

SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023



Table of Contents

03

Introduction

05

Our Vision

06

Our Leadership

07

Our Impact

08

Our Focus

09

Our Evidence

10

Our Training

11

Our Awards

12

Our Successes

14

Our Partnerships



Who we are and what we do

Founded in 1992, SAPERE is the UK's national charity for philosophical education. We promote philosophical enquiry as an educational approach that provides people with the skills they need to thrive in school and society.

Philosophical enquiry offers students and teachers the space they need to explore the big questions that affect learning and lives. We believe that these opportunities for thoughtful discussion are essential in a crowded curriculum and a changing world. By participating in philosophical enquiry, people sharpen their thinking, attune their listening, find their voice, boost their confidence, strengthen their relationships, and connect to their community. With these new skills and attitudes, they can develop knowledge and understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

The focus of our work is on the professional development of educators and other people who employ the pedagogy of Philosophy for Children and Communities (P4C) in their practice. We deliver long-term training programmes and support for these individuals and their institutions, and engage in research – often in partnership – to develop our practice and evidence our impact. Most of our work is in UK schools, universities, and community settings, but we are also active in educational networks around the world.

Research shows that the cognitive, social, and emotional skills developed through philosophical enquiry help close the attainment gap for disadvantaged learners, and it is for that reason that SAPERE focuses on schools that serve these underprivileged communities.



Professional Development



P4C Experiences



Awards and Fellowships



Support Programmes



Strategic Partnerships



Philosophy Resources



R&D Projects



Professional networks



Communications and Advocacy



Fundraising

Become a vital part of the SAPERE community for only £30/year. That's just £2.50 a month to support all our work. **Sign up at: sapere.org.uk/join**

A black and white close-up portrait of Stephen Fry, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He has dark, slightly messy hair and is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt.

Watch Stephen Fry explain the value of philosophical enquiry in this short film: tiny.cc/sapere-fry.

“You know you’re a philosopher, not if you can give answers to the tricky questions, but if you can ask the tricky questions”

Stephen Fry, SAPERE Patron

Flourishing in learning and life

SAPERE exists to help people improve their learning and their lives through philosophical enquiry. Our aim is to give people the skills to thrive in school and society.

Our vision is a future where everyone has the opportunity to engage philosophically in discussions and public discourse that matters to them, that motivates them to listen and to learn from others, and makes a difference to how they think, feel, speak, and act in the world. We strive to realise these benefits of philosophical education as widely and equitably as possible, and we believe that this is both a personal and a public good.

01



Output

Children, young people and adults participate in philosophical discussions in schools and other communities with the support of a skilled facilitator.

02



Immediate outcome

Philosophical discussion develops the ability to think, speak and listen, and deepens individuals' understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

03



Longer term outcome

Philosophical development equips people to reflect on their learning and their lives and connect with their communities, so they can flourish at school and in society.

04



Impact

Flourishing individuals think well together and for themselves, and contribute to richer public discourse, healthier democracies, and a more equitable world.

A message from our co-directors



Emma Swinn MBE

Director of Operations and Development



Grace Lockrobin

Director of Philosophy and Education

We believe in the importance of SAPERE's mission and vision to transform education through philosophical enquiry. We also believe this vision goes beyond school education and into wider world.

There is a stereotype of the philosopher as someone who spends time in solitary thought, but this is not true of the philosophical enquiry that we advocate. P4C is a communal activity; its aim is to help people of all ages and abilities to think well together, so that they can think well for themselves.

Solitary thinking can lead to thoughts that are siloed. Thinking by yourself can be like surrounding yourself with people who think the same way you do; it becomes harder to imagine you could be wrong.

Multiple perspectives flourish in philosophical enquiry; it becomes possible to reflect on your beliefs and values and acquire new skills. These skills can help you to make better decisions, deal with conflict, and participate in society.

We are proud of the work done by the charity over the last 30 years to implement philosophy in so many schools and communities. We are looking forward to guiding SAPERE's development as we embark on the next 30 years.

— Emma and Grace

Small charity, big impact

We train and accredit trainers, who themselves then train teachers and other educators in the practice of Philosophy for Children (P4C). It is a model that amplifies our impact, helping us to reach thousands of learners every year.

SAPERE has 8 part-time staff (6 FTE) and 38 trainers, but the impact of our work is felt nationally and internationally and continues to make a difference to learners year after year.

P4C happens consistently at SAPERE schools, so those children who start in reception have **seven years** of regular dialogue and enquiry before they reach secondary school.

