Growth Mindset

Tips for Carers

**Talk to your child, on a regular basis, about Maths.**

**1. Working is an important part of Maths. It is a way in which Mathematicians communicate their processes and thinking.**

*Encourage your child to think about working as a form of communication and that all the steps in a solution should be clear enough for a person of limited Mathematical knowledge to be able to follow.*

**2. Correct answers are usually only part of a solution.**

*Ask your child how they got their answer and to show you all their working and steps which make up a solution.*

**3. Your child will be benefit from sometimes taking on the role of teacher, as trying to show a process to someone else can clarify their thinking.**

*Ask your child to teach you how to do some questions. You never know, you might also learn something.*

**4. Reflective learners try to learn from mistakes**

*Ask your child to give you examples of a time they learned from a mistake they had made.*

**5. An assessment is not an end point, it is part of the learning process.**

*Your child will sit a Maths assessment soon. After the assessment encourage him/her to celebrate what they achieved, but more importantly identify mistakes which he/she will work hard to learn from.*

**Talk to your child on a regular basis about being a resilient and reflective learner**

**7. Focus your child’s attention away from others and onto the questions they did not manage to complete successfully.**

*Don’t concentrate too much on class averages. Focus on what they have mastered and the areas where they need to work harder in order to make improvements.*

**8. Relate grades to honest and realistic estimation of how well your child prepared.**

*Preparation includes classroom application, at all times, and home study/revision.*

*A way to visualise this is to consider a result of 40% meaning the need to improve revision/study/preparation by up to 60%.*

**9. Encourage your child to view the future in Maths in positive terms.**

*“I can't do it” becomes “I've not mastered it yet!”.*

*“I'm going to fail” becomes “I'll find this a challenge”.*

*“I've not been shown how to do it” becomes “I've not worked out how to apply my skills yet”.*

**6. Resilient learners try their best when faced with a challenge.**

*Ask your child to talk about a question in this topic which he/she found challenging and, with resilience and persistence, rose to the challenge to complete it successfully.*

**Talk about your child’s progress in a way which emphasises their own ability to influence a positive and successful future.**

**Give praise for appropriate effort and avoid praise which uses the words clever or smart**

**10. Praise your child for effort and for being positive in the way they have met a challenge**

*"You said you'd complete five questions tonight and you've worked really hard to achieve that. Well done!"*

**11. Avoid praise for attributes like smart or clever.**

*If your child begins to believe that being clever means you find Maths easy, then at some point they will find Maths difficult and give up because they don’t feel clever enough.*

**12. Challenge your child if they say "no homework tonight".**

*At all times there is home study for Maths. The more your child attempts and the harder your child works the more they will achieve.*

**13. Don't praise speed ("clever boy you finished that quickly") unless it is an improvement on a previous position "you have practised your mental calculations so much that you completed that task in half the time"**

*Encourage your child to measure progress in how much they have achieved and not in how quickly they achieve it.*

**14. Ask reflective questions which help your child develop a good work ethic**

*"How many question did you complete tonight?"*

*"Do you think that is enough?"*

*"How do you know that is enough?"*

*"Did you try hard enough?"*

*“Next time could you do more than this time?” etc.*

**15. Discuss brain growth with your child**

*Make your child aware that intelligence is not fixed and hard work and persistent effort will lead to a fitter brain.*

**16. Define smart as a process not an attribute**

Say things like:

*"It was smart to try those five questions, check the answers and learn from any mistakes you made"*

**17. Don't force your own fixed mindset on your child**

*If you say to your child "I’m not good at Maths" you could be giving them the excuse they need to fail. Perhaps you could suggest that your child explains some Maths to you, displaying your own willingness to learn.*

**Talk about your child's brain power improving, through hard work, and not being something that is fixed**

**Talk about your child's brain power improving, through hard work, and not being something that is fixed**

**18. Ability in Maths is not fixed – It can change.**

*Reinforce regularly with your child, that no matter their present level of ability in Maths, that hard work and resilience in the face of a challenge can make them improve.*

**19. Acknowledge that Maths can be challenging**

*Always encourage your child to be ambitious in Maths even when they find it challenging. Maths should be challenging and will require your child to put in enough effort to meet this challenge.*

**20. Some learners would rather not try than get it wrong, this is a recipe for disaster.**

*Encourage your child to take the time to complete all questions, even if they get things wrong. They can always learn from the mistakes.*

**21. Maths is not about getting it correct first time.**

It’s about learning how to do it correctly after lots of effort and thinking.

**22. Making mistakes is a vital part of learning and being overly risk averse can have a detrimental effect on a pupil’s progress.**

*This seems to be even more evident for pupils studying Maths than in most other subjects.*

**Your child should be able to experiment with Maths safe in the knowledge that they can learn from their mistakes**

**23. Encourage your child to always attempt tasks, even when there is a risk of making a mistake.**

“Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.”

Nelson Mandela

**24. Making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process.**

You child should feel safe to experiment with their Maths, safe in the knowledge that they can learn from their mistakes.

**25. The power of yet!**

*If your child says “I don’t get it”, this has the sound of permanence – and they might never get it.*

*If your child says “I don’t get it yet”, they open themselves up to a future where they will be able to do it.*

**Nurture your child towards a growth mindset**