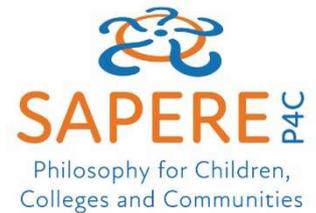


Building communities, developing leaders: P4C Champions at Rokeby School in London



Rokeby is a school for boys aged 11 to 16 in Newham, East London, an area of economic and social disadvantage. Its diverse intake includes boys who have come to the UK as unaccompanied minors and as refugees, boys who are privately fostered, and many who have significant caring responsibilities. A high proportion of its 770 students – more than six times the national average – have English as an additional language, with some 70 languages spoken across the school. Families move in and out of the area and in-year admissions and departures are common. The number of students eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average.

Rokeby has been practising Philosophy for Children, or P4C, since 2009. **Staff, students and governors believe that P4C is one of the vehicles through which teaching and learning at the school have been transformed.** In 2013 Rokeby became the first secondary school to be awarded the SAPERE P4C Gold Award. Its most recent OFSTED inspection, in December 2018, confirmed that Rokeby continues to be a good school.

P4C forms a key part of Rokeby's long-term teaching and learning strategy and is embedded within all aspects of school life. It is a formal part of the school's curriculum and an integral part of its Relationships and Sex Education policy and its SMSC and British values strategy. Students in every year group take part in discrete P4C sessions and P4C approaches to learning and teaching are also integrated into subject lessons. Enquiries are run in a number of languages.

'P4C allows both students and staff to challenge their own understanding of concepts in a collaborative fashion, and the personal growth that takes place within P4C sessions is evident within other subject lessons and visible as students move around the school.'

Ms O'Connor, Assistant Head Teacher

Rokeby's P4C Champions

Working with SAPERE trainer Lisa Naylor, teachers at Rokeby have developed an innovative approach to P4C, in which boys in years 8 to 11 can become P4C Champions. Over the past three years, 20 students have completed Level 1 training and the school currently boasts 42 student P4C Champions. They are a crucial part of the school's P4C success.



Rokeby's P4C Champions in action © Rokeby School 2017

'P4C is an intuitive way for students to discuss controversial topics, to develop their social skills, verbal reasoning and cooperation with one another...[It] has allowed students to build strong relationships and cemented friendships between friends that would otherwise not have blossomed.'

Sohna Singh Rator, Year 11 P4C Champion

P4C Champions take part in Level 1 training alongside staff, building relationships between students and teachers as they work together to drive forward the school's P4C practice. P4C Champions help to develop resources for use across all age groups at the school. They assist staff in devising and running P4C enquiries or, in pairs, they themselves facilitate enquiries with classes lower down the school. They also share Rokeby's passion for P4C with other local schools, offering P4C sessions in primary and secondary schools in the area.

With the support of staff, P4C Champions become responsible and confident facilitators, able to guide the enquiry process and encourage other students to participate and to talk about difficult topics. Their P4C sessions often focus on issues common to the boys' lives: positive relationships, mental health, gender equality, identity and gangs, and knife crime. **Students report that they find it easier to talk about many of these topics when their peers lead the discussion.**

'P4C is a fun way to learn and has helped me and my friends settle in the school, helping us deal with difficult and interesting issues together.'

Marlon Justin, Year 7 student

'P4C is great way to make a class think about lots of different topics in a deep way, and most importantly helps us understand one another and become a strong community.'

Zubair Ahmed, Year 7 student

'Being a P4C Champion has allowed me to join an incredible team who are committed to helping students of all ages explore their feelings and share their experiences and views in a safe environment. It is great to watch students grow in front of your eyes as they learn new things about themselves and others.'

Mir Tasin, Year 11 P4C Champion

SAPERE's award assessors found that Rokeby's P4C Champions **'manifest exceptional degrees of maturity in thinking, attitude and communication, as well as leadership qualities of tolerance, authority and charisma. They are successful academically and identify philosophical issues in a range of curriculum subjects without hesitation. They are obvious role models for other students, a position they reflect on with a great sense of responsibility.'**

'P4C Champions are great ambassadors of the school. They use their leadership skills to support the local community, delivering a number of P4C sessions to local primary school students on themes such as transition, online safety and leadership. It's a great way for students to lead learning and to become active citizens.' Mr Galoria, Assistant Head Teacher

Find out more and book your training today

SAPERE P4C is the UK's national charity supporting Philosophy for Children. We provide high-quality P4C training and support and have over 25 years' experience in bringing P4C into a range of schools and educational settings. We offer whole school INSET training as well as courses which are open to all.

www.sapere.org.uk | enquiries@sapere.org.uk | 01865 408333