SAPERE was founded in 1992. We estimate that since then, we have trained 60,000 educators and helped 1.56 million learners to develop essential skills in thinking, speaking, and listening.

Last year SAPERE worked in **England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales**, as well as **Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, The Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Thailand, USA, UAE, Qatar, Mexico and Japan.**

In the same year, **2,000 delegates** were trained on our courses in the UK. Assuming conservatively that each of those practitioners implemented P4C in just one setting with the average size of a UK classroom, then around **53,000 learners** experienced P4C last year facilitated by educators trained in 2022-23 alone. But in fact, the real number of annual beneficiaries is far higher, as most teachers trained in P4C continue the practice throughout their career.

SAPERE training is only the start of our support; through a sustained programme of professional development schools gain Awards with SAPERE that celebrate their progress and commitment to philosophical enquiry. There are **152,000 pupils** on the roll across all schools that have received a P4C Award from SAPERE since 2016.

Addressing disadvantage

Everyone can benefit from philosophical enquiry, which is why we support all schools who want to practise P4C. But as a charity committed to addressing inequality, our work focuses on disadvantaged schools.

In 2023, 23.8% of pupils were eligible for free schools meals in England (a measure of deprivation). Students eligible for free school meals are 27% less likely to achieve good passes in English and Maths than their peers.

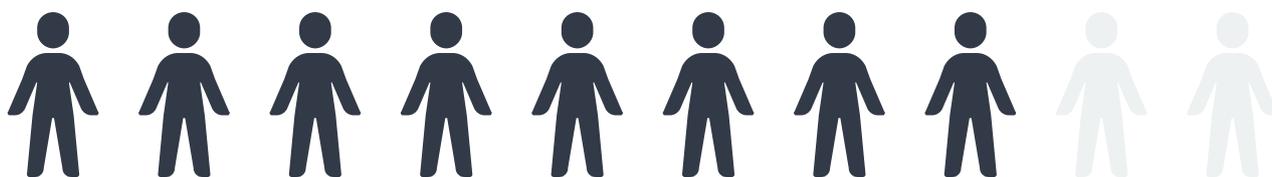
Out of all the schools SAPERE worked with in 2022-23, 56% had over the national average of children on free school meals, and 30% of them had double the national average.

56 % of SAPERE Schools have more than national average of pupils on free school meals



Pupil Premium is a government grant given to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged students. This grant is allocated based on the number of children eligible for FSM, looked-after children and previously looked-after children.

80 % of SAPERE Award Schools have above the national average of pupils on Pupil Premium



Research from the Education Endowment Foundation in 2022 shows that interventions that focus on **metacognition, oracy, and collaboration** – such as philosophical enquiry – can **improve progress in learning for disadvantaged pupils** by 5 - 7 months.

Additional research by Durham University in 2015 and 2021 shows that the **cognitive, social, and emotional skills** developed through philosophical enquiry, can help **close the attainment gap for disadvantaged learners**.

Evidence of impact

The efficacy of Philosophy with Children pedagogy is supported by global research that demonstrates its influence on young people's cognitive, social, and emotional abilities.

Over half a century of P4C practice and research has led to numerous studies examining the effects of this approach on student learning. According to various meta-analyses of these studies, the collective evidence reveals the following effects of P4C on students' abilities and outcomes. Visit www.sapere.org.uk/research for more information.

Research shows:

- Improved critical thinking skills
 - Enhanced communication skills
 - Increased engagement and motivation
 - Positive effects on academic achievement
 - Social and emotional development
 - Cultivation of open-mindedness
 - Long-term benefits on learning and mental health
 - Teacher confidence, improved classroom management and a positive school culture
-



Developing best practice

SAPERE offers a pathway of professional education that includes an introduction to P4C at Level One, courses on advanced facilitation and leadership at Level Two and a course on advancing the theory and practice of P4C at Level Three. We also offer specialist short courses and taster sessions.

In 2022-23 a total of **1,984 people attended our training**, including twice as many people who progressed to Level Two than in the previous year.

During this period, we ran **148 courses**, including closed courses for specific schools and universities, and open courses that attracted philosophical educators from throughout the UK and internationally.

This provision comprised 58 in-person closed courses, and 12 online closed courses. We also ran 41 in-person open courses (up from 17 the previous year) and 29 online open courses, and we ran 8 initial teacher training courses in-person and online.

When asked “how satisfied were you with the course?” **93% of course delegates said they were more than satisfied or very satisfied** with the training received this year.

