**Growth mindset and improvement: Scottish context**

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**What is growth mindset?**

Growth mindset suggests that ‘brains’ and ‘talent’ alone do not result in success, and that by praising children for having talent, we jeopardise their ability to achieve.

Growth mindset is a straightforward idea, presented by Carol Dweck, a psychologist from Stanford University. The basis of this is that people who have a fixed mindset think that their basic qualities, such as intelligence or talent, cannot be changed. As such, they spend time recording and recognising intelligence instead of developing it. They also believe that talent creates success without effort.

People who have a growth mindset think that their basic abilities can be improved through commitment and hard work and that talent is just the beginning of success. This helps to establish a thirst for learning alongside resilience, which is a prerequisite of all worthwhile accomplishments.

Developing a growth mindset motivates children and enhances their relationship with learning and their response to teachers. Most importantly, it allows children to develop a positive attitude towards themselves, especially in relation to accepting and learning from failure.

“Praise (and criticism) that students receive from their teachers and parents tell them how to think about what they do – and what they are.”

Carol Dweck

**Using growth mindset to support school improvement planning and the collection and use of data?**

* HGIOS 4.0 Quality Indicators:
  + Leadership and management
    - Self-evaluation, leading learning, leading change, leading & managing staff, managing resources to promote equity

***Growth mindset supports leadership of learning and positive, realistic self-evaluation.***

* + Learning provision
    - Safeguarding & child protection, curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment, personalised support, family learning, transitions, partnerships

***Growth mindset suggests personal targets and meaningful assessment.***

* + ****Successes and achievements
    - Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion, raising attainment and achievement, increasing creativity and employability

***Growth mindset raises achievement and attainment by developing positive, challenging learning environments.***

**The context of your school or curriculum area:**

* What are the challenges in your school?
  + Attainment
  + Ethos
  + Engagement
  + Deprivation
  + Perception

**Risks and challenges**

* Superficial knowledge of the principles of growth mindset
  + What are the key principles?
    1. There are two mindsets – fixed and growth
    2. We must accept and reflect upon both success and failure
    3. Praise must be honest & learners should be labelled positively
    4. Challenge is important & confidence isn’t everything
    5. Effort is crucial and must be recognised
    6. Judgement should be suspended – teach, don’t judge
    7. Describe behaviours, not people
    8. Giving good feedback and asking for specific change
    9. Sharing information about how the brain works
    10. Identification of inspiring role models & acceptance that learning is everyone’s responsibility
* Perception that growth mindset is a bolt-on methodology
  + Build staff knowledge of key aspects of growth mindset and facilitate access to resources
* Communication and cooperation with pupils, parents and staff
  + Communicating limitations of summative assessment and importance of formative assessment.
  + Sharing weekly message with parents and pupils
  + Parental Interactions at parents’ evening
  + Encouraging parents to build dialogue with school
  + Empowering staff to communicate directly with parents
  + Utilise tutor periods, registration, and assemblies to communicate
  + Facilitate curricular delivery of growth mindset

**Links to national context/ priorities**

* Significant aspects of learning
  + Professional dialogue
  + Progress and achievement
  + Breadth, challenge & application
  + Monitoring and tracking progress
* National improvement framework
  + Performance information
  + Teacher professionalism
  + Parental engagement
  + Assessment of children’s progress
  + Excellence through raising attainment
  + Increased equity
* GIRFEC
  + Children nurtured using a structured and child centred approach.
  + Increased achievement and attainment
  + Young people included in their learning decisions and reflecting on their progress
* Developing the Young Workforce
  + Making progress in learning, life and work
  + Taking responsibility for personal progress
  + Enhanced work experience and access to mentors and role models
  + Changed perceptions of work related learning
  + Informed curriculum planning
* Closing the Equity Gap and the Scottish Attainment Challenge
  + Tackling the attainment gap
  + Challenging everyone
  + Focusing efforts on reducing the impact of deprivation
  + Overcoming fixed mindsets in all of our communities

**Further information**

* A detailed overview and additional resources to support implementation of a Growth Mindset are available at: [www.winningscotlandfoundation.org](http://www.winningscotlandfoundation.org)
* The following texts may be useful starting points to access more detailed information:
  + Carol Dweck (2012) Mindset: How You Can Fulfil Your Potential
  + Carol Craig (2007) Creating Confidence: A Handbook for Professionals Working with Young People
  + Barry Hymer (2014) Growth Mindset Pocketbook
  + Mary Cay Ricci (2013) Mindsets in The Classroom: Building a Culture of Success
  + Daniel Coyle (2009) The Talent Code: Greatness Isn’t Born, It’s Grown
  + Malcolm Gladwell (2008) Outliers: The Story of Success