

# Perspectives

## Philosophy for global citizenship (P4GC) project

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The Philosophy for Global Citizenship (P4GC) project is a one-year action research project funded by Oxfam and which involved The Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERE), South Yorkshire Development Education Centre (DECSY) and Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC). The project evolved from the Philosophy for Children and Global Citizenship National Conference that was funded by Oxfam and organised by CDEC at Borwick Hall, Carnforth (Lancaster) in November 2002. Many of the issues explored and identified during the project also reflect the issues and concerns highlighted during that conference.

The aim of the project was to enable teachers and development education workers to translate and consolidate their expertise gained through Philosophy for Children (P4C) training into good classroom practice that enhances global citizenship. The project therefore focused on the investigation of P4C practice in order to identify key strategies that would facilitate effective classroom application within a global citizenship context. An important aspect of this was to observe Philosophy for Global Citizenship (P4GC) sessions and explore the relationship between the 'process' of P4C and the 'agenda' that comes attached to the term global citizenship.

Six schools of varying sizes, including one secondary school, located around Cumbria participated in the project. Whilst several schools had used the P4C approach extensively throughout their schools for a number of years others had just begun to trial the methodology with certain year groups. The participating schools were introduced to the project framework within which the classroom activities and P4GC sessions were defined.

The methodology used to explore these issues was small-scale action research. The various methodologies used in data collection are discussed and samples of the documents used are provided for reference within the report. Staff from CDEC, working with classroom teachers identified

common themes within the project framework to test out their experiences. Ideas were pooled, refined and tested in real situations.

Project activities also included a joint national seminar in Sheffield, which brought together teachers, development education workers and representatives from SAPERE. The seminar served as a platform to share experiences, reflect on activities and identify key areas for support and further exploration. The outcomes from the seminar are also included within the report.

From the issues that emerged in the discussions at teachers' meetings and the Sheffield seminar, the project team identified three key areas to explore in the report. While the recommendations resulting from the project are not definitive, they do offer direction and guidance against which practitioners are encouraged to test their own practice and experience. The report aims to explore the principles, ideas and existing practice of the Philosophy for Children approach in order to evaluate the extent to which it can be used within the global citizenship context in order to enhance learning. Its purpose is to identify and examine appropriate strategies for the implementation of P4GC and to determine how any perceived difficulties might be overcome.

The report discusses the key finding by exploring the relationship between P4C, P4GC and the Community of Enquiry. The discussion centres on the process of P4C, the possible 'agenda' of P4GC sessions and the value of the Community of Enquiry. This included a close examination of the term global citizenship and the interpretations of this concept.

The report also evaluates whether learning in global citizenship has taken place by examining examples and case studies from the project. It also makes links to three key areas underpinning the National Curriculum namely, skills, values and attitudes and knowledge and understanding. In addition, the report briefly discusses the content of P4GC sessions by considering their philosophical content and how the issue of inaccurate or controversial comments can be approached. Finally it also considers the effect of P4GC sessions on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

The findings from the project add weight to our belief that P4C is a powerful classroom approach capable of application to a global citizenship context. We believe the resulting P4GC adds value to pupils' learning and this report serves as a useful handbook offering some practical advice and suggestions for its implementation.

As a handbook, it includes case studies, practical ideas including an extensive resource list based on 12 global citizenship concepts, websites and other useful information. This includes guidance on whole school development and classroom management. Most importantly, our findings

highlight the need for a coherent strategy to sustain the development of P4GC beyond this project both to make effective use of the fertile ground that exists within schools and, significantly, to develop the skills and support systems across the development education field.

Outside the project there is evidence that there is strong and continued interest in using P4C within a global citizenship context. The global dimension was the focus theme for a SAPERE organised P4C facilitators' network meeting earlier this year and P4C is a popular methodology within other activities such as school linking initiatives in Cumbria. Without doubt, there is great value in developing P4GC as one of the many approaches within the global citizenship curriculum both in Cumbria and beyond.

**Arthur Capstick** has worked in secondary education for over 30 years. He has been involved in the development of Cumbria Development Education Centre since 1999 where he shares the task of co-ordinating global activities and projects across the organisation.

**Vimala John** was born and brought up in West Malaysia and came to Britain in the early eighties. Her interest in global and development issues lead to her current post as Global Education Project Worker for CDEC. Vimala's particular interests are diversity and anti racist education, which are the key themes of "Keeping Diversity on Track", a school linking project she is currently working on. She has also been a key team member in the Oxfam funded Philosophy for Global Citizenship project and co-leads SAPERE accredited level 1 Philosophy for Children courses.

The report/handbook is available for £5.00 plus £1.50 p&p from:

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