

Governor Monitoring Visits

Philosophy Day

Wednesday, 4th September 2019

Present	Jason Buckley 'The Philosophy Man' Whole School Tracey Spencer (Parent Governor)
Links with School Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a culture of lifelong learning • Nurturing a growth mindset

1. Assembly

The assembly was led by Jason Buckley 'The Philosophy Man', a freelance educator working with schools to 'develop confident, independent thinkers through Philosophy for Children'. Jason started the assembly with some warmup exercises, asking the pupils to, for example, think of a favourite meal, discussing this with the person sitting next to them.

Various scenarios were then talked about, primarily involving a family, a game of football, and a broken window. The pupils were asked who should accept the fault of the broken window, this was then expanded into 'why' and 'what ifs'. The pupils showed respect, enthusiasm, and 'out of the box' thinking during the whole exercise, and indeed Jason commented on this afterwards, stating that he had not seen a group before demonstrating such strong attributes.

The pupils then went into the playground for a break and fresh air.

2. Workshop

I observed the first session with class three. Some warmup exercises were conducted, where, in partners, the pupils were asked to discuss which objects they would take into the afterlife – linking with the current class topic of 'Ancient Egyptians'. Ideas were also shared regarding what activity could be done that would never, ever get boring, and why. This was described as 'small talk before big talk'.

Jason used the example of mummification and the afterlife, and the pupils discussed 'rules' that might have been relevant to whether or not a person would have had a heart light enough. They then came up with ideas for how these rules might work today.

Such rules included 'never kill animals', 'never disobey orders', and 'never steal', although one pupil also suggested 'never stop eating chocolate'! An interesting point was 'never do nothing to stop something bad happening'. Jason encouraged the pupils to think about when there might be exceptions to these rules, and if that would ever be ok...can the rule ever be made fair. The pupils suggested such ideas as 'if the rules were made by an evil person who took

over the world' and 'doing that wouldn't do you any good'. They also thought of ways around the rules, for example, eating just one grain of sand when told they had to eat sand every day.

'Don't hurt animals' - exceptions were given as if in self-defence, and Jason asked if humans were more important than animals and why.

'Don't hurt people' - 'except if it's by accident', 'except in a boxing match', 'except if it's for your country/family/pets' and Jason touched on the subject of whether hurting people during a war could be considered acceptable.

The children all seemed to really enjoy the workshop, and all seemed engaged in the activities, taking turns and listening to, and building upon, each other's ideas. It was certainly thought provoking for pupils and adults alike, being encouraged to expand on their views and opinions, and to consider that situations may never be 'black and white'. Class three were a credit to their teacher in the behaviour.

The pupils finished the activity with a 'dalek and Dr Who game'

Jason is due to return to school for the inset day in October 2020.

Tracey Spencer

Parent Governor

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