

Growth Mindset Policy



Costock CE Primary School

Every Child's a Star!

'As God's children, we shine like Stars' Philippians 2 v.15

Our Promise

Every day at Costock Church School we are experiencing and learning;

Service to God, each other and ourselves, Truth, Agape and Respect

As we leave each day we take these Christian Values with us

Approved by: SLT

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POLICY FOR PROMOTING GROWTH MIND-SET

RATIONALE

The research of Carol Dweck, a Professor of Psychology at Stanford University, has shown that people who believe that their intelligence can be developed (thus demonstrating a growth mindset) outperform those who believe their intelligence is fixed (fixed mindset). When children learn the brain is a muscle and they can "grow their brains" and increase their intellectual abilities, they do better.

This is reinforced in Costock's '**I can**' and '**I can't do it ...YET**' attitude.

It has been found that by focusing on the process which leads to learning (such as concentrating, persevering and learning from mistakes), we can foster a growth mindset in our children. Approaches to learning which involve meta-cognition, consistently have shown high levels of impact. The evidence also indicates that teaching these strategies can be particularly effective for low achieving pupils.

AIMS

This policy aims to ensure a consistency of approach across the school in order to promote a growth mindset culture by using language, by modelling and managing behaviour and by organising teaching and learning.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Each class creates an environment in which growth mindset messages are promoted and where the differences between a fixed and growth mindset are evident and learning powers are prominent so that both can be easily referred to.

WHAT IS GROWTH MINDSET?

A mindset is a belief about yourself and your basic qualities such as your intelligence, your talents and your personality. It is a belief that you can do something (a growth mindset) or a belief that you can't do something (a fixed mindset). The good news is that mindsets can change. Just by knowing about the two mindsets, children can start thinking and reacting in new ways. The characteristics below highlight the importance of promoting growth mindsets in our school.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FIXED AND GROWTH MINDSET?

Carol Dweck 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."

Characteristics of a fixed Mindset	Characteristics of a Growth Mindset
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Believes intelligence and talent are fixed ▪ Believes effort is fruitless ▪ Believes failure defines who they are ▪ Hides flaws ▪ Avoids challenges ▪ Ignores feedback ▪ Views feedback as a personal criticism ▪ Feels threatened by other's success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Believes intelligence and talents can be developed ▪ Believes effort is the path to mastery ▪ Believes mistakes are part of learning ▪ Views failure as an opportunity ▪ Believes failures are temporary ▪ Embraces challenges ▪ Welcome's feedback ▪ Views other's success as inspirational



LANGUAGE, MARKING AND FEEDBACK

The word 'work' outside education is something we do for somebody else and contains no explicit connection to education and learning. At Costock CE Primary School, we refer to 'work' as learning, discovery, exploration and play at to work completed at home as 'homelearning.'

We give praise for persistence, effort and resilience rather than being "clever". Wherever possible, praise highlights the effort, skill, process or attitude rather than the person.

We also aware that most of us are a mixture of fixed and growth mindsets and we are all on a journey towards a growth mindset.

This approach links with how we mark work and give feedback. We always mark giving targets and next steps in writing and maths so that all learning for all children, is seen as a way to grow.

Our marking and feedback policy sets out our expectations for Growth Mindset marking and feedback. We use marking and feedback as a way of inculcating a 'Growth Mindset' in our children. Feedback and marking in the form of praise about a child's work will focus upon the process rather than the person as person praise implies that a child succeeded due to an inherent, inborn quality which they possess rather than the effort that they put into their work.

On the other hand however, process praise acknowledges the effort, strategies or actions that contributed to the success. Feedback to children can be individually (oral or written), to a group or given to the whole class.

HOW TO ENCOURGE PUPILS

HOW TO ENCOURGE STUDENTS

Growth Mindset What to say:	Fixed Mindset What not to say:
"When you learn how to do a new kind of problem, it grows your math brain!"	"Not everybody is good at math. Just do your best."
"If you catch yourself saying, 'I'm not a math person,' just add the word 'yet' to the end of the sentence."	"That's OK, maybe math is not one of your strengths."
"That feeling of math being hard is the feeling of your brain growing."	"Don't worry, you'll get it if you keep trying."* <small>*If students are using the wrong strategies, their efforts might not work. Plus they may feel particularly inept if their efforts are fruitless.</small>
"The point isn't to get it all right away. The point is to grow your understanding step by step. What can you try next?"	"Great effort! You tried your best!"* <small>*Don't accept less than optimal performance from your students.</small>

 SOURCE: Carol Dweck 

ORGANSIATION

At Costock, we keep groupings flexible. Children often work collaboratively in mixed attainment pairings and small groups. In this way, we have found that children learn from each other and challenge themselves more. They understand that being able to explain learning to a peer will, in fact, enhance their own learning. They place fewer limits on their learning and have higher expectations of what they can achieve. This, consequently, has improved the attainment of all our pupils.

TEACHING APPROACHES

At Costock work from **all** children is valued. A visualiser is used to share children's work and a culture is encouraged where children feel proud of their learning and see that making mistakes or needing improvement is valued.

When appropriate toy animals can represent a fixed and growth mindset. Children can then relate to the characteristics of each animal.

Children are encouraged to be active learners and take responsibility for making progress. Some children talk about their zone of proximal development when talking about where they are in their learning – using terms such as comfort zone, stretch zone and stress zone. Once children really see where they are with their learning they can choose the appropriate level of challenge. Teachers are able to identify children who need further input and hold mini teaching sessions within lessons to support learning.

We encourage a culture where mistakes are celebrated because mistakes are necessary for learning and improving intelligence. If children have fixed mindsets they find it hard to cope with failure: we teach our children to see mistakes and failure as positive. Mistakes are known as **marvellous mistakes** and can be used to identify misconceptions. People with a growth mindset see failure not as a negative, undermining judgement on them as people, but as something they need to learn from so that they can succeed in the future.

Appropriate, targeted adult support can have significant impact on learning. However, if not managed reflectively, it can also have a significant impact on attitudes towards oneself as a learner, and on independent learning. Children can become "TA" dependent. At Costock, support staff support **all** children. Both teachers **and** support staff promote independence.

Rewards are used at Costock for a wide range of reasons such as promoting good behaviour and to recognize achievement and effort. Golden assemblies provide an opportunity for children to be rewarded for showing behaviours which represent growth mindset.

At Costock children learn that their brain can be developed like a muscle which can change and grow stronger the more it is used. Children know that with time, effort, practice and input they can reach a certain level of proficiency. Teachers know that with time, effort, practice and input that **ALL** children can achieve.

A culture of growth mindset is supported through the use lessons and assemblies about how the brain grows. Pictures and models of brains are in classrooms for children and teachers to refer to. Certain video clips such as "Famous Failures" give a clear message that you can grow your intelligence. Each year group has a dedicated story which illustrates a growth mindset attitude. The children know the story and it is used for classroom discussions.

Parents need to be clear about what we mean by a growth mindset and how we promote it at school and how they can support it at home. All parents are given a leaflet as a guide to the promotion of growth mindset.

Children learn about meta-cognition in order to be able to identify different learning powers so that learning skills they are using can be discussed and developed. Each class creates an environment in which the learning powers are displayed prominently. The learning powers are introduced in a structured way through stories including those written by the children. Children are encouraged to consider which learning power they will need in order to achieve a certain task.