



Newsletter #2

Children As Philosophers

Project overview

Education in Europe is faced with significant socio-demographic and economical changes. To develop cohesively and inclusively, education and training need to devise plans and strategies that will allow citizens to play an active role in democratic life.

Education needs to be prepared to provide adequate training of children whose way of thinking, behaviour, preferences, expectations and learning styles are very different from those of teachers.

Therefore, the project *Children As Philosophers (CAPs)* has a key objective:

To enable learners to engage in a creative and critical process of inquiry within a collaborative and supportive community.

Project update

Over 12 months have passed since eight partners from 6 countries met for the first time in October 2017 in Walsall. They have continued to work collaboratively to develop and share their knowledge and skills leading to a number of outcomes that are impacting of staff and pupils:

- 2 Joint staff trainings have taken place, the first in Italy in December 2017 (Principles of Philosophy and Creative thinking) and the second one in Romania (Metacognition) in April 2018.
- The first pupils' exchange which saw children from Romania, Sweden and Bulgaria joining the children the UK for a whole week of activities leading to the children experiencing learning together in another country.
- A good practice survey has delivered by both staff and pupils across the 6 countries. The data from the survey has been analysed identifying



10 good practice examples from each country. These will be included in a publication currently in design which will be made available to others to use freely in their schools and settings.

- Design of the training guidelines and training package following the first 2 joint staff trainings. These publications will be made freely available to the public.
- Partners are currently compiling the collection of case studies which will show the level of activities being undertaken and the impact that the project is having on both pupils and staff.
- A number of activities, to raise awareness of the project, have also taken place in different countries. These range from the sharing of information about the project at local level, with neighbouring schools and partners, through to national and European levels with some partners attending events and conferences.



News from Europe

The students from class 6 from Elf School in Cluj Napoca were invited to showcase an open class Philosophy for children session at Babes Bolyai University. The theme of the seminar organised by the Faculty of Philosophy Cluj Napoca and Grenoble Alpes University was Reflexive thinking in philosophical talk.

The discussion was facilitated by Laura Pamfiloiu, teacher at Elf School. The stimulus used to facilitate the session was a box of present that could contain wonderful things. However, the box come with a warning: Do not open! Using strategies such as thinking aloud, making connections and summarising, solving problems, questioning, led the students to then discussed some key questions:

Why do people want more and more things?

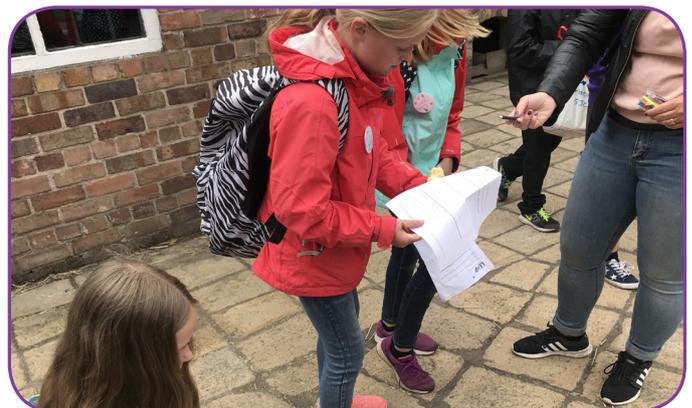
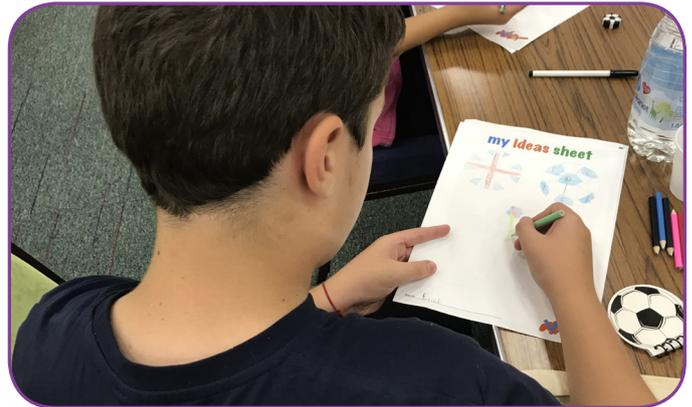
Why are people afraid to make wishes?

What are the risks people are/are not willing to take in order to fulfill their wishes? In what terms?

Why some people are more determined to take action while others are just observers?

Why do people act before they think without considering the risks of their actions?

Is curiosity useful?



The activity concluded with the students reflecting on the fact that even if they may not find an answer to their question, the philosophical enquiry helps them extend their thinking, reason and understand the challenges around them and develop the necessary skills needed to live in a constant changing world.

Staff from the event were very excited to see how such activities support students engaging in philosophical discussion event at a young age.

Laura Pamfiloiu (RO)

On return from the training in Cluj Napoca on the topic of Metacognition, we met with our local team to discuss about how we could tailor the activities and strategies we learnt during the training to our children who are between the ages of 3 to 5.

We reflected on “metacognition” and we bought the Italian version of the book *What do you do with an idea?* by Kobi Yamada. This was a book we saw being used during the conversations in Romania.

The book provided a stimulus to open up conversations about how ideas come in our minds, what kind of ideas they are and what we can do with them.

The first conversation we had with the children was in a large group. We then we thought it would be interesting to reflect on a metacognition level and look at the differences that we observe between reflecting on our own and reflecting in groups.

We then split the session in two parts. In the first one the children were invited to close their eyes and to think on their own about the answers they gave. Subsequently, they were asked to discuss their ideas in a small group.

Once back in the large group, the teacher asked them if they had found more difficult to reflect alone or to discuss in group. They were keen to share that it was more interesting to discuss in groups as it helped them think of other answers.

Form our training in Cluj we understood the importance of explicit teaching of metacognition as this leads to reflect on our way of thinking. Moreover, we improved and built on the use of books as useful tools in the philosophical conversation and we continued to think about the possible “doors” to many ideas.

Lucilla Faglia (IT)



News and events

3rd Joint Staff training

The next joint staff training will take place in Sweden, in February 2019.

The event will take place over 5 days and will focus on strategies to develop social philosophy.

The event will be jointly delivered by staff from Önums Friskola in Vara.

They have been working hard to prepare workshop sessions which will help staff develop relevant skills and knowledge to develop learners' understanding of social philosophy.

2nd Pupils mobility

Staff from both Bulgaria will host the 2nd pupils' mobility in June 2019.

The event will see 15 pupils and 7 staff from Romania, Sweden and the UK joining pupils and staff in the Bulgaria for a seven day event.

To find out more about the project and how you can benefit visit:

<http://www.childrenasphilosophers.com>

Project partners



The Bliss Charity School
Endowed 1674 Northamptonshire



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di Modena



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