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Developing Communities of Inquiry in the UK: Retrospect and Prospect

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Introduction

My aim in this article is to offer a critical evaluation of the development of communities of inquiry in the UK, with particular reference to the teaching of philosophy in schools. The paper is divided into four sections. In the first, I examine some key aspects from an historical perspective. The second section focuses on the question: 'should children be taught to think philosophically?' Having discussed the teaching of philosophical thinking in the UK, I outline a typical example of a dialogue undertaken with primary school pupils. Finally, I consider future prospects for developing communities of inquiry.

Developing Communities of Inquiry in the UK: Retrospect

I first became interested in the teaching of critical thinking in the early 1980s. At that time, my research focused principally on issues within the philosophy of education. In particular, I was concerned to examine the concept of 'indoctrination', to contrast it with terms such as 'education', 'training', schooling' etc. and to explore the extent to which indoctrinatory practices are evident in schools. As I progressed through the extensive literature on 'indoctrination', I became increasingly dissatisfied with analyses of the concept, offered by philosophers of education and others, who argued that it is necessarily a pejorative term, denoting, for example, unworthy intentions and teaching methodologies. In this, it was thought to be distinctive from 'education', which was viewed, by definition, as a 'good' thing, engaged in by well-meaning and enlightened individuals. As I have argued elsewhere (Costello, 2000), an adequate analysis of the concept of 'indoctrination' is rather more complex than much of the literature indicates. While it is certainly true that indoctrination is, at least in some sense, an 'illness' which permeates educational institutions, I suggested that it is also unavoidable (and therefore justifiable) in certain contexts. Furthermore, given the current prevalence of references to 'indoctrination' and 'indoctrinatory teaching' in the educational press and elsewhere, both nationally and internationally (see Spillius, 2009 and Harnden, 2009 for an example of the latter), it is essential that student teachers and their more experienced colleagues should develop a sound understanding of this concept and consider the implications which this may have for their practice in schools.

Utilising the metaphor of an 'illness' to understand some of the forms and functions of indoctrination within educational settings was useful because it led me to seek a 'cure' or 'antidote' for them. Having made a distinction between justifiable and unjustifiable indoctrination and developed the view that certain indoctrinatory outcomes of the teaching process are to be combated, I looked for an appropriate educational vehicle to accomplish this task. In order to be successful, it seemed to me that any such approach would need to contain appropriate pedagogic materials which: (1) enabled children to learn the skills of thinking, reasoning and argument, and (2) were underpinned by a sound theoretical foundation. It was at this point that I became aware of Matthew Lipman's 'Philosophy for Children' programme through his *Thinking: The Journal of Philosophy for Children*. Coming from a background of philosophy myself, I immediately warmed to the idea that young children should be exposed to the teaching of logical, ethical (and more general philosophical) reasoning at a young age. Subsequently, I developed my own approach to the teaching of philosophy in primary schools, and undertook

classroom-based research, the results of which were reported in my doctoral thesis (Costello 1990).

In 1992, I participated in the Twelfth Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Educational Reform, which was held at Sonoma State University in California. Attended by some 1250 delegates, the conference lays claim to being the largest forum for the discussion of critical thinking in the world. According to the conference proceedings, 289 presentations were made by contributors from Australia, Great Britain, Canada, Chile, Korea, South Africa, Switzerland and the USA. While many participants argued for the introduction of a 'thinking skills' curriculum into schools, it was only on seeing the substantial number of books on the subject, which were on sale at the conference, that I came to understand the extent to which teaching thinking has become an integral part of educational provision in the USA and elsewhere.

While British research output on the teaching of critical thinking has not been as substantial as that in the USA, over the last two decades a number of major publications have appeared. The first two of these (Coles and Robinson 1989; Fisher 1990), present accounts of the major approaches to the subject and these have been followed by several texts which offer more individualistic approaches to practice (Fox 1996; Fisher,1996, 1998; Quinn 1997; Murris, 1992; Costello, 2000). More recently, books have been published which focus on how to teach thinking and learning skills (Simister, 2007); learning through enquiry and dialogue in the primary classroom (Haynes, 2008); developing thinking and understanding in young children (Robson, 2006); thinking skills in education (McGregor, 2007); Philosophy for Children (Bowles, 2008); philosophy in schools (Hand and Winstanley, 2009); and philosophy with teenagers (Hannam and Echeverria, 2009).

All of these publications have at their core a concern that schools and other educational settings should provide an appropriate environment in which children's thinking and valuing processes may be supported and enhanced. In an earlier article published in this journal (Costello, 2007a), I suggested that the concept of a 'community of inquiry' is now widely used by educators, whose aim is to enable their pupils (or students) to develop and demonstrate an ability to think, reason and argue effectively, both orally and in writing. I referred to the work of Matthew Lipman and his colleagues, who have offered their own conception of a 'community of inquiry' (Lipman et al., 1980). The development of communities of inquiry in the UK, in the context of teaching philosophy in schools, has been strongly influenced by Lipman's work.

Should Children be Taught to Think Philosophically?

As I have argued elsewhere (Costello, 2000), philosophy (by which I mean a thorough endeavour to develop, clarify, justify and apply our thinking, principally, though not exclusively, with regard to the teaching of logical and ethical reasoning), provides an ideal means by which teachers may encourage children to articulate views, express arguments and reflect on their own thinking and that of others.

At first glance, the claim that children should be introduced to philosophy, as I have defined it, is a remarkable one. The sceptic might be forgiven, then, for reacting with incredulity to the argument which I have advanced suggesting that children are capable of engaging in philosophical discourse from the early years of their education. However, several writers have argued convincingly that this is so. Perhaps the most well known book in this area is *Philosophy and the Young Child* by Gareth Matthews, in which he cites a number of instances of children displaying philosophical puzzlement. For example, Ursula (three years, four months) says: "I have a pain in my tummy". Her mother replies: "You lie down and go to sleep and your pain will go away". Ursula retorts: "Where will it go?" (Matthews 1980, p. 17). According to Matthews: "Ursula's question – 'Where will it go?' - is an invitation to philosophical reflection. One can accept the invitation or not, as one chooses' (p. 18). All too often, adults are unwilling or unable to engage children in such reflection.

