10 year olds) over the 2002/3 year. The enquiries utilize musical contexts as stimuli for enquiry. After the first 10 enquiries the larger year 5 class was split into two smaller groups which undertook a shorter enquiry. Many sessions were audio and video recorded. Class teachers were present at each sessions and contributed to the data collection by evaluating behaviour and thinking development. Teachers had weekly evaluative discussions with the project leader. They benefited from the sessions modelled by the project leader and both now include a P4C approach within their teaching schedule. Written questionnaires (self-concept as a thinker) were filled in by children near the beginning and at the end of the project. Whole class evaluations were held termly. In each class a low, medium and high ability pupil was identified for closer monitoring (these were selected on the basis that they were underachieving in their own band).
Main findings: All parties involved in the project agree that the project fulfilled all stated objectives, and, in many ways, exceeded expectations. The main for of analysis in this study comprises a number of detailed case studies. These have lead to the project leader to conclude that these 6 to 10 year old children apply a range of cognitive strategies when interpreting musical experience, and seem to be able to move fluently between these. The project leader also comments favourably on the enhancement of collaborative and expressive language skills developed by the children. Children's enhanced speaking and listening skills have been demonstrated by their ability to speak in longer and/or more complex sentences. Other major outcomes include enhanced listening skills and improvement in questioning, reasoning and general thinking abilities.
Contacts: Dr Sara Liptai (contactable through the Sapere website)

Entry Number: 13
Heading: School Inclusion and citizenship project
Dates: 2005
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Social Inclusion, Addressing Disadvantage, Ethical reasoning, emotional intelligence, self esteem, listening skills, Critical thinking.
Synopsis: Lancaster Global Education Centre (LGEC) and Cumbria development Education centre (CDEC) ran pilot projects to evaluate the effectiveness of P4C and citizenship activities in the engagement of socially excluded young people in their own learning and to encourage them to become active, responsible citizens. These pupils were largely situated within Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). The LGEC project trialled as many Global Citizenship activities as possible whilst CDED combined the P4C methodology with experiential learning and critical skills. Evaluation of the project appears to be mainly by way of pupil and tutor reporting and feedback during informal and more formal discussions. The report gives a detailed account of the activities utilized in each of the projects.
Main findings: In both projects it was found that tasks involving movement and concrete task completion maximised levels of motivation and concentration. Improved concentration as evidenced by the willingness of pupils to engage with the activities rather than walk out. At the end of the projects, pupils felt more positive about their ability to change things for the better, which is a reflection of improved self-esteem. Tutors report that, during the project, the pupils developed better communication skills, including working as a group, and were better able to listen to and accept other people's opinions and be able to agree or disagree with them. It became clear that P4C should be used in conjunction with other participative methodologies for pupils to be able to develop a fuller understanding of the topics, without being intimidated by their own lack of knowledge, and to help them make the step from understanding the issues to believing they could effect change, and be prepared to do so as active citizens.
Contacts: NWGEN report August 2005 ?

Entry Number: 14
Heading: Clackmannanshire Study
Dates: 2002 to 2004
Key words: Philosophy for Children, Critical reasoning, expressive language, cognitive ability, Emotional intelligence, collaborative working.
Synopsis: This study evaluates the outcomes of implementation of P4C on a wider scale across one local authority. Over 100 teachers across the authority received training and support and collaborated with two assistants working part time to develop P4C in the primary classroom for 1 hour a week with regular classes for 16 months. The study comprised a traditional two by two, pre-post test design incorporating an experimental and a control group. A range of evaluation tools were used, standardised quantitative, Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT), Myself as a Learner Scale (MAL), qualitative, such as video analysis and questionnaires. The experimental group were involved in an additional qualitative analysis in order to triangulate findings. The move to triangulate outcomes is a feature of this study
Main findings:
1. A whole population of children gained on average 6 standard points on a measure of cognitive abilities after 16 months of weekly enquiry.
<i>What increase in GCSE grades would this represent?</i>
<i>Information about the predictive validity of CAT tests on the gl-assessment website suggests that a six point improvement in CAT score correlates closely with a 20% improvement in chances of achieving a particular grade at GCSE. For example, a pupil who had a 50% chance of achieving a grade C, if subsequently improves his/her CAT score by 6 points, now has a 70% chance of achieving that same grade. This is supported by findings from the NRAIS evaluation which suggests that P4C practice supported a 24% increase in the number of pupils achieving 5 A to C grades at GCSE.</i>
<i>Sixteen months of weekly P4C sessions at aged 10 to 11 (across y6 y7 transition) could boost everyone's chances of achieving a significantly better grade by 20 to 25%. Worth considering what the cost of this would be in terms of teacher training, development time and what the impact might be on PISA results (worth analyzing skills required for answering PISA questions and possible P4C impact here) and on EBAC results.</i>
2. Pupils and teachers perceived significant gains in communication, confidence, concentration, participation and social behaviour following 6 months of enquiry.
3. Pupils doubled their occurrence of supporting their views with reasons over a 6 month period.