When asked if their course would improve their practice, 95% said yes.

“I cannot stress enough how impressed I was with the whole course and how it was delivered by our trainer.”

Deb Patton, a delegate on a SAPERE Level One Course in 2023



Recognising excellence

Our school awards offer a comprehensive framework for promoting and recognising quality and sustainable P4C.

Our awards acknowledge the hard work and dedication it takes to implement P4C across a whole school (or other setting). Designed with clear objectives for students, for teachers and for the setting, our awards structure progression, facilitate reflective practice, and help to create a sustainable culture of philosophical teaching and learning that permeates all areas of school life.

According to our awards criteria, students make progress by building a community of enquiry and developing their ability to question, reason, and reflect; teachers make progress by undertaking professional learning, and developing their ability to facilitate, plan, and review philosophical enquiry; and the setting supports the development of P4C by providing strong leadership, supporting whole-school training, and overseeing ongoing evaluation.

Gold Schools are distinguished by their consistent monitoring and evaluation of P4C programmes, which includes tracking the impact of P4C on learning outcomes, and the school culture and ethos. Gold Schools are committed to involving parents and the wider community in P4C and communicating best practices to them.

33 schools are participating in our programme to enhance and advance P4C provision in their schools, working towards achieving an award or moving up to a higher award.

Bronze Award

12 new Bronze schools, & 9 renewing their Award. There are currently 38 schools in receipt of a Bronze Award.



Silver Award

13 new Silver schools & 2 renewing their Award. There are currently 24 schools in receipt of a Silver Award.



Gold Award

3 new Gold schools & 5 renewing their Award. There are currently 17 schools in receipt of a Gold Award.



Transforming education

SAPERE School, Emmaus Primary in Sheffield, has embedded philosophical teaching and learning throughout the school and beyond, working with parents and local partners. This year they renewed their Gold Award.

Working with a wide variety of speech and language challenges and significant special educational needs and disabilities, the school has put P4C at the heart of what it does – boosting oracy, critical thinking, and wellbeing. Since first achieving a Gold Award in 2019, students and teachers have deepened their philosophical practice through an innovative process of performance review and pupil consultation. Their sustained success is even more remarkable for having taken place during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“P4C has had a massive impact on the school and the culture, the way they speak, even outside of the classroom.”

Pamela Shaw, Y1 Teacher at Emmaus Primary, a SAPERE Gold School





“People who are shy and don’t really participate in class... you can see them gain confidence from P4C. I feel like P4C can boost your self-esteem and make you feel good about yourself.”

**Ethan, student at Emmaus Primary,
a SAPERE Gold School**

Collaboration in action

The work that we do at SAPERE is made possible through the support of collaborators and funders whose investment and expertise drives innovation and research.

In 2022-23, we partnered with schools, universities, local government, scholarly societies, charities, and cultural organisations in the UK and around the world.

The Templeton World Charity Foundation funded our research on the impact of P4C in teaching science and religious education in mainstream and special educational needs schools in England. In addition, the Welsh Local Government Association commissioned us to support the exploration of equalities policies in Welsh schools. We also partnered with the Philosophy Foundation and Reading Council to offer a summer school to children in Reading. Beyond the UK, we worked with Globeducate to offer P4C to teachers in their network of international schools, benefiting their students aged 4 to 19.

In higher education, we worked with Princeton University to train philosophy postgraduates offering a summer school to underserved local communities in New Jersey. Meanwhile in the UK, our eight longstanding University partners – including University of Winchester – helped us to introduce P4C to trainee teachers. Also this year, the University of Bristol and the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) came on board as our 2023 conference sponsors.

Furthering our work in the cultural sector, The Towner Eastbourne – host of the 2023 Turner Prize – commissioned SAPERE to offer professional development for art teachers and gallery staff and Guth Gafa commissioned us to produce educational resources for the documentary Young Plato. We also developed our site-specific work outdoors working with CDEC, the Cumbrian global learning charity.





Thank you!

SAPERE's work is possible because of the dedication, passion, and excellence of a large number of people among them:

staff and trustees who together guide SAPERE's operations, governance, communications, finance, quality assurance, development, fundraising and administration; **patrons** whose voice amplifies our messages and supports our work; **trainers** who deliver courses and develop P4C practice; **members** who help guide our decision-making; **teachers, educators and schools** - those new to the journey as well as those who have been with us for many years; and **collaborators and funders** who help us innovate, develop and research our impact

You can support our work too!
Sign up at: sapere.org.uk/join

Keep in touch

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