



# St Mary's Church of England (VC) Junior School

## **GROWTH MIND-SET** **-A Guide for Parents**



Hopefully you have heard your child talking about St Mary's now being a 'Growth Mind-set School' and, if you have had the opportunity to be in and around the school, you will have seen some of the displays to encourage our children to develop a 'Growth mind-set'. But what does this really mean?

### The Main Points

We are trying to encourage our students to have a Growth Mind-set instead of a Fixed Mind-set. A summary of the mind-sets is listed below:

<u>FIXED MIND-SET</u> <u>Aim to avoid making any mistakes and immediate success</u>	<u>GROWTH MIND-SET</u> <u>Understands that intelligence can be developed</u>
Pupils with a Fixed Mind-set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Avoid challenges so they do not fail</li> <li>❖ View effort as a sign of failure</li> <li>❖ Will give up easily when a task becomes too hard</li> <li>❖ Will only focus on if they get something correct, rather than any useful feedback given to help improve the quality of the work produced</li> <li>❖ Believe that intelligence is fixed, e.g. "I'm not good at maths", or "I can't spell"</li> <li>❖ Think "Why bother? I can't do it anyway!"</li> </ul>	Pupils with a Growth Mind-set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ View challenges as a way of stretching their learning</li> <li>❖ Understand that mistakes can lead to learning and will persist when things get difficult</li> <li>❖ View effort as the path to mastery</li> <li>❖ Will learn from feedback – "How can I improve?"</li> <li>❖ Are able to persevere – "I struggle with maths, but I will improve if I put in the effort!"</li> <li>❖ Develop a positive attitude – "I can't do it <b>yet!</b>"</li> </ul>

### How does St Mary's promote the Growth Mind-set?

- ✚ Assemblies and PSHE time devoted to Growth Mind-set to inform pupils
- ✚ PSHE lessons informing pupils how to develop positive mind-sets
- ✚ Effort awards have changed to reflect Growth Mind-set philosophy
- ✚ Pupils receive high quality feedback to improve learning
- ✚ Mastery and challenge focus within lessons
- ✚ Assembly rewards to those pupils displaying effort, persistence and resourcefulness
- ✚ Growth Mind-set vocabulary is used within all lessons



## How can parents support their child in having a Growth Mind-set?

### 1. Have 'learning discussions' at home to reinforce what has happened that day.

"What did you learn today?" "What did you try hard at today?"

### 2. Give feedback on the process not on the outcome.

For example, if a child does well in a maths lesson, "Well done, you have been working hard", instead of "You are clever at maths". This will help by showing that the reverse is true when things don't go well.

### 3. Explain to your child that brains can grow

Brains can grow and learning changes our brains. This is called brain plasticity - intelligence is not fixed.

### 4. Encourage risk, failing and learning from mistakes

This helps children to become resilient and persevere when things get difficult.

"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success when they gave up." (Thomas Edison Inventor)

### 5. Encourage and model positive self-talk



## Developing a Growth Mind-set

<u>INSTEAD OF.....</u>	<u>TRY THINKING.....</u>
I'm not good at this	What am I missing?
I give up	I'll use a different strategy
It's good enough	Is this really my best work?
I can't make this any better	I can always improve
This is too hard	This may take some time
I made a mistake, I give up!	Mistakes help me learn
I just can't do this	I am going to train my brain
I'll never be that smart	I will learn how to do this
Plan A didn't work, I give up!	There's always a plan B
My friend can do it	I will learn from my friend

If you are interested in finding out more about Growth Mind-set please check out the following amongst others:

**Dr Carol Dweck** - numerous books and articles available online

**Professor Robert Winston** - The Human Mind

Mind-sets for Parents: Strategies to Encourage Growth Mind-sets in Kids - **Mary Cay Ricci**