



The Four Cornerstones of Thomas's Academy

Theory into Practice

Be Kind: The Thomas's Schools have been successfully championing 'Values Education' for many years. The Academy follows the same well-developed set of values that underpin the curriculum at Thomas's. These values (kindness, courtesy, honesty, respect, independence, confidence, leadership and humility) are being further developed through the 'Inspiring Living' programme at Thomas's, and the Academy intends to support in this development. The AS Tracking system, originally used by Thomas's schools, to enable an accurate assessment of children's social and emotional development is also now being implemented at The Academy.

Further information about the Thomas's Values can be found at: <http://www.thomas-s.co.uk/Values>

Information about AS Tracking can be found at: <http://humanecology-education.co.uk/>

Learn to Learn: Thomas's Academy has been developing an approach intended to enable children to become better learners based on the work of Bill Lucas & Guy Claxton on 'Building Learning Power', and Carol Dweck's 'Growth Mindset'. Our 5 Learning Attitudes: Be Reflective, Be Inquisitive, Be Creative, Be Collaborative & Be Positive (Resilient) are well-embedded and understood by all children. This approach has increased the children's ability to understand how they can improve their own ability to learn. The next phase of this project is to develop more pupil leadership within this approach through our 'Learning Council', and to enable teachers to weave together dual-objective lessons that focus on both 'what' will be learned and 'how' it will be learned.

More information on these approaches can be found at: <http://www.buildinglearningpower.co.uk/> and at <http://mindsetonline.com/>

Think Globally: The International Primary Curriculum provides a creative, skills-based curriculum that is relevant to our pupils. The IPC continually remains in development to ensure a current and highly relevant curriculum. No one can properly predict the nature of work that will be available for today's primary age children by the time they are adults. Many of the jobs they will have simply don't yet exist, especially in the fields of ICT, technology and science. So the principle of the IPC is to focus on personal, academic and international learning that will prepare children, wherever they may live, for the world of tomorrow.

Fundamental to the IPC approach to learning is a clear progression in skill development. This even applies to the personal learning goals which emphasise adaptability, resilience, cooperation and respect and which, as a result of progressive skill development, help children to become able and inspired learners. As for the international context, it's not just an add-on. International-mindedness is embedded into all IPC learning to ensure that children grow up with a very clear global understanding. More information about the IPC can be found at: <http://www.greatlearning.com/ipc/>

Create Beauty: The work of Ron Berger at the Harvard Graduate School of Education has received particular attention in the UK recently, especially through the development of his 'Beautiful Work' ideas at School 21 in Stratford. The Thomas's Academy also takes inspiration from this approach, expecting all children to focus over extended periods of time to produce work of real beauty and depth. We aim to help children to develop the persistence and resilience required to produce exceptional outcomes, and we provide time for children to refine their work, with a particular focus on children working collaboratively to critique and improve their work together.

Further information about Ron Berger's work can be found at:

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/deeper-learning-student-work-ron-berger>

Further information about School 21 can be found at: <http://school21.org>

And Finally, in addition to the Cornerstones... are the building blocks...

Joint Practice Development: The Academy provides teachers with structured opportunities to analyse learning within each other's classrooms and to develop innovative approaches collaboratively. More than a further Theoretical Cornerstone, Joint Practice Development is the means by which Thomas's Academy will become a 'learning institution'. As New King's, we have been engaging with Lesson Study for the past 2 years and undertook a pioneering project led by Peter Dudley, a leading expert in Lesson Study, in partnership with Camden Education Authority and Cambridge University, into the effective use of Lesson Study to improve learning. It is our intention that every member of teaching staff at the Academy engages with educational research and takes part in Lesson Study in order to develop contemporary theory into effective practice.

Further information about Joint Practice Development can be found at:

<http://schoolpartnerships.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Hargreaves-2-Leading-a-Self-Improving-School-System.pdf>

Further information about Lesson Study can be found at: www.lessonstudy.co.uk

Thomas's Academy has a clear ambition to connect with practitioners across the Thomas's family of schools and more widely with other schools nationally and internationally. We welcome visits and discussions from all interested parties to discuss how future collaboration can bring positive developments and outcomes for pupils at all schools.

To arrange a visit, please contact info@academy.thomas-s.co.uk