



## Background ...

The decision to put thinking at the heart of the school was taken in the academic year 2009/10. At this time the school was popular and high achieving. However, we believed that for our girls to be successful and happy in this challenging and competitive world it was also necessary for them to be equipped with more than excellent examination results.

As a result we embarked upon our Thinking Schools journey. The aim being that during their time at Invicta, the students will develop certain qualities. They will become knowledgeable, independent, innovative, ambitious, articulate and considerate. In September 2009 a new senior leadership position was created. This Assistant Headteacher role had teaching and learning and indeed 'learning to learn' as a primary responsibility.

## Strategy ...

Once it had been decided that we would follow the Thinking Schools programme we started developing links with the University of Exeter, Kestrel and Rochester Grammar School. A strategic action plan detailing how the thinking strategies would be embedded into our school was created, a senior lead practitioner of Thinking Skills post was created and a drive team established. A breakdown of our strategies and approach from 2010 to today can be seen [here](#).

Over the last four years we have introduced a number of Thinking Skills strategies which include Thinking Maps, Thunks, Thinkers Keys and Thinking Hats. These have been incorporated into the curriculum at all key stages and the pastoral system. One of the most exciting aspects of our journey was revisiting and re-working our school core values to reflect the Habits of Mind which in our school became known as Habits for Success...



## The Invicta Learner Profile and Habits for Success

In line with the changing climate, Invicta identified desirable qualities of undergraduates and those entering employment. By the time a student leaves Invicta we hope they are:

- Independent
- knowledgeable
- considerate
- ambitious
- articulate
- think analytically
- responsible risk takers
- innovative and open to wider learning

In order to ensure that students build the above qualities the school introduced the 'habits for success' to students. The 16 'Habits of Mind' were discovered by educationalists who interviewed highly successful individuals from every form of employment, from inventor to stockbroker, fashion designer to film director. They discovered that each individual, regardless of their job shared very similar characteristics. They are referred to as 'habits' because the characteristics were not carried once or twice throughout careers but demonstrates relentlessly. If students behave intelligently on a regular basis they will eventually do so permanently. Working through the habits of mind should allow students not be daunted by 'difficult scenarios' and will identify characteristics that are essential for success beyond school life.

This image displays how all these ideas are combined to form the 'Invicta Learner Profile' with all the values, qualities and habits arranged around the student. Whilst we anticipate students to progress in all the areas, individuality is at the heart of the school life so we understand that students will make more progress in some areas than others:

This aspect of the programme has been extremely successful and we are confident that these Habits are integral to our school ethos.

### Today and beyond...

In November 2013 Invicta Grammar School was deemed to be a 'Centre of Excellence' with respect to cognitive education and is pleased to be recognised by Exeter University's CEDU as a 'Thinking School'.

We are now working across the federation to share our experiences of Thinking Skills and Habits. Our links with Mid Kent Learning Alliance have seen us support The Malling and Holmesdale Schools on their own thinking path and we hope in the future to extend our experiences to Aylesford Primary School. We are continuing to further develop our Thinking Skills programme with the aim of encouraging independent students.

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