Historically speaking, the teaching of philosophy in British schools has been advocated against an educational backcloth that has hardly been conducive to its development (Costello, 2000). The advent of the National Curriculum, with its strong emphasis on the acquisition of subject knowledge, its adherence to attainment

targets and levels of attainment, and its advocacy of a broad spectrum of study across disciplines, has meant that teachers have had little opportunity to foster an intellectual environment in which critical thinking might flourish in the classroom. Consequently, the discussion of philosophical ideas has been (and continues to be) a seriously neglected element in the education of children.

No doubt a major reason for this unfortunate state of affairs is a widespread acceptance of the notion that such children are simply not equal to the task, since they are largely incapable of the mature reflection and rational thought which philosophy presupposes (see, for example, Levine, 1983 and Gazzard, 1983). Philosophy, it is argued, belongs to the later years of secondary education, if not to universities and colleges. Given this (and before arguments for the teaching of philosophy in schools could be advanced and educational programmes developed), it was necessary for proponents of such teaching to counter the view that philosophy is exclusively the preserve of the adult mind.

This view is by no means recent in origin, having been espoused by both Plato and Aristotle. In the *Republic*, Plato argues that dialectic (philosophy) can only be introduced to those who have completed many years of training and study and who have reached the age of thirty. He suggests that to introduce philosophy at an earlier age is fraught with difficulties:

And there's one great precaution you can take which is to stop their getting a taste of [philosophical discussions] too young. You must have noticed how young men, after their first taste of argument, are always contradicting people just for the fun of it: they imitate those whom they hear cross-examining each other, and themselves cross-examine other people, like puppies who love to pull and tear at anyone within reach (1974, Book 7, 539b).

Aristotle argues that the young lack the requisite experience of living to profit from his lectures on politics (to which ethics is a kind of introduction). In their contributions to philosophical discussions, the young merely echo the pronouncements of others. This is in contrast to their ability to become competent in mathematics, the truths of which are derived without recourse to experience:

One might further ask why it is that a lad may become a mathematician, but not a philosopher or a natural scientist. Probably it is because the former subject deals with abstractions, whereas the principles of the two latter are grasped only as the result of experience; and the young repeat the doctrines of these without actually believing them, but in mathematics the reason why is not hard to see (1976, Book 6, Chapter 8, 1142a, 16-19).

More recently, several well-known professional philosophers have argued against the possible inclusion of philosophy in the curricula of schools. For example, in her book *A Common Policy for Education*, Mary Warnock (1988) suggests that philosophy is properly the preserve of the university undergraduate. Her comments are, at times, both Platonic and Aristotelian in flavour. To begin with, we are told that philosophy is not 'an appropriate subject for study by pupils at school' (p. 57). Warnock offers the following statement to support this thesis:

I do not think it possible to study philosophy profitably without entering fairly deeply into the history of the subject, and for this there is not time at school, nor could it be a subject that would interest more than a few pupils. Instant philosophy, philosophy that springs into being in the bath or on the television screen, is fun, but it can hardly be serious (p. 57).

Rather than being introduced to philosophy at school, Warnock suggests that it is preferable for pupils to acquire a thorough grounding in and sound understanding of subjects such as mathematics, literature, history and so on, to which the tools of philosophy may be applied at a later date.

What are we to make of Warnock's arguments? It seems to me that they are unconvincing because they contain assumptions which are both unargued and untenable. We need to ask the following questions: (1) In order to engage in philosophy, why is it necessary to enter "fairly deeply into the history of the subject?" (2) Why should philosophy be thought to be of interest only to a few pupils? (3) Must philosophy be serious to the exclusion of fun?

With regard to the first question, I see no reason to assert that children who are being introduced to philosophy must imbibe, at the same time, a deep knowledge of the history of the discipline. Indeed, I can think of nothing which is more likely to provoke disinterest in the neophyte philosopher than this approach. On the one hand, the pupil is asked to engage in a discussion of ideas which are both new and exciting. On the other, he or she is to be given a history lesson involving a 'roll-call' of famous names accompanied by a résumé of their main texts and theories. This is not to denigrate the importance of the history of philosophy. It is simply to indicate that philosophy is first and foremost an activity - it is something one does.

Furthermore, I would suggest, children are fascinated initially by philosophical inquiry precisely because it is so different from anything else which they are offered in the school curriculum. To identify this new subject too closely with a more familiar (and perhaps unpalatable) discipline is to run the risk of the former being rejected by the pupil along with the latter. Protagonists of 'children's philosophy' believe that it is possible (and indeed desirable) to engage in philosophical discussions with young children without requiring them to be imbued with an historical knowledge of the discipline.

Turning to the second question, Warnock offers us no evidence to support her contention that philosophy will be of interest only to a small minority of pupils. Indeed, the entire history of Philosophy for Children serves to refute this argument. One has only to witness young children discussing philosophical issues to see how keen they are to talk, to debate, to reason, in short, to participate in a community of inquiry.

On the other hand, the argument that only a few children might become attracted to 'philosophy', as articulated by Warnock, is all too understandable. In her view, whatever else one is doing when one is discussing philosophical issues, one is certainly not having fun. Yet one of the reasons why the children to whom I have taught philosophy over the years looked forward to our sessions is precisely because they enjoyed the discussions so much.

In undertaking research for my doctoral thesis (Costello 1990), I taught philosophy to children in three primary schools. Before concluding my work, I asked children what they thought about our discussions. In response to the statement 'What I like about philosophy is...', I received comments such as:

- You are free to say what you feel about situations.
- We all do it together. You get a chance to speak.
- I like the puzzles and the arguments and the discussions.
- Talking with each other.
- That it is good listening to other people's verdicts and arguments.
- Because we don't have to write and I am a slow writer. And we discuss things more and don't just leave it at one answer.
- Talking about everything around us.

In arguing for the existence of a dichotomy between those activities which are serious and those which are 'fun', Warnock reminds me of the stern elementary school teacher who demarcated rigidly between 'work' and 'play', and who saw the latter as important only insofar as it enabled children to engage in their studies with renewed vigour. What Warnock offers us is simply her own conception of what the study of philosophy should involve. This view must stand or fall on its ability to compete with alternative conceptions, such as those offered by Lipman and other protagonists of philosophy for (or with) children.[1] Warnock's stand-point is both narrow

and restrictive: it encapsulates neither what philosophy can be nor what children can achieve (see Costello, 2000 and part one of Hand and Winstanley, 2009, for additional discussion of this theme).