4. Teachers doubled their use of open-ended questions over a six month period.
5. When pupils left primary school they did not have any further enquiry opportunities yet their improved cognitive abilities were still sustained two years into secondary school.
6. Pupils increased their level of participation in classroom discussion by half as much again following 6 months of weekly enquiry.
The Clackmannanshire intervention demonstrated improvements in cognitive performance in children through a relatively 'light' cost-effective intervention involving one hour each week when children were 10 years old. Since the CAT scores at 11 are highly predictive of GCSE achievement it would seem that P4C provides a cost-effective answer to the drive to improve attainment at 16. Programme costs (in 2004) included part-time secondment of teacher/trainer consultants, in-service training resources and materials, amounting to £233 per participating class teacher, equating to £9 per participating pupil. In subsequent years, trained teachers can work with new cohorts of pupils at less than half this cost for support and refresher sessions. This compares favourably with other methods that appear to have no empirical support for effectiveness as yet in the public domain and reportedly a consistently higher unit cost.
Contacts: Articles by Trickey and Topping
Topping, K.J. & Trickey, S. (2007). Impact of philosophical enquiry on school students interactive behaviour. <i>International Journal of Thinking Skills and Creativity</i> , 2(2), 73-84.
Topping, K. J. & Trickey, S. (2007). Collaborative philosophical enquiry for school children: Cognitive effects at 10-12 years. <i>British Journal of Educational Psychology</i> , 77, 271–288.
Topping, K. J. & Trickey, S. (2007). Collaborative philosophical enquiry for school children: Cognitive gains at two-year follow-up. <i>British Journal of Educational Psychology</i> , 77(4), 787-796.

Entry Number: 15
Heading: SHINE Trust Better Thinking for Better Learning Project
Dates: 2004
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, Listening skills, expressive language, logical reasoning, questioning skills
Synopsis: The SHINE trust commissioned this research from Sapere. Thirty taught lessons were delivered by a facilitator in a year 4 and a year 6 class over the period of a year. Use was made of a comparison between teacher prediction and the actual Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in English and mathematics. Video recordings of classroom discussions were also made and analysed.
Main findings:
The study report includes analysis of examples of pupil responses which illustrate the claims made for improvement in pupil skills and competencies. Some key quantitative outcomes are given below.
1. 88% of children in the year 6 class improved on the Teacher Prediction for their end of Year Grade at KS2 Reading. 94% achieved or exceeded this with only 6% not achieving their predicted grade.
2. 62.5% of children exceeding the teacher's prediction for achievement at Maths SAT.
3. 26% of children achieved level 5 in Reading 69% of children achieved level 4 in Reading and 5% of children achieved level 3 in Reading from the children who attended the philosophy sessions throughout the project. 51% of the school population are on free school meals and 49.5% of the children have English as an additional language.
4. The focus group achieved 24% at level 5 in Maths, 64% at level 4, 6% at level 3 and 6% at level 2. The focus class has exceeded the National Average score for level 4 attainment as nationally 43% of children achieve a level 4 at Maths and in this class it is 64%.
Contacts: Alison Hall, Sara Liptai (from Sapere website)

