Christ the King Catholic Primary.
'A Thinking School'

Do not confine your children to your own learning. For they have been born in another time. *Hebrew Proverb*

A Thinking School is *'an educational community in which all members share a common commitment to giving regular careful thought to everything that takes place. This will involve both students and staff learning how to think reflectively, critically and creatively, and to employing these skills and techniques in the co-construction of a meaningful curriculum and associated activities*. (Burden, 2006)

The benefits are shown not only in the high levels of achievement and the enthusiasm for lifelong learning but also in the ways in which all members of the community interact with and show consideration for each other.

The understanding of the development of children's thinking and learning skills has been an area of growing interest across the world in recent years. As Robert Fisher (2005) writes, *'thinking skills are not mysterious entities existing somewhere in the mind. Nor are they like mental muscles that have a physical presence in the brain. What the term refers to is the human capacity to think in conscious ways to achieve certain purposes. Such processes include remembering, questioning, forming concepts, planning, reasoning, imagining, solving problems, making decisions and judgements, translating thoughts into words and so on'.*

Your child is taught to use a number thinking skills strategies that are used to enhance their learning. These strategies are not an end in themselves but are 'tools' to support their effective life-long learning.
Once confident in using the strategies they are then apply them appropriately in all curriculum areas.



<u>The following is an outline of some of the thinking tools we use at our school from Reception to Year 6.</u>

If you want to find out more:

- Talk to your children
- Come into school and talk to your child's teacher.
- Attend the curriculum information meetings through out the year.

Developing Good Learning Habits Using Habits of Mind.

"A habit is like a cable:
we weave it each day and at last we can not break it.".

By nurturing and valuing these habits or attitudes our pupils develop positive dispositions to learning that enable them to become confident life-long learners

The 16 Habits of Mind identified by Costa and Kallick include:

- Persisting
- Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- Managing impulsivity
- Gathering data through all senses
- Listening with understanding and empathy
- Creating, imagining, innovating
- Thinking flexibly
- Responding with wonderment and awe
- Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
- Taking responsible risks
- Striving for accuracy
- Finding humour
- Questioning and posing problems
- Thinking interdependently
- Applying past knowledge to new situations
- Remaining open to continuous learning

See http://www.habits-of-mind.net/ for further information

Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children (also known as P4C or P for C) was developed more than twenty years ago by Dr. Matthew Lipman. The central idea of Philosophy for Children is the community of inquiry where pupils work together to generate and then answer their own questions about the philosophical issues contained in written materials or a wide range of other resources. Thinking in the community of inquiry is critical, creative, collaborative and caring.

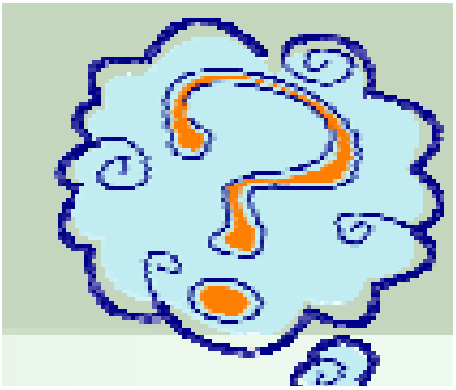
Philosophy taps children's natural curiosity and sense of wonder. It engages them in the search for meaning and enriches and extends their understanding. It strengthens thinking

and reasoning skills and builds self-esteem. It helps to develop the qualities that make for good judgement in everyday life.

Philosophy for children improves critical, creative and rigorous thinking. Participants develop their higher order thinking skills and the attitudes and dispositions necessary for good thinking. They improve their communication skills and their abilities to work with others. The pupils become accustomed to asking each other for reasons and opinions, to listening carefully to each other, to building on each others ideas.

Skills learnt in the community of inquiry are transferable. Philosophy for children enables students to make bridges between the various things they learn, thus making the curriculum more meaningful to them. Both the co-operative skills and the thinking skills developed in Philosophy for Children contribute to improved social interactions and greater social responsibility.

See www.sapere.org.uk for further information on Philosophy for Children



Parallel Thinking with De Bono's Six Thinking Hats

Edward de Bono is regarded by many as the leading authority in the field of creative thinking, innovation and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. He is equally renowned for his development of the Six Thinking Hats. The Six Thinking Hats method provides a practical method of constructive thinking. Each thinking type of thinking is identified with a coloured hat as shown below.

