



St. Colman's Primary School and All Saints' Nursery Unit (Annaclone)

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Progress Through Partnership, Leading To Excellence



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Growth Mindset **Do's** and **Don't's**

We hear a lot about fostering a Growth Mindset in our children. We all want our children to be successful, happy and resilient. But ***what does a Growth Mindset entail and how can we practically go about achieving it?***

Sometimes we don't realise that the words we *think* encourage and praise can actually undermine your child's ability to become the best learners they can be. Every word or action sends a message to your child, many have wider implications and can be applied by the child to any number of different situations that they find themselves in. Are we inadvertently sending messages that suggest we are judging them or are we fully supporting them to learn and grow to their **full potential**?

To help your child reach their real lifelong potential and be emotionally resilient try some of these:

Do	Do Say	Don't	Don't Say
Praise effort rather than focus on outcome	<i>I'm so proud of how hard you are trying and how much you are learning.</i>	Praise their intelligence and talents - as if they are fixed	<i>You must get 10/10 - it's the only result that matters because you are so bright.</i>
Give lots of feedback about how they have done and what they could do next - without criticising and judging.	<i>You have written such an exciting story - how about redrafting and checking some of the spellings I have underlined?</i>	Judge their outcomes - either good or bad.	<i>You are so talented, I Expected more from you OR This is full of mistakes you can do better!</i>
Focus on what they are learning and developing and celebrating that.	<i>You have tried really hard with those sums - how do you work them out? I'd really like you to show me your thinking.</i>	Make them feel that that matters is their scores and grades.	<i>You got an A that is brilliant. You need to get good grades if you are going to be successful.</i>

Do	Do Say	Don't	Don't Say
Help them realise that mistakes are part of Learning and you only learn by making mistakes and sticking at it until you can make progress.	<i>Did you find that book hard with all those difficult words - just think how much you are learning if you get through it all.</i>	Get upset if they can't do it - and overtly show that you are disappointed.	<i>Are you too stupid/not clever enough to read that book?</i>
Model growth mindset yourself by sometimes getting it wrong and showing you can learn from it.	<i>I'm finding it really hard to learn a few Spanish phrases for the holiday but I'm going to stick at it. (Piano lessons Etc)</i>	Demonstrate you are stuck in your ways and nervous about learning new things.	<i>I don't do foreign languages...and I'm no good at maths, so I'd rather not bother.</i>
Praise them for specific achievements and persistence.	<i>I'm impressed with how you have found a new way to understand algebra. You stuck at it and I'm so proud.</i>	Only praise when they get it all right.	<i>You've only done 5. I thought you could get at least 10 done.</i>
Help them fix it when they make mistakes.	<i>Hey you got it wrong - that's ok because it shows you can still learn more. You just haven't got there YET!</i>	Make judgements about their ability and compare them with other children.	<i>Hope your teacher doesn't think you can't do this because I bet all your friends can?</i>
Talk to them about the learning process and journey.	<i>What have you learnt today that has really pushed your comfort zone or challenged you? What made you smile today in school?</i>	Let them think you can learn and make progress without hard work.	<i>If it's too hard, don't do it.</i>
Help them choose challenging tasks that stretch them even if they may not get everything right.	<i>Isn't it exciting when you are working really hard on something and it is so very hard but eventually you will get it.</i>	Advise them that they don't have to do anything they don't want to do.	<i>It's not fair if you get it wrong, your teacher should help you more.</i>

Do remember that there is a context to every situation, that *every child is different* and that with the best will in the world we will ALL say the wrong thing from time to time.

Fitting homeworks' into a busy evening schedule can be at times *stressful* - but by planning for positive communication with a growth mindset at the forefront.... research has proven that it can de-stress situations.

Finally... Never under-estimate the power of the word 'YET!' when motivating children.