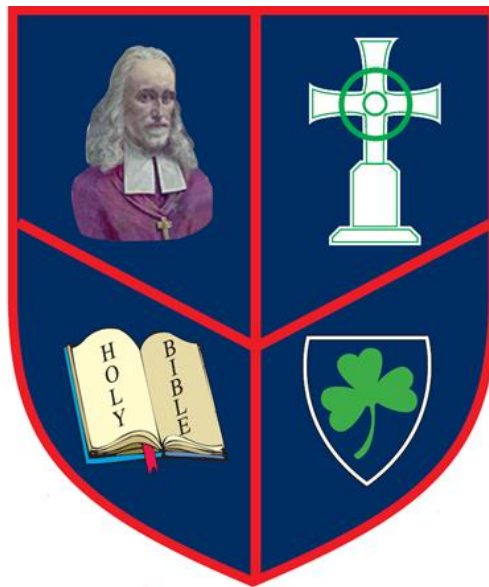


# Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities



September 2023

Board of Governor (Chair): \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

# *Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities*

At the heart of the Curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of pupils' skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating effectively in society. By engaging pupils in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum, we, as teachers can develop pupils' personal and interpersonal skills, capabilities and dispositions, and their ability to think both creatively and critically.

## *Aims and Objectives – September 2023* →

- Understand the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TS&PC) framework;
- Identify the practical strategies needed to develop aspects of the framework;
- Plan effectively for the development and progression of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities through UICT; and
- Filter Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities effectively through other areas of the curriculum.

## *The Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Framework*

Developing skills and capabilities is important for several reasons. They:

- Draw attention to the processes of learning and not just the products;
- Are more likely to engage pupils in active rather than passive learning;
- Enable pupils to go beyond the mere recall of information and to develop deeper understanding of topics;
- Create positive dispositions and habits for learning; and
- They provide a new range of criteria against which pupils can evaluate their progress in learning.

Essentially, they enable pupils to learn how to learn.

## *What Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Should We Develop?*

A distinctive feature of the current framework is that it integrates a range of different types of thinking skills and learning dispositions with collaborative learning (working with others) and independent learning (self-management and taking responsibility). Most of our thinking is developed informally as we engage in both everyday and school activities. Developing thinking skills means designing learning so that pupils will think more skillfully than they would otherwise do – to engage them in better quality thinking. Thus, thinking skills are tools that help pupils go beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge in order to deepen their understanding and apply ideas, generate new

possibilities and make decisions as well as to plan, monitor and evaluate their progress. Personal and interpersonal skills and capabilities underpin success in all aspects of life. Developing personal capabilities means creating opportunities for pupils to experiment with ideas, take initiative, learn from mistakes, work collaboratively and become more self-directed in their learning. It is important, therefore, that pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence are explicitly fostered along with their ability to manage their own emotions, to interact effectively with others and eventually to regulate and enhance their own learning. In this way, Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities links closely with Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at Key Stages 1 and 2 and Learning for Life and Work at Key Stage 3.

## *What Kinds of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Are in the Framework?*

Five strands are included in the framework. These are:

- Managing Information;
- Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making;
- Being Creative;
- Working with Others; and
- Self-Management.

### *Managing Information*

*(Asking, Accessing, Selecting, Recording, Integrating, Communicating)*

The purpose of this strand is to develop your pupils' abilities in an information intensive environment. Pupils should discover how to: ask focused questions; plan and set goals and break a task into sub-tasks; use their own and others' ideas to locate sources of information; select, classify, compare and evaluate information; select the most appropriate method for a task; use a range of methods for collating, recording and representing information; and communicate with a sense of audience and purpose.

### *Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making*

*(Searching for Meaning, Deepening Understanding, Coping with Challenges)*

The purpose of this strand is to engage your pupils in active learning so that they can go beyond the mere recall of factual information and the routine application of procedures. You should help your pupils discover how to: sequence, order, classify, and make comparisons; make predictions, examine evidence, and distinguish fact from opinion; make links between cause and effect; justify methods, opinions and conclusions; generate possible solutions, try out alternative approaches, and evaluate

outcomes; examine options and weigh up pros and cons; use different types of questions; and make connections between learning in different contexts.

## *Being Creative*

*(Imagining, Generating, Inventing, Taking Risks for Learning)*

The purpose of this strand is to encourage your pupils' personal responses. Curiosity, exploration, experimentation and invention are important elements of being creative and should be integrated into learning across the curriculum along with the development of knowledge and understanding. You should help your pupils discover how to: seek out questions to explore and problems to solve; experiment with ideas and questions; make new connections between ideas/information; learn from and value other people's ideas; make ideas real by experimenting with different designs, actions, and outcomes; challenge the routine method; value the unexpected or surprising; see opportunities in mistakes and failures; and take risks for learning.

## *Working with Others*

*(Being Collaborative, Being Sensitive to Others' Feelings, Being Fair and Responsible)*

This strand enables your pupils to engage in collaborative activities and to make the most of their learning when working with others. To do this, pupils must develop the confidence and willingness to join in, have the social skills required for working in face-to-face groups, show empathy, and develop a more general social perspective. They must also appreciate some of the aspects of group dynamics and the roles that can be assumed in groups. You should help your pupils discover how to: listen actively and share opinions; develop routines of turn-taking, sharing and cooperating; give and respond to feedback; understand how actions and words affect others; adapt their behaviour and language to suit different people and situations; take personal responsibility for work with others and evaluate their own contribution to the group; be fair; respect the views and opinions of others and reach agreements using negotiation and compromise; and suggest ways of improving their approach to working collaboratively.

## *Self-Management*

*(Evaluating Strengths and Weaknesses, Setting Goals and Targets, Managing and Regulating Self)*

The Self-Management strand helps your pupils become more self-directed, so that they can manage their learning in new situations and in the longer term. To do this, they need to become knowledgeable about themselves as pupils, be more aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses, consider how they feel about learning, and identify their interests and their limitations.