Teaching Philosophical Thinking in the UK

As a pre-requisite for developing effective programmes for the teaching philosophical thinking in the UK, it was necessary to undertake critical reflection concerning three key theoretical issues (Costello, 2000; 2007a; 2007b):

- Offering an evaluation of some of the central theoretical foundations of Lipman's Philosophy for Children programme.
- Exploring a potential obstacle to promoting effective thinking in children: the problem of indoctrination in educational settings.
- Offering a robust and convincing response to the question: 'How can supporters of children's philosophy convince the sceptic that what is taking place in the classroom is genuinely philosophical?'

In a review of Michael Pritchard's book, *Philosophical Adventures with Children* (1985), Miller attempts to counter the most potent criticism which has been made of the 'Philosophy for Children' movement, namely that it fails to refute the popular view that 'children are utterly incapable of real philosophical thinking' (1986, p. 46). In order to do this, he catalogues the means by which advocates of Lipman's Philosophy for Children programme can seek to convince others that they are successful in enhancing philosophical thought in their students. He suggests that: "previous evidence for the success of the programme can he roughly divided into three categories: (1) the testimony of those who have used the programme, (2) tapes and transcripts of actual sessions, (3) the results of objective tests [undertaken] by children exposed to the programme" (p. 46).

Miller discusses the third category only briefly, since, as he says, there are no objective tests to assess the quality of philosophical reasoning. A number of tests in other subjects, e.g. reading, mathematics and critical reasoning, may be offered to children, both before and after they have studied philosophy, in order to indicate the extent to which this study has improved their performance in other academic subjects. However, such tests tell us little about children's progress in philosophy itself. The obvious difficulty with teachers' testimony as a means of demonstrating children's philosophical ability is, as Miller recognises, that such testimony can be based on selective bias. This may be true inasmuch as teachers, either wittingly or unwittingly, succumb to the temptation to include only that evidence which is conducive to the fulfilment of their expectations. Indeed, in the absence of further proof, teachers become susceptible to the charge that many, if not all, of their findings are, at least to some extent, exaggerated. Consequently, it is incumbent on protagonists of children's philosophy to offer substantial transcripts of taped discussions. Such an approach is important because the difficulties associated with selective bias are minimized. Of course, they may not be avoided completely, since it is possible, and indeed necessary, to offer transcripts of selected audio- or videotapes. To circumvent this problem, the researcher should be expected to provide evidence that a number of children's dialogues have taken place.

One familiar problem remains. This concerns the possibility that, having examined the transcript of a philosophical discussion, the sceptic may simply dismiss it as 'children talking'. In other words, the philosophical nature of many of the comments made may pass unnoticed. As Miller points out: "Pritchard is well aware of the probability that someone who does not quite know what to look for and or doesn't want to see it, will not find genuine philosophical insights in the children's conversations without help" (p. 47). In order to provide assistance in this matter, Pritchard punctuates children's dialogues with his own commentaries, indicating where philosophical problems are being examined. Thus, it becomes extremely difficult for the sceptic to assert that the subject matter of philosophy is not central to the discussions. Miller's comment is apposite here:

A sceptic could he exposed to examples of good philosophical discussions by children and come away unconvinced. She could fail to see the philosophical content of an actual conversation due to her own

prejudice and/or lack of training... By providing plenty of commentary Pritchard minimised the likelihood that the philosophical content of the transcripts he reproduced will not be seen (p. 47).

This is the approach I have adopted in undertaking my research in primary schools. In so doing, my aim has been to suggest that the disdain shown by some professional philosophers towards what takes place in the classroom in the name of 'philosophy' is unwarranted. Annotating dialogues should ensure that readers are able to judge how proponents of children's philosophising themselves view the work presented, in terms of its content and quality. If, as a result of this rigorous approach, differing perspectives are articulated concerning whether or not what is taking place in schools is genuinely philosophical, then at least the debate will be well informed by the evidence that has been gathered.

The best way to refute arguments against the teaching of philosophy in schools is to show in some detail that children are able to engage, in a competent fashion, in philosophical debate and argument. This I have demonstrated elsewhere, in the context of the primary school (e.g. Costello 1995; 2000). My own approach to teaching philosophy in schools has involved four aspects. Firstly, I have written a number of short stories, involving three children who inhabit a fantasy world. A second method of engaging children in philosophical reflection is to offer them samples of reasoning (embedded in logical, ethical and more general philosophical problems) to discuss. Thirdly, diagrammatic representation (e.g. overhead projector transparencies and PowerPoint slides) may be used to initiate discussions. This is particularly important for children who are poor readers but whose reasoning ability may be as good as, or better than, that of their peers. Finally, more recently, I have begun to write narratives that encompass the life of the contemporary classroom (Costello, 2007a). Related to this work (and in keeping with a continuing focus on the development of communities of enquiry in education), I have also undertaken research and publication on the theory and practice of argument (Andrews, Costello, and Clarke, 1993; Costello and Mitchell, 1995), and personal, social and moral education (Bowen and Costello, 1996-1997).

My response to the question 'should children be taught to think philosophically?' is an unequivocal 'Yes'. Philosophical training must he given to children at an early age (see Ridley, 2006), since without it they will merely appropriate the standard (and often unreasoned) beliefs and opinions prevalent in their immediate environment. The teaching of philosophy to children can do much to counteract the prejudices and uncritical thinking which are a fact of everyday adult life. It is the responsibility of the philosopher, one of whose tasks is to clarify our thinking, to initiate such teaching.

In order to illustrate how this might take place, I offer the following dialogue with a class of 10- and 11-year-old children, who discuss issues raised by the question 'What Makes You You?' (see Appendix 1). Contributions made by pupils whom I have not been able to identify have been included without attribution. One of the aims of my commentary in the text is to make connections between the arguments children offer and those employed by professional philosophers. Indeed this exercise is based on Reuben Abel's *Man is the Measure: A Cordial Invitation to the Central Problems of Philosophy* (1976), which was the first book it was suggested that I should read when I began to study philosophy, as an undergraduate, in the late 1970s.[2]

PC:	'What makes you you?' is the question we are going to discuss, and the first thing Ian said was what?
Ian:	The personality.
PC:	The personality. What do you mean by that, Ian? Can you say a little bit more to me about that?
Ian:	What makes you you is there's a decision, and the decision you make on that, that's your personality. That's what you would say. That's what that person would say.
PC:	OK.
Ian:	That's their personality.
PC:	Excellent. Michael?
Michael:	Your soul.
PC:	What's a soul, Michael?

