Building Learning Power

"Since we cannot know what knowledge will be most needed in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance. Instead, we should try to turn out people who love learning so much and learn so well that they will be able to learn whatever needs to be learned."
John Holt

At Sheddingdean C Primary School we want to instil certain habits and attitudes to enable our pupils to be more confident in their own learning ability. By becoming better learners pupils will concentrate more, learn faster and better, think harder and fin learning more enjoyable.

Today's schools need to be educating not just for exam results but for lifelong learning. To help the children build their learning power we will be teaching the children the 4 Rs of learning based on research developed by Guy Claxton**:**

Being resilient, resourceful, reflective and reciprocal.
Through these 4Rs the children will be able to have greater success and reach their full potential as learners.

Being resilient is about not giving up, learners can …

- Get lost in learning – I can be on task and get completely absorbed in my learning
- Manage distractions – I can shut out distractions when I'm learning
- Persevere – I can stick with my learning, even when I find it hard
- Be creative – I can think in creative ways and use it to further my learning

Being resourceful is about keep looking for other ideas. Learners can …

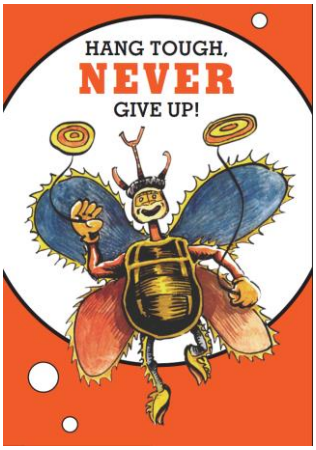
- Question – I can ask questions to help me with my learning
- Investigate – I can explore in different ways
- Make connections – I can make connections with what I already know
- Visualise – I can create a picture in my mind

Being reflective is about thinking of what to do and how to improve. Learners can …

- Plan – I can organise myself for my learning and get on independently
- Be curious – I can find interest in what I'm learning and want to know more
- Reason – I can give reasons for my thinking and work systematically
- Reflect and evaluate – I can reflect and then recognise the next steps for my learning

Being reciprocal is about working alone or in a group. Learners can …

- Be self- reliant – I can recognise when to learn independently and collaboratively
- Be a team player – I can work well as part of a team
- Piggy back ideas – I can learn from those around me



At Sheddingdean C Primary School we value the importance of having the right attitude and Mindset for our learning.

Based on the work of psychologist Carol Dweck, we encourage our children to have a 'Growth Mindset', to help them embrace challenges and learn from setbacks, understanding that the more effort and practice they put in the better they will get.

A fixed mindset leads us to believe our basic skills and qualities are more or less set from birth and there is not a lot we can do about it.

At our school we want to encourage everyone to have a growth mindset, believing that most things can be achieved through hard work, listening to support, practice, and by not giving up when faced with a challenge.

People with growth mindsets know that some people may be particularly talented at certain things but recognise this as just a starting point; even these people need to work hard to improve their talent!

Having a growth mindset helps pupils to achieve more because they have resilience, value practice and are not afraid of a challenge.

Growth Mindset checklist
Sometimes we don't realise that words that we think encourage and praise can actually undermine a child's ability to become the best learners they can be. Every work or action sends a message. Are you sending messages that support them to grow as resilient learners? **Consider this:**

Do	**Do say**	**Don't**	**Don't say**
Praise effort rather than focus on outcome	*I'm very impressed by how hard you are trying and how much you are learning.*	Praise their intelligence and talents – as if they are fixed.	*You must get 10/10 – it's the only result that matters because you are so bright.*
Give lots of feedback about how they have done and what they could do next – without criticising and making personal judgements.	*You have written such an exciting story – how about redrafting and checking some of the spellings I have underlined?*	Judge their outcomes – either good or bad – without giving points for improvement. Mix up judgements of outcomes with personal qualities.	*You are talented, I expected more from your OR This is full of mistakes you can do better!*
Focus on what they are learning and developing and celebrate that.	*You have really tried hard with those problems – how do you work them out?*	Make them feel all that matters is their scores and grades.	*You got an A that is brilliant. You need to get good grades if you are ever going to be successful.*
Help them realise that mistakes are part of learning and you only learn by sticking at it until you can make progress.	*Did you find that text hard with all that difficult vocabulary – just think how much you are learning if you get through it all.*	Get irritated if they can't do it – and show you. Think they are useless.	*There's no way you will be able to read that – it's much too difficult.*
Model growth mindset yourself by sometimes getting it wrong and showing how you learn from it.	*Who can help me with this tech/ maths/ spelling problem as I'm struggling and I need to get it right. I need to learn something from you!*	Demonstrate you are stuck in your ways and nervous about learning new things.	*I don't do technology/ maths/ spellings – never have been able to …*
Praise them for specific achievements and persistence.	*I'm impressed with how you have found a new way to understand algebra. You stuck at it and didn't give up until you found a way.*	Only praise when they get it **all** right. They should be tackling work that is hard enough to get some things wrong.	I want to see an A* from you every time.
Help them fix it when they make mistakes. Make sure they are willing to challenge themselves, not opt for guaranteed success.	*Hey you got it wrong – that's good because it shows you can keep learning.*	Make fixed judgements about their ability and compare them with other children.	You should be coming top of the class with your ability.
Talk to them about the learning process and journey.	*What have you learnt today that has really pushed your comfort zone?*	Let them think you can learn and make progress without the pain of hard work!	All that matters is the exam grade you get, I don't care how you get there.
Help them choose challenging tasks that stretch them even if they may not get everything right.	*Isn't it exciting when you are working really hard on something and it's so hard but eventually you get it!*	Allow them to just do the things they know they are good at.	Stick with what you know then – at least you will get a good mark.