

Focus on ...

Mithian School



Quality Feedback and Growth Mind Set

Aims and Objectives of the activity / initiative:

At Mithian our aim is to provide quality teaching and learning that allows each of our children to leave Mithian with lifelong skills. These skills will enable them to live successful lives as part of Modern Britain in an ever-changing and developing world.

It is important to all the staff and Governors at Mithian that we develop the children's learning through reflective questioning and quality feedback; alongside developing their attitudes to learning. At Mithian we support each child to develop their enthusiasm for learning and improvement.

Implementation - What has happened in school?

Implementing Quality Feedback and Growth Mind Set (including Teaching and Learning):

Quality Feedback and Growth Mind Set have been implemented as a specific focus at Mithian. This followed the Sutton Trust Toolkit reporting quality feedback as 'very high impact for low cost'. Initially staff wanted to widen children's responses to learning and to focus on what they had learnt rather than what they had done; they wanted to develop questions which would promote reflective thinking. Staff wanted there to be a focus on reflective questioning acknowledging the process of how children learn. Feedback/questioning focuses on choice of learning strategies as well as self-regulation strategies. Also, feedback from children to teachers is crucially important so that teachers can adapt teaching to meet learners' needs. With all that in mind A school priority was focussed on Quality Feedback with success criteria including

- * Children can explain what 'learning' has taken place
- * Children are positive about feedback from adults, peers and marking
- * Children are reflective and independent learners
- * Children understand what they have to do to improve

Governors were heavily involved in this initiative and staff agreed to trial different types of questions at an age appropriate level for each class. These were monitored and new areas/question types were introduced in the spring term. Staff considered how to make feedback and questioning more effective building in a series of techniques and specific time slots. INSET was run to ensure that a whole school approach to using these questions was in place and additional support staff sessions were held.

Staff investigated and introduced ways of involving the parents which resulted in reflective questions being sent home and Andy Brumby (Cornwall Learning Lead) leading parent sessions about Growth Mind Set, quality feedback and providing examples of this.

Developing Growth Mind Set within the children was crucial to developing attitudes to overcome challenges. Working with Andy Brumby we developed 'Lift Off' and 'Crash Landing'. 'Lift Off' is our Growth Mind Set character. He is keen to expand his knowledge and has a positive attitude when faced with a challenge he 'can't do YET' - displaying the mind set that it is possible to achieve in time. 'Crash Landing' has a more negative view and when stuck he is 'unable to achieve the task'. There was a real drive to re-shape pupils' (and parents') thinking around failure to consider it productive rather than terminal being aware that to FAIL is in fact your First Attempt In Learning.



'Lift Off' 'Crash Landing'

Pupils were introduced to a more discrete self-improvement marking approach using a green pen and highlighter. Children are encouraged to engage with their own learning and provide their own feedback on their work as well as, when appropriate, on the work of their peers. This proved a great success and children are thoroughly engaged with the process. Andy Brumby has included our work as a short case study for Oxford University Press about how pupils can be encouraged to develop an optimistic outlook when working towards challenges.

The next academic year a school priority was to continue to build on the success of the quality feedback and also to

* Improve attitudes to learning and resilience

Staff worked closely to monitor the reflective questioning and agree new areas/question types each term. Questions were displayed in classrooms and used by all staff as well as pupils eg 'how has your thinking about ... changed during the session?' As part of the end of year reports teachers make comments linked to attitudes to learning.

Sessions were held by Andy Brumby to establish how to develop this further with both pupils and staff. We focussed on linking the Growth Mind Set characters together with the school aims and visions. Attitudes to learning were among the key focus and staff selected key words that reflected this; emotional intelligence, motivation, efficacy, resilience, grit and enthusiasm which resulted in an acronym and slogan 'EMERGE - as a lifelong learner' something that with these qualities we hope every child at Mithian can achieve. Pupil workshops on emotional intelligence and motivation were run in the Summer Term. The positive impact of this new focus was seen in parent feedback and across the school in pupil marking as well as comments children made to each other. Parents have been given a toolkit all about EMERGE and how they can help their children. A parent session focussing on 'EMERGE' was held and received positive feedback: 'love that you are teaching the children life skills', 'skills are often referred to in our home and they really work', 'a great way to reinforce positive learning', 'I thoroughly support the schools' ethos!'