Michael:	The personality, you, what makes you you.
PC:	It's your soul. That's a very interesting thought. Any other thoughts? What were you going to say, Christopher?
Christ. S.:	I was going to say that myself.
PC:	You were going to say 'soul' as well?
Christ. S.:	Shall I tell you why?
PC:	Yes. I want to know why.
Christ. S.:	Because we were doing topic-work about Aidan and Miss G said 'What does...' Well, actually, it was St Cuthbert, but he saw the soul of St Aidan. So Miss G asked us what the soul was and we eventually came up with that your soul is what makes you you.

(Comment) *This view competes with that offered by Clarence Durrow, in his well-known article 'The myth of the soul'. Darrow (1972, p.291) suggests that 'There is, perhaps, no more striking example of the credulity of man than the widespread belief in immortality. This idea includes not only the belief that death is not the end of what we call life, but that personal identity involving memory persists beyond the grave... If it is not certain that death ends personal identity and memory, then almost nothing that man accepts as true is susceptible to proof'. Furthermore, Moseley (2008, p. 209) notes that 'While early modern philosophers felt the need to agree in the existence of soul from social or political pressures or mere force of habitual indoctrination, by the nineteenth century, atheists and sceptics were stripping the concept apart with [Gilbert] Ryle arguing that it is merely a 'ghost in the machine', a non-existent imaginative creation of our own mind'. See also: Braddon-Mitchell and Jackson (2007), Matthews (2005) and Sorabji (2006).*

PC:	Oh super. So I've ... come upon a subject that you've already touched on before. Did Miss G ask you what the soul looks like?
Chorus:	Yes.
Terry:	Yes, but you can't see it.
PC:	Terry?
Terry:	You can't see it.
PC:	Well, I can't see my liver either, can I, Eve? But I have a good idea what my liver looks like.
___	It's invisible.
PC:	It's invisible.
	[Laughter]
PC:	What do you think, Helen?
Helen:	It's a ghost-like figure that you can't touch.
PC:	A ghost-like figure that you can't touch. Christopher?
Christ. S.:	Nobody actually knows what it looks like because nobody has seen one... Well, Cuthbert saw one, but he didn't... He thinks he saw one. But he didn't actually explain what it was. Well, he did, but...
	[Laughter]
PC:	But what? I've lost that bit.
___	There's lots of different stories. There's some stories ... Some books say he saw this and some books say he saw something else. So, you don't actually know what he saw.
PC:	So, let me ask you this: if we don't know what the soul looks like and if Cuthbert thinks he saw one, but we're not sure whether he did, how do we know that what makes you you is your soul? How do we know that? What's our... what am I looking for?

(Comment) *Here my aim is to establish appropriate grounds for claims to knowledge. See Baggini (2002, chapter 1); Law (2007, pp. 49-63).*

___	Explanation.
PC:	Explanation or...?

___	Argument.
PC:	Argument or ... ?
___	Reason.
PC:	Reason or ... ?
___	Proof.
PC:	What's our proof that, in fact, we have a soul? What's our proof? Because you just said to me 'What makes you you is the soul.' And I'm saying to you: 'Well, no one has seen that.' Have you seen your soul, Sarah?
	[Sarah shakes her head]
PC:	Not at all? Not even once? No?
	[Sarah shakes her head]
PC:	Have you seen your soul, Louise?
Louise:	No.
PC:	No? Have you seen your soul, Scott?
Scott:	No, because no one knows what it looks like.
PC:	Well, if no one knows what it looks like, how do we know we have a soul, Christopher?
Christ. S.:	I don't know, but I think I've heard of 'soul' meaning...
PC:	Meaning?
Christ. S.:	Like you were sort of on your own.
Ian:	That's 'solo'.
	[Laughter]
PC:	Well let's leave this idea of a soul for a moment. What other answers might we give to this question: 'What makes you you?', Christopher?
Christ. S.:	How tall you are, the colour of your eyes, how big your ears are, how big your nose is.

(Comment)   *Christopher subscribes to the philosophical view that the problem of personal identity can be resolved by referring to an individual's bodily features.*

___	How big your mouth is.
PC:	OK, Jenny?
Jenny:	Heritage.
PC:	Heritage. Say something about that to me, Jenny.
Jenny:	It makes you look how your mother and father look.

(Comment)   *Reuben Abel (1976, p.188) asks: 'Is ancestry part of the person? The genes you inherit from your parents, and which were fixed at the moment of your conception, will normally be transmitted unchanged to your descendants.'*

PC:	OK, Christopher?
Christ. S.:	Well, I think it could be your brain, because your brain makes you do things, and your brain makes your decisions.
PC:	All right. Any other thoughts on what makes you you? Ben?
Ben:	Your bones, because if you didn't have any bones, you'd be floppy.
PC:	Your bones. Yes. And some people... say: 'I've got large bones,' and some people say: 'I've got small bones.' OK. Let me ask you this, then. Let us say you decided this evening: 'Oh well, I've had enough of wearing the same old clothes that I always wear. On Saturday, I'm going to go into town and I'm going to buy myself some new clothes.' And you go into town and you spend a fortune buying some new clothes. But the thing about these new clothes is they are not at all like any other clothes that you previously liked. Let's say your favourite colour used to be blue; you decide: 'Everything I buy is going to be black.' Let's say your favourite fabric was silk; you say to yourself: 'No more silk for me - leather.' And you put your new clothes on and you're walking in the city

8

centre, and you're feeling very happy with yourself. And then you say to yourself: 'I know. I am going to have a new hair-do. Lots of people compliment me on my ginger hair, but I'm going to have a change. I'm going to go blonde. Lots of people have complimented me on my curly hair. I'm going to have a change and I'm going to have it all straightened out. I don't want to be blonde any more. I'm going to go dark.' Now, imagine that you went into town and you bought a lot of new clothes, you went into the hairdresser's and you got a new hair-do, a new hair-style. Would you be the same person?

