

Oaklands Junior School



6th September 2013

Dear Parents,

Thinking Schools

Headteacher:
Miss S Charnley

I am writing to inform you about an exciting strategy that we are developing this year. *Thinking Schools* is an initiative that puts thinking at the heart of learning and the curriculum. It is used to promote independent and co-operative learning skills, high levels of achievement and both enjoyment and satisfaction in learning. 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.*' (Burden, 2006)

While we value knowledge and exam results, we also feel it is important to challenge the children's minds and creativity. We want them to be able to transfer skills from different areas and apply past knowledge, having the opportunity to reflect on their work and their thinking. As a staff, we hope that these skills will stand the children in excellent stead in the future, giving them increased confidence to use these strategies and techniques as they move on to the world of secondary school, higher education and employment.

So how are we hoping to do this? Over the next few years, we plan to introduce a range of thinking strategies that can be encompassed into all the different curriculum subjects, running alongside our focussed Thinking Skills programme.

We would like to invite you to come and find out more about *Thinking Schools*. We plan to hold a 'Thinking Week', 30th September – 4th October. On Tuesday 1st October at 7.00pm, there will be a Parents' Information evening, explaining how we are introducing the concept to the children, demonstrating some of the tools that we have introduced and showing how you can be involved with this. We value our parents greatly as part of our 'educational community' and feel that, the more closely we can work together on this, the greater benefit there will be to our children.

On the same day, we are holding a 'dress up' day at school. The theme is 'Come as the answer to a question!' Please do not feel you have to go to any trouble or cost with costumes – the children can wear anything, as long as they can create a question to which they represent an answer. We will be talking about this with the children at school but thought it would be good to give you a bit of a heads up on this one! A few examples could be:

- Snow White – Who is the fairest in the land?
- Pirate – Who plunders the Seven Seas?
- Gareth Bale – Who holds the world transfer record?
- Mount Everest (!) – What is the highest mountain in the world?

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on 1st October and to setting off on our Thinking Journey together.

Yours faithfully,

S.M. Charnley

Miss. S. Charnley (Headteacher)

Mrs. A. Penstone (Co-ordinator for Thinking and Learning)



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Thinking Schools Information Evening

Child's name(s) _____ Class _____

I can / cannot attend the Thinking Schools presentation on 1st October.

Number of people attending _____

Signed _____