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# Bristol Philosophy Exchange

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Co-ordinator and co-founder

# Motivation

The "project is motivated by the importance of boosting student employability and entrepreneurialism, widening participation, knowledge transfer and partnership with local communities"



*Teachers and students on a training day*

# Inspiration

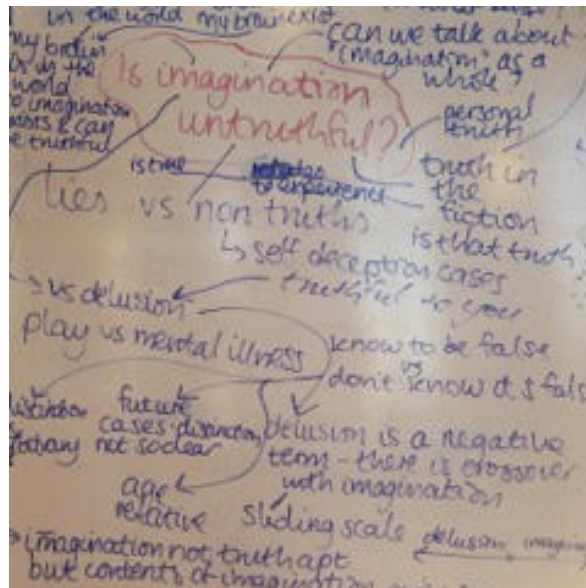
The project is modelled on and inspired by its parent project in Leeds.



*The Leeds Philosophy Exchange*

# Aims

- For all parties to benefit from the collaboration in the classroom
- For students to have an opportunity to put their knowledge to practical use, improve their philosophical thinking, and boost their employability



*Is imagination untruthful?*

*Illegible training day enquiry scribbles*

# Aims

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- For students to have an opportunity to put their knowledge to practical use, improve their philosophical thinking, and boost their employability
- To raise awareness of philosophy as a subject and to raise aspirations to continue with philosophical study
- To raise awareness of the University in the city and raise aspirations of going to University

# First year 2013-14



The project worked at Sefton Park School across three Year 5 classes

Each class participated in 12 weeks of philosophical enquiry

# First year: students

Each team consisted of the class teacher and three students  
The project recruited exclusively postgraduates



*Postgraduates thinking about metaphors for facilitation*

# Positive feedback

“I feel that it has been beneficial for the children in a number of different ways: it provides further speaking and listening opportunities; it makes children have to justify their responses with reasons; it encourages deeper thinking; it leads them to question themes of morality and other issues. I have seen benefits across other subjects and I have noticed that reserved and shy children are now feeling more confident to speak.”

*Dan Simson, Head of Year and Year 5 Class teacher, Sefton Park*



# Students in the classroom

"Seeing [Grace] facilitate a discussion with my class was also invaluable, seeing her react to exactly the kinds of things that training without children present can't prepare you for."

Postgraduate Student

# Students in the classroom: challenges

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Being a teacher and facilitator isn't easy!

# Second year 2014-15

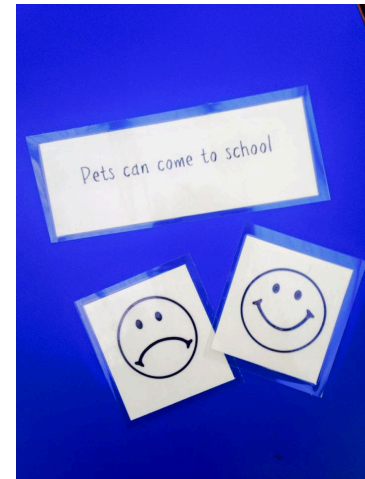
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**Hannah More  
Primary School**

# Second year 2014-15

- The project expanded to work with Hannah More School, an inner city school with a high proportion of EAL pupils
- The project worked in Year 2, Year 4 and Year 5 at Hannah More.



*Warm up game for Year 2 (thanks to Grace Robinson)*

## Second year 2014-15

The project also continued to work at Sefton Park in Year 5 and I worked with 'Gifted and Talented' Year 6 pupils to allow them to build on their previous year's philosophy.



*How Many Apples? Philosophy with Year 6  
using Thinking Space resources*

# Second year: students

- The project worked with undergraduates
- Teams consisted of two undergraduates and a class teacher





# Second year: some improvements

- More time was focused on classroom management and teaching skills
- Students spent longer meeting their class before commencing sessions
- Training was split so that by the second training day teachers and students had had some practical experience
- Improved mechanisms for teachers and students to communicate and reflect on sessions

# Positive feedback

“It was useful to be introduced to teaching philosophy being so well supported, as otherwise I would have felt very unsure about what I was teaching. Working with the knowledgeable students gave me more confidence. I have learned a great deal from the training and students about philosophy and how to teach it.”

*Ani Garcia, Year 2 class teacher, Hannah More*

# Positive Feedback

“Firstly the project allowed me to experience first hand teaching in an non-stressful environment so that I could come to a reasoned decision about whether I want to teach. And the course was so amazing, that I definitely do!

More than this the course allowed me to get into the mind of a teacher, plan lessons, gain confidence while teaching (which is a surprisingly different form of public speaking than most) and it allowed me to improve my skills with children. At first finding the balance between being friendly and authoritative was a little confusing, but after the course I am sure that I will be able to move into teaching much more smoothly than I would have done otherwise.”

*Philosophy Undergraduate*

# Second year: challenges

- Finding sufficient time for reflection and planning with class teachers and students
- In some classes, the collaboration and communication was excellent. In others, it did not work so well.

# Future

- Teachers are going to lead some of the modelling sessions
  - Some students are going to do it for a second year, becoming mentors to other students
  - In September 2016 we are hoping to introduce the project as undergraduate module (as at Leeds).
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- Both Sefton Park and Hannah More are working towards embedding philosophy in their schools

# Exchange

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Outside of the classroom, what each party brings to the exchange is made explicit.

In the classroom, roles are divided differently, into that of facilitator and co-facilitator.