(Comment)   *In discussing personal identity, John Hospers (1989, p.410) asks: '"Under what conditions is X the same self, or the same person as before?" That is, what mental or physical changes can occur in Mr X without his ceasing to be Mr X?' Similarly, Law (2007, p.123) asks: 'When we look through photograph albums, we see photos of ourselves at different stages in life. What makes each of these individuals the same person?'. For an extensive examination of the concept of 'personal identity', see Noonan (2003).*

___   Yeah.
___   No, you wouldn't have any money left.
              [Laughter]
PC: That would be one difference. You would have no money left, but would you be the same person, do you think, Jenny?
Jenny: Inside you would but outside you wouldn't.
PC: Can you say a little bit more to me about that?
Jenny: Well, say you were a very nice person.
PC: Yes.
PC: You'd still be a very nice person, but you've just had a new hair-do and got new clothes.

(Comment)   *Jenny suggests that the notion of 'personal identity' incorporates both mental and physical aspects.*

PC: So, you are a different person on the outside, for you. What do you say, Christopher?
Christ. S.:   Well, if ... you took everything off and cut all your hair off, if you did it with your new image and your old image, you'd still look the same.
PC: Except for the hair...
Ian: You wouldn't have any hair, would you?
PC: Let's say I go on a diet. I say to myself: 'No more sweets for me.'
___   No more 'Mars' bars.
PC: I like sweets, so it's very unlikely I'm going to do that. But let's say I do, and come in to you in a month's time and I say: 'I've lost two stones. I feel like a new person.' Am I?
___   No, you're not.
PC: Am I a new person, Abigail?
Abigail?   No, because you can't change what you are inside.
PC: What can't you change then? Give me some examples. That's a very good comment. Give me some examples of what you can't change. Because you've said I can change my hairstyle, I can change my figure, I can change my clothes. What can't I change, Abigail?
Abigail: You can't change your personality.
PC: Can you not?
Ian: You could because you could stop doing what you used to do and do other things.
PC: Can you give me an example of that?

(Comment)   *As this part of the dialogue demonstrates, asking questions, inviting participants to reflect critically on the views they have expressed and requesting examples to illustrate their thinking are essential to the teaching of philosophy.*

Ian: Well, say you never ever took white sugar, you always have brown sugar in your tea or whatever.
PC: OK.
Ian: And you hated coffee.
PC: Yes.
Ian: Then you started having coffee and never have tea, or always have white sugar...
PC: Yes.
Ian: That would be changing your personality, in a way.
PC: OK Carl?
Carl: I think what makes you you is your philosophy of the world. The decisions you make.

(Comment)   Carl argues that a person's mental functions are central to his or her personal identity.

PC: OK. So, it's your personal philosophy of the world that makes you you. Well, let's say, talking about Abigail's point that you can't change what's inside, let's say I'm a liar, and let's say I'm a thief, and let's say I'm a bully. And, consequently, I'm not very popular, as you can imagine. But one day I go home and I say to myself: 'From now on I'm not going to be like that any more. I'm never going to tell any more lies. I'm never going to steal things that do not belong to me, take things that do not belong to me, and I'm not going to bully anyone any more.' Have I not changed inside and therefore become a different person, Carla?
Carla: In a way it is inside, those feelings of kindness, instead of being just like a bully.
PC: So, have I become a different person, Carla?
Carla: Not entirely a different person.
PC: OK.
Carla: Because on the outside you have changed, though on the inside you've probably changed.

*(Comment)   Carla distinguishes between one's overt behaviour and one's disposition to
act in a particular way, which may be motivated by a number of different considerations. As Shakespeare's
Richard ill (Act 3, Scene 1) notes wryly: 'Nor more can you distinguish of a man/Than of his outward show,
which, God he knows/Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart'.*

PC: OK.
Christ.:   You're not an entirely different person unless you're born again... Because you're always you, aren't you?

*(Comment)   Christopher suggests that bodily activity is constitutive of personal identity. As Anthony O'Hear (1985: 244)
notes, this view concurs with that adopted both in law and in everyday life.*

PC: OK. I'll come back to that point. A very good point. Christopher?
Christ. S.: Well, I couldn't say to myself: 'I want to be like Paul R' ... And anyway, even if you stopped being a bully and was really nice, you've changed what you do but you haven't changed how you speak and what your eye colour is, and things like that. So, you've just sort of changed a bit of you.
PC: Let's say I said to myself: 'Not only am I going to change my hairstyle and my clothes, but I'm also going to change my personality. I am going to behave differently towards people from now on.' So I've made some outward changes and some inward changes. Am I now a totally different person, Christopher?
Christ. S.: No, because... It's hard to explain really but you are not a new person because you're still you. You're still you aren't you?
PC: Right. Well, let me push you a little bit more. Imagine that I'm poorly... my heart isn't working very well ... Let's say I need a new heart. And the surgeon at the Royal Infirmary rings me up and says: 'Mr. Costello, we have a new heart for you. I am going to perform the operation tomorrow morning.'

Tomorrow evening I wake up, open my eyes, look around me, see familiar sights. I feel quite well. On the other hand, I've got someone else's heart inside me, haven't I? So does that mean, Terry, that I'm a different person?

(Comment)   *The relationship between organ transplantation and personal identity is discussed in Lamb (1985, pp.89-90) and Baggini (2002, pp.81-82).*

Terry: You're yourself ... You're the same person, except you've got a different heart.
PC: But I might have Mr Smith's heart. I've got a part of Mr Smith inside me. Doesn't that mean I'm a different person?
Terry: No.
PC: Jill?
JiIl: You're still the same.
PC: OK.
Abigail: Well, you can't change your brain.

(Comment)   *The notion of brain transplantation has been the subject of much philosophical discussion. See, for example, Shoemaker (1963); O'Hear (1985, pp.246-53). As Baggini (2002, pp. 81-82) notes: 'We know people can continue to live with transplanted and synthetic organs and limbs. So what if we could be entirely replaced by such body parts? Isn't this compatible with survival? Because of this, most defenders of this view [that continuity of bodily existence alone is necessary and sufficient for identity] say that the crucial organ is the brain, as this controls thought. Everything else could be replaced but not the brain'.*

PC: Go on. You can't change your brain. I'm interested in that line. Right, have a think about that and I'll come back to you. Helen?
Helen: Well, even if you have got Mr Smith's heart, all your heart does is pump blood round your body. So, in a way, you can't change your personality from that.

