WHITEHALL

Spring 2 Week 4

Message from the Headteacher

It has been a busy month with our RISE open mornings and our staff being able to visit other RISE schools, too, to experience how high-performing schools operate and similarities and differences between them.

We have also hosted our first P4C parent workshop, and in this newsletter, we wanted to share with you how deeply we ask our children to think, and how high our expectations are for them to be engaged and to participate in the life of the school.I hope you enjoy reading them and seeing how insightful and empathetic our children are as they try to navigate and understand an ever-changing world around them.

Some of our community have been observing the month of Ramadan this month, and, so too, have some of our older children. We will be marking this time, like we mark all the things that bring us together, in school, next week, with Eid cooking. I hope the children will be able to bring these recipes for you to try yourselves at home and sample the delights they will create and cook in school.

Lastly, to our families celebrating, we wish you all a happy Eid Mubarak and a wonderful Easter holiday when it comes.

School will finish on Friday 27th March at 2:00pm. We look forward to seeing the children back in school on Monday 13th April.

EYFS

Reception have focused on exploring the local environment and our role in taking care of outdoor spaces. The children initiated litter picking and creating a bug sanctuary, after engaging in our P4C class discussions.

Together, they experimented with natural resources and used loose parts to build a wonderful bug hotel. George says, "If we do not take care of our environment, it will become unsafe for us to learn in". Saorla says, "We can all work together to look after the insects and bugs". We are incredibly proud of how Reception are critically reflecting on their discussions and being responsible learners who care for each other and the world around them.

KS1

As part of our P4C unit for this term, Year 1 have been learning and having discussions about Animal Welfare. The children have been introduced to a wide range of stimulus' to provoke a whole class debate on the rights animals have and the responsibilities of humans as caregivers to animals. Through engaging 'would you rather' questions, thought provoking videos/stories/statements and critically acclaimed questions, children have learnt how to think deeply and are able to state the reasoning using their logic to support their opinions.

Margot, “I think it’s everyone’s responsibility to look after animals.”
Arthur, “Just because animals can’t talk it doesn’t mean they don’t have feelings.”

This half term, Year 2 have been exploring the theme of kindness in their P4C lessons.
We began by thinking about what kindness really means and how it can be shown in different situations. This is included school, at home and in the wider world. The children shared their own experiences and quickly discovered that even small actions can have a big impact on others.
As the weeks progressed, the class took part in a range of discussions and activities that encouraged them to reflect, question, and challenge ideas. Using stories, videos and open-ended questions, the children explored themes such as including others, showing empathy, and understanding different perspectives. They were encouraged to explain their thinking and listen respectfully to the opinions of their classmates.

“If you are kind, other people might be kind back to you."
"We should be kind to everyone."

LKS2

Year 3 children explored a stimulus about food scarcity in zones of conflict. Using a P4C approach, they discussed ideas such as justice, love, scarcity, desperation and conflict. The children generated thoughtful questions to guide our next enquiry, including:

What would the world look like if war didn’t exist? Who should go first? If we gave justice to these children, is it better to give food or love?

After voting for the question, 'If we gave justice to these children, is it better to give food or love,' the children discussed the issue during a circle time. Here re some of our philosophical outcomes:

"I feel lucky that I have food and love. I feel disappointed that war means that people have to prioritise what needs are met.”

"If they are suffering and we give them love. Love can lock inside their memory, which they will remember forever.”

"They are feeling desperate because if they continue feeling hunger, they may die.”

"I think sometimes we don't need to chose one or the other. Sometimes by giving one we also are giving the other. Like if you give food to someone who is hungry, you are loving them."

In Year 4, we have been centring our P4C discussions around self-esteem and its implications on how we behave and make decisions. Through thoughtful dialogue and collaborative thinking, pupils have been exploring what it means to value themselves and others, and how our beliefs about ourselves can influence the choices we make.

The children have asked big questions such as “Does believing in yourself make you more likely to succeed?” and “Is it more important to be unique or to adapt to our surroundings?”. These discussions have encouraged pupils to listen carefully to different viewpoints, explain their reasoning and challenge one another’s ideas. By reflecting on self-esteem in this way, pupils are developing not only their speaking and listening skills, but also a deeper understanding of themselves and the impact their actions can have on those around them.

UKS2

In our latest P4C session, Year 5 tackled the thought-provoking question:

“Do we have a purpose?”

The children impressed us with their curiosity and creativity, offering ideas that showed real depth. Together, we explored different perspectives on what purpose might mean and how it shapes the way we live. Ted shared that "Humans must have been made for a purpose; they did not just step on Earth for no reason." Some thought about this question from a religious and spiritual perspective.

Ariana shared that, " I believe that all people must be kind, respectful and forgiving of each other." We also reflected on our own individual morals and what it means to be a good person. The discussion was thoughtful and full of insight, with pupils building on one another’s ideas and challenging themselves to think more deeply about their place in the wider world.

PSA Easter Raffle

The PSA is pleased to announce the return of the Easter Egg Raffle next week. Each morning before 9:00am, children will be able to purchase raffle tickets in school.

Tickets are priced at 20p each, and every ticket will be entered into a draw for the chance to win an Easter egg. The raffle draw will take place on Friday the 27th March. There will be two Easter eggs per class, and Nursery will also have its own raffle draw.

Comic Relief

We will be marking Comic Relief’s Red Nose Day next Friday, 27th March. This is so that all families and children have the opportunity to take part.

Children are welcome to come to school in non-uniform.

Voluntary donations are appreciated and will be collected by The Whitehall Collective at the school gate that morning.

School photos

On Monday 23rd March, we will have the school photographers in. They will be taking photos of siblings, new admissions, and Year 6 class group photos.