

Greens Norton C of E Primary School



Policy for Thinking

'In our school everyone can join in with everything we offer.'

Approved by

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Chair of Governors

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Introduction

At Greens Norton CE Primary School we believe that thinking plays a vital role in a child's academic and social development. Children are taught to use thinking skills to focus on knowing how as well as knowing what. A variety of strategies will be taught to enable them to find a solution to an unknown problem.

The five main areas of thinking skills used in our school are:

- Information processing skills
- Reasoning skills
- Enquiry skills
- Creative thinking skills
- Evaluation skills

In every lesson a child is encouraged to think independently in response to the work, irrespective of subject, planned by the teacher.

Information Processing Skills

These skills enable a child to locate and collect relevant information, to sort, classify, sequence, compare and contrast and to analyse relationships.

To develop this type of thinking a teacher may ask "What makes a diary different to a narrative?" "What material would be best to keep heat in?"

Reasoning Skills

These enable children to give reasons for opinions and actions, to draw inferences and make deductions. The children need to use precise language to explain what they think and be able to make judgements and decisions informed by reasons and evidence.

For example, in Geography, after studying the location of certain towns or villages, a question may be asked, "Why do people build towns and villages by rivers?"

Enquiry Skills

These skills allow a child to ask relevant questions or pose new problems, which lead to planning and ways of research to predict outcomes and improve ideas.

For example, investigate work, particularly in science, a question such as "What sort of sandwich is healthy?" would require these skills.

Creative Thinking Skills

Children using these skills will be able to apply imagination, extend ideas, suggest hypotheses and look for alternative outcomes. Typical questions a teacher may ask to develop this type of thinking would be 'What do you think?' 'What ideas have you got?'

Evaluation Skills

Encouragement is needed to judge the value of what they have heard, read or made by themselves or others. Questions used to develop these skills 'Do you believe that, and why?' 'What worked well?'

In order to create a secure learning environment, pupils need: -

- To be open
- To think for themselves
- To be able to put forward ideas knowing that their input will be valued equally by their peers.

Implementing Thinking Skills

Key strategies will be used by teachers to develop independent and creative thinking.

1. Wait and think
Teachers will allow thinking time after a question for pupil response.
2. Think-pair-share
Teachers will allow individual thinking time, discussion with a partner before opening up a class discussion.
3. Ask for more
Ask 'follow-ups' e.g., 'why?' 'Do you agree?' 'Give me an example'
4. Withhold judgement
Respond to answers in a non-judgemental way e.g. 'Thank you' 'That's interesting' 'Can you think of alternatives?'
5. Play devils advocate
Present a different point of view and ask for responses e.g. 'Do you agree or disagree?'
6. Encourage questioning
Invite pupils to ask questions, or to write about what puzzles them. Value genuine challenging questions, share and discuss.
7. Think about thinking
Ask pupils to think about their thinking and learning e.g. 'What thinking have you been doing?' 'What have you found hard?' 'What have you learnt?'

Children will be made aware of the thinking process in each lesson and be given opportunities to apply their thinking skills in a real way.

In the guided reading sessions, key questions are posed to promote and enrich a child's thinking and understanding of a text.