(Comment)   *Unlike a number of patients who have received transplanted hearts, Helen does not believe that the recipient of such an organ is likely to acquire certain personality-traits of the donor (see Lamb, 1985, pp.89-90). Recently in the UK, a newspaper article entitled 'Transplant made me obsessed with chores', reported the case of a man who 'developed a cleaning obsession after the transplant of a cornea that he says "must have come from a woman"'. Having previously left household tasks to his partner, the man added: I can now notice every speck of dust and dirt and can't help but have a go at cleaning it up as I go along' (Cockcroft, 2009, p. 7).*

PC: OK. Carl?
Carl: Your attitude makes you different. Like yesterday, when we were doing those votes, not everybody got the same answer. People had different views on what was good and what was bad.
PC: That's right ... Christopher?
Christ. S.:   Even if you did have your heart changed, you'd still have your skin the same, so you'd still be the same person. And you couldn't really change all of you. You couldn't get all the rest of somebody else's body because your body would be somebody else.
                [Laughter]
PC: Right, let me give you this example. Joanna goes out to afternoon break and she's playing. She falls over on the yard and bangs her head on the concrete, and is knocked unconscious. When she wakes up, she can't remember who she is, what her name is. She can't remember any of you. She doesn't know who Miss G is. She doesn't know who I am and, what's more, she cannot even remember anything about her past life. Now, Roddy, is she the same person?

(Comment)   *Memory has also been advanced as a criterion of personal identity. See Abel (1976, pp. 191-192); Hospers (1989, pp.413-415); O'Hear (1985, pp. 243-253); Baggini (2002, pp.80-81).*

Roddy:	Yes.
PC:	So, if I said 'What's your name?' She says: 'I don't know.' How many brothers and sisters have you got?
___	She wouldn't be able to speak.
Joanna:	None.
PC:	None. Any sisters?
Joanna:	One.
PC:	Right, let's say, I'll ask her: 'How many sisters have you got?' And she says 'l don't know.' And say her [mother] comes to pick her up in the evening [and she says:] 'Come on now, Joanna, it's time to go home.' [Joanna says:] 'I don't know you, who are you?'
	[Laughter]
PC:	Is she still the same person? Because now... something [has] happened to the brain. You were saying to me before: 'If something happens to the body... if I get a new heart, I'm still the same person.' But now her attitudes are going to change. Let's say she previously liked vanilla ice-cream and I offered her some. She says: 'No, I can't stand that, I'll have some of that red stuff. What's that?', I say, 'Oh, strawberry, oh yes.' Whereas previously she'd really disliked strawberry. So, Carl, her attitudes have changed as a result of this fall. Is she not now a different person, Christopher?
Christ. S.:	No, because all that's happened is she's been knocked unconscious and she can't remember anything. The rest of her is still the same. It's just that the brain is not working that well.
	[Laughter]
PC:	Jenny?
Jenny:	Well, in about 30 or 40 years' time they will be able to change your whole body.
PC:	So, what point are you making there?
Jenny:	So, you won't have to be the same person.
PC:	OK. Listen to this example. Roddy also decided he is going to go out and play on the yard this afternoon, and, would you believe it, he falls over, like Joanna, and bangs his head on the concrete. Now, his condition is a little bit different. When he wakes up, this is what he says: 'My name is Thomas.'
	[Laughter]
PC:	How many brothers have you got, Roddy?
Roddy:	Two.
PC:	Two brothers; and how many sisters?
Roddy:	None.
PC:	None. Two brothers. 'My name is Thomas,' he says, 'and I have four brothers.'
___	And a sister.
___	And two cats.
PC:	And three sisters.
___	And a dog.
PC:	And, of course, Christopher, [who] is a very sensible boy, says: 'You must be joking. Your name is Roddy. You sit next to me in class. This afternoon we were discussing philosophy with Mr Costello.' He says: 'Who? Oh, I don't remember any of that. Anyway, I thought philosophy was something that you did at university. It can't be true [that] I've been learning philosophy all term with Mr Costello.' Now he believes his name is Thomas. He thinks he's got four brothers and three sisters. Joanna, hasn't he surely now become a different person?
Joanna:	No.
PC:	No? Why not? ... He names the brothers for me: Adam, Bill, Charlie and Dave. 'You should meet them. They're such nice fellows,' he says. Where do you live, Roddy?
Roddy:	65 High Street.
PC:	65, High Street. He says: 'I live in 108 New Street, and what's more, Jenny, you can come round for tea tonight.' Now, surely at this point, we would want to say, Ben... that Roddy has become a different person?

Roddy:	No.
PC:	Ruth?
Ruth:	If he couldn't remember anything, he wouldn't know that Jenny's name was Jenny.
PC:	No. That's true.
Christ. S.:	He could say: 'I'll invite Gertrude round to my house.'
PC:	Yes, he could ... Now, one more experiment. Let me see who I'm going to get to be in this experiment. Michael, stand up, and Katie, stand up. Now, let's say someone performed an experiment on these two ... And this is what happened as the result of the experiment. Katie's memories and attitudes, and, as you might say, Carl, philosophy of life, all transferred to Michael. Michael's attitudes and values and his philosophy of life transferred to Katie.
___	That happened in 'Laurel and Hardy'.
PC:	Yes it did happen in 'Laurel and Hardy', I remember that. Yes, now, what's your favourite colour?
Michael:	Blue.
PC:	That's your favourite colour now. And what's yours?
Katie:	Pink.
PC:	Yours is pink. And what's your favourite chocolate bar?
Michael:	'Dairy Milk'.
PC:	'Dairy Milk'. What's yours?
Katie:	'Kit-Kat' .
PC:	'Kit-Kat'. So, yours is 'Kit-Kat' and yours is 'Dairy Milk'. Now, if that had happened, and, say, someone was capable of swapping these persons' memories and attitudes and values and so forth. Would it not be now the case, that, although this person, to all of you, looks like Katie, she is really Michael because she thinks like Michael. She acts like Michael ... Now if that was the case, I know it's an hypothesis, it's not really factual. But if that could take place, would they not now be different people ... Chrit.?
Chrit.:	The brains would be different, but they'd still be the same ... They'd still look the same but they'd have different ways of thinking and different brains.
PC:	So, would they be the same person? This is what I want to know.
Terry:	They won't have different brains. The brains won't move like that.
___	Well the thoughts won't either.
PC:	Well, let's say we could have an experiment that would transfer these thoughts. Let's just say it was possible. Christopher, would they not now be different people?
Christ. 1.:	Well, I'd say: 'Yes', because, well, they've both been changed round, so Katie would be Michael and Michael would be Katie.
PC	You think that. What do you think, Jenny?
Jenny:	Their DNA won't have changed.

