

GROWTH MINDSET CASE STUDY

CROOKFUR PRIMARY SCHOOL EAST RENFREWSHIRE



TAKING RISKS AND DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET



Stephanie Fry, from Crookfur Primary School in East Renfrewshire, took part in Winning Scotland's Mindset in Education programme with the aim of increasing attainment in maths by exploring creative and flexible thinking.

She wanted to ensure pupils were given the opportunity to learn in a setting that encouraged them to take risks and explore numeracy - whilst developing a growth mindset outlook.

INCREASE CONFIDENCE

Stephanie explained how she wanted to help 'a group of learners who were identified from the lowest 20%, had low standardised test scores and lacked overall confidence and would benefit from a targeted intervention in mathematics.' Mindset in Education provided a range of learning experiences to help the children develop their confidence.

Stephanie used a range of approaches including think boards, outdoor learning and concrete resources to help pupils learn to solve problems. Think boards develop children's understanding of concepts, allowing them to represent their thoughts and ideas visually in different ways. They can be used to represent fractions in words, symbols, materials and pictures.

The images here show pupils using the environment to link multiplication patterns.



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"Pupils embraced the opportunity to have a safe space to explore their way of thinking and make mistakes. Their attitude and engagement were extremely high as they were able to confidently explain their thinking without a jotter or textbook in sight."

"The most significant moment for me was when two boys who had started the project with little self-belief pleaded with me not to go back to class because they were so determined to solve the problem set."

THE POWER OF 'YET'

"Throughout all my research and training there had been a large emphasis on the power of the word 'YET' and the importance of that word was the focus that brought all the elements of the project together. A word that has now become embedded in my teaching."

PUPIL PERCEPTION

Data showed a shift towards a growth mindset and the way pupils perceived their own maths ability. "All children increased their mindset profile score, and all but one child increased how they viewed how good they are at maths. Along with data, pupil voice, was extremely important in analysing the impact of the project."

"Children's feedback to peers and teachers during the project showed that the pupils were proud of the work they had achieved and wanted to teach others about the word 'yet'."

"Class teachers commented on the difference they saw in the pupils during maths lessons, and they were intrigued to learn how to incorporate strategies into their daily teaching."

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COVID

Just as Stephanie was gaining momentum and seeing positive results within the classroom – COVID happened. But Stephanie saw this as an opportunity to enhance her project.

"Whilst pupils were learning online, I started to plan how I was going to take growth mindset forward on a larger scale. My headteacher could see that the intervention worked but also saw the passion I now had to take it forward."

"Developing growth mindset was included in the school improvement plan and my understanding and drive for developing a growth mindset culture in education became an integral part of my remit."

What started as a small project with eight pupils turned into a school wide initiative.

For Stephanie it worked because there was a whole school approach. She trained other teachers within the school, who soon saw the positive impact. "From the training I received from Winning Scotland, I was able to lead sessions enabling my colleagues to understand the theory behind fixed and growth mindsets. Staff were able to start identifying learners that displayed fixed or growth mindset tendencies. With life still online, I decided bombarding teachers with too much information wasn't going to be beneficial, so I chose to focus on the language of mindset. Changing feedback can direct learners to realise that effort is the key and it's not about being born smart."

WHY DID IT WORK SO WELL?

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"My headteacher and colleagues have embraced the work I introduced into the school during a very turbulent couple of years and can now see why developing a growth mindset culture is so beneficial to raising attainment as well as enabling learners to face challenges more positively."

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

"Once back in the classroom, all pupils completed a mindset questionnaire and were categorised into varying degrees of fixed to growth mindset. After completing the lessons, pupils were then asked to complete the questionnaire again and the results showed that almost 77% of pupils moved towards a more growth mindset and 92% of teachers said they saw pupils display a growth mindset out with the targeted lessons."

77%

of pupils moved more towards a growth mindset



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THE FUTURE

The impact of applying growth mindset for Stephanie has been profound and rewarding, she said:

"I'm not going to stop! Developing a growth mindset isn't a short-term goal but our school is definitely on the right track, and I am so excited to see where it takes us."

The school has growth mindset displays to further embed the cultural changes: "wall displays showcase the pupils' work during the focused lessons, displays that don't include perfect work but ones that show how mistakes help us learn, growth mindset awards and most importantly there is real buzz about the school that captures a growth mindset ethos."

Stephanie has also started to involve parents and carers: "an informational swag was sent out to inform of the work the school had been doing and how they could also help develop their child's growth mindset."

The next sessions I have planned within the school is to further develop their understanding and have growth mindset family challenges organised."