Six Thinking Hats is a simple, effective tool that helps all involved to be using the same type of thinking at any one time, which is far more productive, focused, and mindfully involved.

The Six Thinking Hats:



The White Hat
Information available and needed



The Red Hat
Intuition, feelings, and hunches



The Black Hat
Cautions and difficulties
Where things might go wrong



The Yellow Hat
Values and benefits
Why something might work



The Green Hat
Alternatives and creative ideas



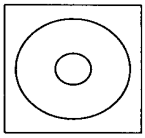
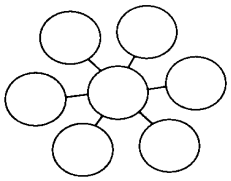
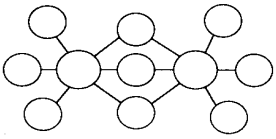
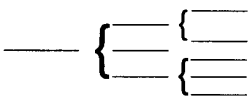
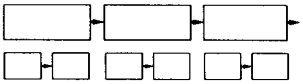
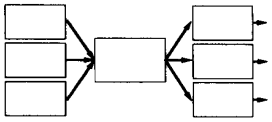
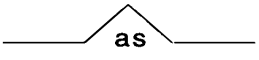
The Blue Hat
Managing the thinking process

We use thinking hast to discuss topics, solve problems, explore alternatives, reach decisions, research, organise and write reports, brainstorm

See http://www.edwdebono.com for further information

Using Thinking Maps

Thinking Maps are a set of eight visual tools provide a consistent way for teachers to present their existing curriculum in a more meaningful way. For pupils they provide a way to use, and find information, to plan and reflect upon their learning in a way that processes information the way the brain does.

Questions from Texts, Teachers and Tests	Thinking Processes	Thinking Maps as Tools
How are you defining this thing or idea? What is the context? What is your frame of reference?	**DEFINING IN CONTEXT**	Circle Map 
How are you describing this thing? Which adjectives would best describe this thing?	**DESCRIBING QUALITIES**	Bubble Map 
What are the similar and different qualities of these things? Which qualities do you value most? Why?	**COMPARING and CONTRASTING**	Double Bubble Map 
What are the main ideas, supporting ideas, and details in this information?	**CLASSIFYING**	Tree Map 
What are the component parts and subparts of this whole physical object?	**PART-WHOLE**	Brace Map 
What happened? What is the sequence of events? What are the substages?	**SEQUENCING**	Flow Map 
What are the causes and effects of this event? What might happen next?	**CAUSE and EFFECT**	Multi-Flow Map 
What is the analogy being used? What is the guiding metaphor?	**SEEING ANALOGIES**	Bridge Map 

1-9

More information can be found on www.mapthemind.com

Benjamin Bloom : Developing Questioning



CREATING

REMEMBERING

Benjamin Bloom identified six levels of questioning , from the simple recall or recognition of facts- the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract levels of questioning that involves the greater thinking. Research has shown that teachers tend to ask questions in the "knowledge" category 80% to 90% of the time. These questions are not bad, but using them all the time places ceiling on our pupils' learning. Questions at the higher level require much more "brain power" and a more extensive and elaborate answer.

At Christ the King both teachers and pupils use the categories of questioning that Bloom identified and were updated by Anderson in the 1990's to ensure that we challenge our learning. The different levels of thinking are also used in the KS2 homework projects.

Below are the six question categories as revised by Anderson.

- **REMEMBERING-** The ability to retell or describe information or data.
- **UNDERSTANDING**-The ability to interpret information
- **APPLYING-**Being able to apply the knowledge in new situations.
- **ANALYSING** - Being able to interpret the knowledge, apply principles and relationships in a given situation.
- **EVALUATING**- Being able to draw together information and data in different formats and develop new or improved models of understanding.
- **CREATING** -To reflect on what has been processed and judge or verify its merit.

The TASC Wheel

Thinking actively in a Social Context (TASC) is a well researched universal thinking skills framework developed by Belle Wallace to support investigation, problem solving, and finding information.

Using the TASC framework helps our learners to:

*Work independently

*Develop skills of research, investigation and problem solving that can be used across the curriculum.

*Develop a positive sense of self as an active learner.

*Demonstrate their abilities using the full range of multiple intelligences

* Develop skills of self assessment.