(Comment)   *Jenny's argument also recognises the importance of the physical aspect in determining a person's individuation. However, in being concerned with the basic biochemical structure which causes such individuation, she focuses on the absolute determinant of external characteristics.*

PC:	What's DNA?
Jenny:	It's the genetics inside your body.
PC:	Excellent. And what difference would that make, Jenny?
Jenny:	They'd still look the same.
PC:	They'd still look the same. So, even though we had to get used to the fact that Katie's favourite chocolate bar was 'Kit-Kat' now, and that her favourite colour was blue, when we look at her we'd still say: 'Well, that's Katie. That doesn't look at all like Michael ... And vice versa. OK. ... One last question needs very careful thought. If a witch came along or a warlock - what is a warlock?

___	Is it just like a little man?
___	A creature in the shape of a man?
PC:	Perhaps. Eve?
Eve:	A male witch.
PC:	A male witch. You see them in fantasy stories. If one of them came along, a warlock or a witch, and turned you into a frog, would you be the same person?

(Comment)   *At this stage, the presumption is that the frog still displays the thought patterns of a human being. John Hospers (1989, pp. 410-411) discusses a similar example concerning a man who turns into a monkey. In addition, Franz Kafka's story* The Metamorphosis *(in Glatzer, 1988), focuses on someone who changes into a beetle while retaining his original personality traits. See also Baggini (2002, pp. 79-83).*

Chorus:	Yeah.
PC:	Carl?
Carl:	Yeah, it's just like when you changed your hairstyle and your clothes. You just changed into a frog.
___	Yeah, it don't matter. You've just turned into a frog.
PC:	But you jump like a frog, don't you, Carl?
Carl:	That's because your muscles have changed.
PC:	But you're still the same person?
Mark:	You're the same person. It's just that you've shrunk, changed the colour of your skin, lost all your hair and …
PC:	What else?
Mark:	… don't wear any fancy clothes.
PC:	Now, after all of those changes, Mark, you tell me that you're still the same person?
Mark:	Yeah.
PC:	What do you think, Jenny?
Jenny:	Your thoughts haven't changed.
PC:	Your thoughts haven't changed. Let's say that not only did this witch turn you into a frog, but she also gave you the thought patterns of a frog.
___	Oh no!
PC:	Whatever they might be. Chrit.?
Chrit.:	I think you are completely different, then.
___	I don't.
PC:	What if she has given you the thought patterns of a frog, but left you physically exactly as you are so you are thinking like a frog but you look like yourselves? Chrit. ?
Chrit.;	I don't think you're different then.
PC:	So, you need physical change and mental change. Jenny?
Jenny:	If she gives you the thought of a frog and you're still as you are, you haven't actually changed - just your insides.
PC:	OK. Paul? …
Paul:	Right, well just say, like if you… take everything out of my body and put it into, say, Dean's body? …
PC:	Yes.
Paul:	… and take all his things, and put it into mine. We'll be completely different people, but we'll be under the same name.
PC:	OK.
Scott:	Mr Costello.
PC:	Yes, Scott.
Scott:	When you've changed your personality into a frog, but you're still human, all it does, it makes your brain think that that's a frog. But you're still the same person.

PC: Last comment from Jenny.

Jenny: Well, to change the whole of you, you'd have to get your DNA out, and work out all the patterns and what they mean, and then stick it back in in a different way.

Developing Communities of Inquiry in the UK: Prospect

I would argue that communities of inquiry in the UK may be further developed within the context of the following key themes:

- The increasing prominence of (and importance attributed to) teachers' research projects.
- The growth of organisations that aim to promote the teaching and learning of thinking skills (including Philosophy).
- The prevalence of publications in this field.
- New directions for research and practice.

As regards the first of these, the relationship between research and teachers' professional development is a close one. In recent years, a welcome and much-needed debate has taken place about the nature of continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers and how this might be improved. For example, the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) (2002), in a document entitled 'Continuing Professional Development: An Entitlement for All', offered draft advice to the National Assembly for Wales concerning a range of issues. The GTCW argued that "all teachers should be entitled to high quality and well-planned CPD provision throughout their career" (para. 19). It is noted (para. 14) that: "CPD activities take many forms. These range from attending courses to school-based learning and undertaking action research."

Two excellent examples of action research projects to support teachers' CPD are Best Practice Research Scholarships (BPRS) in England and Teacher Research Scholarships (TRS) in Wales. As regards BPRS, qualified teachers currently working in schools (including nursery, independent and non-maintained schools) have been eligible to apply and funding of up to £2500 has been awarded to support the development of research projects that focus on classroom practice. As a condition of proposals being accepted, a tutor or mentor must be appointed to assist teachers in completing research projects successfully. Offering some expertise in research methodology, the tutor/mentor is required to make a formal statement indicating how and when he/she will support projects being undertaken, as well as to monitor, evaluate and help to disseminate research findings.

The GTCW's TRS scheme commenced in 2001-2002. Funding of up to £3000 has been made available to teachers to enable them to undertake action research projects, supported (as in BPRS) by a tutor/mentor. I have acted as a mentor to two groups of teachers who received GTCW scholarships. The first group, based within Wrexham Education Authority, undertook action research projects in a broad range of areas. The second, also sponsored by the National Union of Teachers (NUT, 2003), completed projects on the teaching and learning of thinking skills (including Philosophy) in infant and secondary schools. This involved attendance at two residential seminars, where teachers were introduced to aspects of research methodology, issues relating to thinking skills, the development of research projects, data collection and analysis, and writing research reports (Costello, 2003; 2007c).

The GTCW TRS scheme was evaluated in two ways. Firstly, three comprehensive reports were produced by Egan and James (2002, 2003, 2004). The first of these involved the development of an evaluation pro forma for teacher researchers; a questionnaire concerning the effectiveness of the scheme, which was sent to their headteachers; a questionnaire for tutors/mentors; and a series of interviews with teacher researchers, headteachers and line-managers. The report indicated the following benefits to teachers from undertaking action research projects (2002, p. 15): the development of individual needs and skills; motivational and career factors; engagement with good practice; time to develop reflective practice; work-based learning; working collaboratively with other professionals; and learning and teaching gains.

