

FROM THE HEADTEACHER...

Gazing at my calendar, I see that those of you lucky enough to have an advent calendar will be half way through your daily dose of chocolate which means the Autumn Term must nearly be at an end. We have had a busy term as always and looking back I'm amazed we managed to fit everything in! I think everyone will be ready for a break over Christmas and I truly hope our children will let us have at least one decent lie in.

One bit of staffing news: sadly we say goodbye to Mrs Kirk at the end of this term. Mrs Kirk has been a wonderful teaching assistant in the morning and, for the last few terms, has run our School Council and award-winning JRSO team. We wish her the very best of luck at her new school! From January, Julie-Anne King will be supporting 5CW in the mornings.

We return next year on Wednesday 4 January for the Spring term. For now I would like to thank you all for your support this term and to wish you and your families a Happy Christmas with my best wishes for 2017!

Iain C. Gilmore

CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

As I hope everyone knows by now, our concert is this **Friday 16 December at 2pm in St Mary's Church** and everyone is invited. The children will be performing 13 contemporary songs telling the Biblical story of Christmas – I'm certain you will have had a preview of some of them at home already...

After the singing, there will be a collection to support St. Mary's voucher scheme and there is a link on our Facebook page giving you more details of this. The concert will last around 45 minutes and afterwards you are free to take your children home but please make sure you sign them out with a teacher or Mrs Paine will not let you leave the church!



THINKING SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

We joined the Thinking Schools Academy in November 2014 joining The Portsmouth Academy who were already members and Newbridge Junior School who joined at the same time as us. Part of our commitment was to introduce thinking as part of what we teach and to be recognised for this work by getting our formal Thinking School Accreditation.

We have been working really hard over the last couple of years on this and in February next year, we are going to be visited by a member of Exeter University to check on the work we do and hopefully get our official accreditation – the second school in Portsmouth to do this.



Some of you have asked for some more information on the thinking tools we use and so we hope you find the following useful!

HABITS OF MIND

Habits of Mind are characteristics of successful learners according to research. In other words, if you look at what successful learners do, how they approach problems, or how they behave in certain situations, they found all these things in common. They are written in scientific language but the meaning is straight forward. So far we have looked at eight Habits of Mind:

Managing impulsivity

Taking a breath before losing your temper or stopping when things go wrong

Persisting

Never giving up even when things are getting tough or going wrong

Questioning and posing problems

Look at things in a new way and finding the right question to ask

Applying past knowledge to new situations

Thinking about what you already know and using that in a new situation

Finding Humour

When it does go wrong, finding a way to raise a smile so it doesn't feel like the end of the world

Remaining open to continuous learning

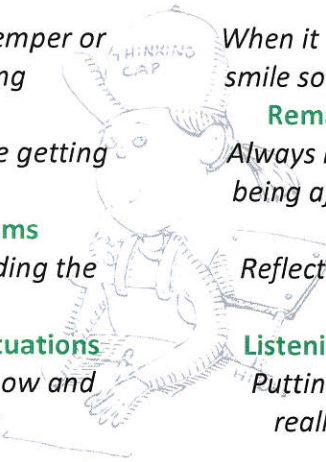
Always looking for new things to learn and not being afraid to say you don't know something

Thinking about Thinking

Reflecting on what you've done and thinking about how well it went

Listening with understanding and empathy

Putting yourself in someone else's shoes to really understand what they are saying

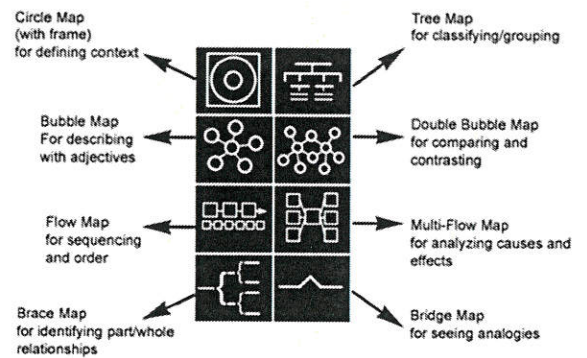


Again ask your children about these and don't be afraid to use the scientific words – they know them!

THINKING MAPS

Thinking Maps are different ways of presenting ideas or information on a page. These help thinkers organise their thoughts and so be able to answer questions or problems put to them.

For example, a flow map helps you work out the order in which to do something (especially useful when learning something like long multiplication) or a double bubble map helps you find what is the same and what is different between two ideas (especially useful when looking at story characters). There are eight thinking maps in total: CIRCLE MAP, BUBBLE MAP, FLOW MAP, BRACE MAP, TREE MAP, DOUBLE BUBBLE MAP, MULTI-FLOW MAP and BRIDGE MAP. Ask your children about them and when they use them in their learning!



DRESS LIKE A LEARNER DAY

To celebrate our work on thinking, we invite everyone to dress up as their favourite learner or thinker on **Friday 13 January**. They might choose a hero of theirs who has learned a new skill or been successful in a new career; they might choose a character from history who is famous for a new discovery or a way of working; they might choose someone who displays a particular Habit of Mind. Talk to your children and help them decide!

2016-17 DATES

Spring Term 2017 – Wednesday 4 January - Friday 7 April - Half Term: Monday 20 – Monday 27 February (back Tuesday)

Summer Term 2017 - Monday 24 April - Tuesday 25 July - Half Term: Monday 29 May – Monday 5 June (back Tuesday)

INSET DAYS – Monday 27 February and Monday 5 June

STOP PRESS...SPECIAL SPACE DAY DINNER MENU ON THURSDAY 19th JANUARY...GREAT TIME TO TRY OUT A SCHOOL DINNER!