As explained by Johnson, Johnson and Holubec in their work ‘Circles of learning’ peer relationships are a critical element of the socialisation and cognitive development of children and young people. These include learning attitudes, values, skills and information that cannot be learned from adults.

**Importance of trust**

Peer to peer interaction also provides support, opportunities, and models of prosocial behaviour. Children and young people tend to view situations and problems from different perspectives. This is developed by an increase in trust and interest with peers and is a critical competency for social development. Children and young people become autonomous in their learning by internalising positive values and acquiring social skills and sensitivity. Such sensitivity will promote trust therefore reciprocal encouragement amongst and between peers. Productivity in turn increases as a result of this trust. Trust feeds motivation, acceptance and support. Positive language, interactions and support are a result of structured social interactions between peers. It is vitally important that young people are provided with the opportunity to interact with a structure.

high

TRUSTt

low

TASKt

simple

complex

Further to this, in relation to the above matrix young people who work together cooperatively to accomplish shared goals, the more children and young people trust each other in their learning the more they can maximise their own and others learning. Increased trust improves productivity.

With reference to the research, a by-product of teaching Growth Mindset is increased task persistence (the ability to sustain motivation and concentration on a task) aided by the use of peer feedback in a positive and supportive way. This approach dovetails with the aim of achieving a high level of trust between peers which feeds motivation and peer support. A pupil with a growth mindset is less likely to give up when presented with a complex task, therefore displaying task persistence approach, as argued by Dweck, Walton, & Cohen, (2011). The term academic tenacity consistently cropped up in the literature and it is defined as the mindsets and skills required to focus on longer term goals while remaining strong to withstand challenges on the path to excellence (Dweck, Walton, & Cohen, 2011; Farrington et al, 2012).

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