In addition, I undertook my own evaluation of the impact of TRS on enhancing teachers' professional development (Costello, 2003). Following the evaluation pro forma produced by Egan and James, I asked two questions:

- How effective do you consider the chosen activity to be in enhancing your professional knowledge, skills and expertise? Please circle your response (1 = very effective; 4 = very ineffective)
- How could you further develop the work you have undertaken? Please specify.

All respondents indicated that their chosen activity was 'very effective' in enhancing their knowledge, skills and expertise. Written comments included the following:

- It has made me look at what I do 'day in, day out'. I haven't really been doing anything new, but I have become aware of what I'm doing and have looked at the results of my strategies in the teaching and learning process. I have probably become even more aware of the needs of the pupils I teach and the need to continue to look for new ideas. I have most certainly become more confident in myself and it has given me the 'feel good factor'. I would like to move on...
- Time to read and research. Networking and sharing practice. Focus on mentoring: I feel confident to undertake more research. Focus on learning and teaching in general: I have adapted ideas from target groups to other classes.
- The research project has been excellent in enhancing my professional development, as prior to this I was not even aware of what thinking skills were, let alone being able to implement them in my classroom. It is also an opportunity to undertake research which is directly related to improving teaching and thus learning.
- Very effective. The first course produced new ideas. The research process helped me to develop thinking skills strategies and spread them through the Faculty. It improved my skills and those of other teachers within the Faculty.

In the context of thinking skills, responses to the second question included the following:
- I wish to develop further thinking skills strategies within the classroom and perhaps extend to a whole school approach across key stages. It would also be useful to do another research project which could build on the one already undertaken – perhaps to implement thinking skills across the curriculum.
- I would like to form a working group within the school to develop thinking skills activities across the curriculum, in order to spread good practice.
- I now want to continue my research and spread good practice across the whole school. Thinking skills should be a key area in whole-school curriculum development. I personally would like to initiate this and research my findings.

In recent years in the UK, we have seen the development and growth of organisations that aim to promote the teaching and learning of thinking skills (including Philosophy). For example, the Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (http://sapere.org.uk), Dialogue Works (http://www.dialogueworks.co.uk) and the Council for Education in World Citizenship – Wales (http://cewc-cymru.org.uk), offer training courses and resources for teachers. The success of these organisations is linked, in part, to the increasing attention now being paid by policy makers to developing children's thinking skills. In the context of a revision of the school curriculum, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has implemented a 'Developing Thinking and Assessment for Learning' programme, in partnership with schools and Local Education Authorities. In its document Why Develop Thinking and Assessment for Learning in the Classroom?, WAG (2007, p.4) suggests that 'Metacognition (thinking about thinking) is at the heart of the learning and teaching process' (see also WAG, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c).

I have already referred above to the increasing prevalence of publications in the field of thinking skills and philosophy. In addition to books on these themes, it should be noted that teachers in the UK also have access to

the journal *Teaching Thinking and Creativity* (http://www.teachingtimes.com), the central aim of which is to raise standards of teaching and learning by developing children's thinking skills.

The importance of the internet in the lives of young people has been highlighted in recent research, which indicated that: (1) an estimated 71% of 16 to 24-year-olds have internet access; (2) 75% of those questioned within this age group said that they 'could not live without it' (Wray, 2009, p.10). Given this, and in looking ahead to new directions for research and development, one promising area should be mentioned: the role of new technologies in developing communities of inquiry (see Haste, 2009a, 2009b; Howard (forthcoming)). As Haste (2009a) suggests, such technologies:

> enable young people not only to access but to modify and integrate information, to do so collaboratively, and also to enter virtual space in which role-playing and the negotiation of alternative worlds with others require intensive concentration and considerable cognitive, social and affective skills. The data suggest that such activities can have a positive effect on civic awareness and agency; their implications for moral awareness are being explored. However, a second implication is the profoundly different form of education as praxis, in which the child is an active agent, not the passive target of teaching. This revolution must be taken seriously.

Concluding Comments

In conclusion, I suggest that the development of communities of inquiry in the UK has been, and continues to be, an important endeavour. Looking back to where we began in the 1980s, it is pleasing to see that the substantial work of individuals, groups and organisations in this field has made a substantial impact on practice in schools and has been recognised by policy makers as being vital to pupils' educational and personal development. As the above dialogue demonstrates, it is essential to improve the quality of children's philosophical reasoning and argument if they are to emerge from compulsory schooling as reflective citizens who are willing and able to play a full part in helping to shape the society to which they belong.

Appendix 1:   What Makes You You?[3]

- Would you be the same person if you changed your hairstyle/mode of dress?[4]
- If you were given a new heart, would you be the same person?
- If someone is a liar/thief and then changes for the better, is he/she still the same person?
- If I decided to go on a diet and a month later I said: 'I've lost two stones, I feel like a new person,' am I?
- Robert falls over on the school yard and bangs his head on the concrete. When he wakes up, he is unable to remember who he is or anything about his past life. Is he the same person?
- If Robert wakes up and says his name is Thomas and that he has three sisters (whereas Robert has none) and goes to St. Paul's School (whereas Robert goes to St. Philip's School), is he the same person?

Endnotes
1.   The term 'Philosophy for Children' refers to the teaching programme devised by Matthew Lipman and his colleagues at the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC); philosophy with children' refers to other (non-IAPC) programmes and approaches to teaching and learning in this field.
2.   This dialogue was presented in (Costello, 1995), as part of a book chapter which focused on the contribution made by the teaching of philosophy in schools to the theory and practice of argument. Looking at the dialogue again, I found it a useful exercise to consider critically the comments made in the text. As is usually the case with philosophical thinking, it was clear that some additional commentary was required and so this has been added. For the benefit of readers who are interested in considering the key philosophical themes being addressed, I have also drawn upon some more recent examples from the literature.
3.   This exercise examines the philosophical problem of personal identity (Madigan, 2009), which falls within the broader area of philosophy of mind (Heil, 2004; Kim, 2006; Searle, 2004). As regards the first ques-

tion, see Abel (1976, pp. 186-187).

4.   See Abel (1976, pp.186-187).

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