

Growth Mindset

It has been proven that having a Growth Mindset can improve a child's progress and attainment. As a school, we have embraced this and are teaching children how they can grow their brains and intelligence and therefore achieve anything they want!

What is the difference between Fixed Mindsets and Growth Mindsets?

Carol Dweck PhD, an American Professor of Psychology, is one of the world's leading researchers on motivation. She states: *"In a fixed mindset, students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb. In a growth mindset, students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don't necessarily think everyone's the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it."*

People with a Fixed Mindset like work to be easy for their ability; enjoy people praising them for how clever they are; don't like to try new things because they may not be very good at them; and give up easily.

People with a Growth Mindset like challenges (work that is hard means they are learning); enjoy praise for the effort they put into work; believe they can become more intelligent by learning something new; learn from their mistakes and never give up.

Developing Growth Mindsets in School

Having the children sat in mixed ability groups, encourages them to support each other and has had a positive effect on how children approach learning. Across a year, they will have the opportunity to work with most of their peers. When marking or giving any feedback, we will always praise the amount of effort that a pupil has put in to their work. A pupil may not have got every question correct but if they have shown resilience, this will be praised. Next step marking will be used for all children so that every child realises that they can still improve. When a child makes mistakes, we will always encourage the pupil to reflect on what they have learnt from this mistake and discuss how their brains have grown as a result.

How you can help at home

It's natural to praise children when they do something well but do this with caution. Always praise the effort a child has put in and avoid making comments such as 'you are a natural!' or 'you can do anything!'. Without clarifying the process, your child can develop mindsets where they believe the learning is out of their control. If a child thinks they can do anything, they struggle to stay motivated when they come across something new that challenges them.

Talk to your child about the brain being a muscle – the more they use it, the stronger it gets. When they learn something new, their brain is growing. Encourage children to not give up if they find something difficult. Start by thinking about what they can do or know, and process from there. Challenge your child to try something new or that they find difficult.

Further Information

If you would like some further information about Growth Mindset, the following links may be useful:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/help-your-child-try-new-things>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTXrV0_3UjY – Carol Dweck: The effect of praise on mindset

<https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents>

Books for children

Giraffes Can't Dance by G. Andreae

Cleversticks by B. Ashley

Rosie Revere Engineer by A. Beaty

Your Fantastic Elastic Brain by J. M. Deak

Mistakes that Worked by C. F. Jones

The Girls Who Never Made Mistakes by M. Pett and G. Rubenstein

Everyone Can Learn to Ride a Bicycle by C. Raschka

The Dot by P. H. Reynolds

Three Cheers for Errol by B. Cole