



"Growth Mindset" After School Club Evaluation



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Introduction

It is known that children and young people who have a positive attitude towards their learning will make good progress and be successful. We want children to relish challenges, be resilient, embrace mistakes as part of the learning process, value the importance of effort (rather than the result), respond carefully to feedback, and take inspiration from others.

Central to this attitude and approach to learning, are the theories of Growth Mindset. This is a term coined by psychologist Carol Dweck. Her research has identified characteristics of learners with a fixed and a growth mindset. Adopting a growth mindset can change a person's perception of themselves entirely. Studies have shown that if you have a growth mindset, you're more likely to continue working hard, even when you meet obstacles or failures. You persevere, adapt, and try different strategies and you learn.



Growth Mindset After School Club - 10 week trial

Following on from a successful trial at Crown Wood Primary School, Bracknell, St Joseph's Primary School offered the club to pupils from Year 2 through to Year 4.

14 pupils were selected by the school

- 9 pupils from Year 2
- 3 pupils from Year 3
- 2 pupils from Year 4

The club is based on the principles of growth mindset. I use a resource called "The Big Life Journal" an American company that produces resources to support children and parents with regards growth mindset. Each week focuses on a different theme:

- Making a difference in the world
- Dream Big
- Follow your heart
- You are not what you have
- Follow your heart
- Taking action
- Love of Learning
- Importance of gratitude
- Mindfulness

Each session provides the opportunity to practice a breathing and/or visualisation exercise. Children are exposed to many sources of stimulation throughout the day. Meditation, focusing on breathing, is a practice for calming one's mind and body. Research has indicated that meditation can assist with improving concentration and focus, calming anxiety and reducing impulsivity, among other benefits. Meditation takes time, commitment and practice. It is not an exercise that should be applied only when your children is stressed out, worried or lacking focus.

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Benefits to the parents

Parents or carers were written to at the outset, several exercises were sent home for the whole family to get involved with. Parents/ carers were surveyed at the end of the 10 week course.

6 parents/ carers completed and returned the questionnaire.

One parent said that their child did not enjoy coming as "**Mum made me come.**"

The other 5 parents said their child enjoyed the sessions "**It was find,he loved the fact his brain was growing.**"

Several parents reported noticing a difference in their child's overall temperament. "**Slightly more positive and calmer.**" "**She has supported her brother when he is struggling a few times.**"

All parents / carers felt that over the 10 week period their child was either somewhat or more considerate, helpful, kind, focused or calmer.

"My daughter loves this club. The lesson about the bucket pleased her the most. She always couldn't wait for the next Brain Train Me. Great club."

"My daughter has really enjoyed this and I think it has helped her be a bit more considerate towards others. "

" Although my daughter has not wanted to share, I believe it has provoked thought in her. "

Pupil Feedback

The pupils were able to give feedback about how they were feeling as they came into the club and again when they left using red, amber and green buzzers. This exercise was able to evidence that most of the children's moods were better at the end of the club.

At the beginning of each club we recapped on the previous week's theme and children not only remembered what we had learnt but were able to talk about

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how they had put the theme into action throughout the week, providing an opportunity to build resilience by learning new strategies.

Teacher feedback

The Growth Mindset After school club aimed to foster an emphasis on a variety of enriching activities alongside core academic subjects to build confidence and encourage talents. The 3 year group teachers were surveyed at the end of the course to see if they had noticed any difference in the children attending.

Teachers reported noticing children being somewhat more helpful, thoughtful and calmer. Teachers also felt children were somewhat more considerate of other people's feelings, somewhat less distracted and more focused.

The club was held in the Year 2 classroom and the teacher sometimes sat at the back to do paperwork. She commented how interesting it was to see a couple of the pupils behaviour in a more expressive and assertive way to what they do in the classroom normally.

"They seem calmer. Their activity focus has improved. I have also been doing mindfulness with the class as well. They seem very confident to give things a go - like answering questions and speaking in the class." Year 3 teacher

Summary

- All of the parents/ carers that responded to the survey said they were satisfied with the club.
- Parents / Carers reported noticing some difference in temperate.
- Teachers felt the club supported the pupils to focus on the work they were doing in the classroom. Some noticed improvements in confidence.
- Children put strategies into practice independently each week.

Interested to know more?

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