Entry Number: 16
Heading: NRAIS, Northumberland Raising Aspirations in Society
Dates: 2000 – 2004
Key words: Philosophy for Children, Addressing disadvantage, mathematical skills, Oracy, collaborative working.
Synopsis: This project began with 22 schools in Berwick and then developed further when over £1 million was granted from the government's single regeneration budget. A range of strategies were used of which P4C formed a central strand. Active learning and enquiry approaches were used to develop positive dispositions to learning, to improve collaborative skills and to boost attainment. The project was evaluated by researchers from Sunderland and Newcastle Universities. The project won an award in recognition for outstanding contribution to raising aspirations in 2005.
Main Findings:
Findings from Northumberland Schools relating to P4C
1) At key Stage 1 long-term involvement with P4C has led to improved maths performance in national tests.
2) At key Stage 1 there appears to be a positive link between the use of P4C and maths performance.
3) Overall, the use of P4C is greater in schools where English performance at Key Stage 2 SATs exceeds predicted levels.
4) At Key Stage 3 in the five high schools using P4C. 567 pupils achieved 5 or more A-C GCSEs in 2004 compared with 457 predicted (ie a 24% better than predicted result).
Contacts:
http://www.sustained-success.com/index.php/899
www.rais.org.uk
Dr Maggie Gregson and Trish Spedding, University of Sunderland
David Moseley, Dr Vivienne Baumfield and Hanneke Jones, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne.
Williams, S. and Wegerif, R. <i>Radical Encouragement: Creating Cultures for Learning</i> . Imaginative Minds: Birmingham

Entry Number: 17
Heading: Community Philosophy – ‘Thinking Village Project’.
Dates: 2006 to 2009
Keywords: Philosophy for Children, collaborative working, Emotional Intelligence, addressing disadvantage.
Synopsis: Over a three-year period, the project director, Graeme Tiffany and three community philosophers set up and facilitated communities of enquiry in a range of community and intergenerational contexts. Their work strongly influenced by P4C practice but implementation had to be flexible in order to meet the needs of specific groups.
Main Findings: The project found that Community Philosophy could:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an effective means of engaging people; • Act as a conversational bridge between different groups and generations; • Help all involved reach deeper levels of understanding; • Support and broaden participation in community life; • Provide a space for constructive engagement with real world issues, including those that are controversial, cause conflict and are considered culturally taboo, and • Be enjoyable for its own sake.
Contacts: Full report by Graeme Tiffany is available from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, download www.jrf.org.uk from which an evaluation by Porter and Seeley, 2008 can also be downloaded.

Entry Number: 18
Heading: Teaching Thinking and the perceptions of practitioners.
Dates: 2004 to 2007
Keywords: Philosophy for Children; Dialogue; enquiry; Philosophy for children; professional development; teachers' perceptions; thinking skills; thinking strategies.
Synopsis: Newcastle University has worked in collaboration with Northumberland Education Directorate and schools to develop a coherent approach to improving pupils' learning and thinking. Since the mid 1990s they have promoted the dual approach of teaching thinking strategies (specific teaching and organizing tools such as odd-one-out and mind mapping) and philosophy for children. This work has culminated in a certificate in teaching thinking skills. The research project referred to here surveyed teachers of primary, middle and secondary schools to gauge the use they made of the training and their perceptions of the effectiveness and impact on pupils learning. 39% of surveys sent out were returned (87). The research aimed to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the teaching of thinking strategies and P4C.
Main findings: The vast majority of respondents reported a range of positive effects on their pupils, including pupil motivation and cognitive, social and affective benefits. P4C was thought by respondents to contribute most to cognitive and social benefits whilst thinking strategies were more likely to aid motivation and engagement. Teachers reported that the training had significant impact on their practice. The difficulty of gauging the effect of thinking strategies on pupils' cognitive development was noted and raised as a concern if such strategies are universally employed. Future research might explore why it is that P4C appears to have a more visible effect on cognitive development.
Contacts: Jones, H. (2008) 'Thoughts on teaching thinking: perceptions of practitioners with a shared culture of thinking skills education'. Curriculum Journal, 19:4, 309 – 324.