A new logo was created by the staff with the support of a design company. The head and PSHE lead met with the design company to explain where the ideas originated and how they linked with our school. Colour choices for each quality were discussed with staff and pupils. These were then used for the word as well as the 'smoke' from the rocket. The design company sent several options which again were shared with staff and pupils. Our Growth Mind Set character 'Lift Off' is inside the rocket window, this shows how EMERGE and Growth Mind Set strongly link together.



Information is put in weekly newsletters regarding EMERGE and focus skills for the pupils eg emotional intelligence. Certificates given in assemblies make references to EMERGE and particular qualities shown eg ...'for great resilience when learning to telling the time' or 'being motivated to improve handwriting technique this week'.

Marking is reflective and linked to Quality Feedback sessions and questions. There is evidence of pupil responses linked to 'Lift Off' and 'Crash Landing'. Pupil responses are evident through use of green pens and highlighters.

Impact on Children's Outcomes:

There has been a noticeable change in the way pupils respond to their work and to the attitudes of themselves and others. Pupils positively engage with the Growth Mind Set character 'Lift Off' and liken their own learning attitudes to his. They are quick to initiate change from a 'Crash Landing' closed attitude towards a task, question or challenge to a 'Lift Off' positive response. Children in all year groups encourage others to be more like 'Lift Off' when faced with tricky concepts. This is done in a positive way. A culture of welcoming mistakes has been embedded and children know how these help learning. Parents have commented that when using the Growth Mind Set style questions they can have lengthier conversations with their children and can often establish what challenges their child may need to overcome or what learning has taken place in the day. For example instead of the typical 'nothing' response to the question 'what have you done today?' if the question is re-worded to 'what was the trickiest part of your day?' a child rarely allows room to breathe explaining what was tricky in maths, writing and PE! Or similarly 'what did you use to help you in maths?' may provide the response 'I had to draw a numberline to add two two digit numbers together ... look I'll show you'. The parent now knows what their child learnt in maths and their achievements too. EMERGE has drawn attention to skills needed to be successful in life. The children are able to engage with these qualities and make connections with jobs, challenges and successes. Ensuring that EMERGE, Quality Feedback and Growth Mind Set are on display in all classrooms, corridors and the hall means that it is an embedded culture within the whole school. Assemblies focus on a key quality each half term which allow the children the opportunity to reflect.

Leadership and Management:

As a small school all staff have been fully involved in developing Quality Feedback and Growth Mind Set. Our PSHE lead and our Headteacher have worked closely alongside staff to develop EMERGE and our PSHE lead has delivered a parent workshop on EMERGE. Andy Brumby (lead on Quality Feedback at Cornwall Learning) has met several times with our Headteacher and PSHE lead and has delivered staff, pupil and parent workshops. Parents have been kept fully informed of each stage of the process and the school newsletter has helped to detail focus words, key events and workshops. This initiative will continue to call for the full support of all staff, parents and pupils. The PSHE lead and Headteacher will enthusiastically drive the project into the next stage to ensure that it continues to be a success.

Opportunities for Collaboration:

We continue to review our Growth Mind Set questions termly. We would welcome collaboration between schools to develop this further. This could be with schools who wish to initiate a similar approach in their own setting or with schools already owning this approach and who have other insights and development ideas for quality feedback and attitudes to learning. Our school council members are always keen to share their insights and working with other schools from a pupil perspective would be beneficial, for example sharing their knowledge and understanding of our Growth and Closed Mind Set characters 'Lift Off' and 'Crash Landing' and examples of Growth Mind Set questions used in the classroom.

Resources:

Growth Mind Set - Carol Dweck PHD Professor of Psychology

Andy Brumby - Cornwall Learning.

Sutton Trust Toolkit for Teaching and Learning.

<http://www.suttontrust.com/about-us/education-endowment-foundation/teaching-learning-toolkit/>

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/6752/EEF_Toolkit_pdf_version.pdf

On the main body we would want 'Lift Off and Crash Landing', EMERGE logo, School Logo, School Info, photos from Andy Brumby sessions.

Ofsted Quote 'pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and try hard in lessons', 'they are keen to succeed' OFSTED July 2014.



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