

Developing a growth mindset for students and staff to create a culture of shared expectations and joint responsibility for learning

Spotlight on Christ the King Catholic Primary School

Why did the school get involved?

When Christ the King got involved with Whole Education, it became clear that, in spite of the great successes the school had experienced over a number of years, we were interested in broadening what was offered to the children in terms of their 'learning diet'.

We wanted to instil the idea of a Growth Mindset to the school so all pupils could cope better in their school and future lives. Quickly, we realised this would be great for the children, but also for the staff.

What became a key focus wasn't solely academic outcomes but also, and of equal importance, the attitudes that children and staff would develop. The team was keen to prepare children for the challenges of life and enable them to cope better with disappointments they may be faced with.

What has been most helpful working with WE?

The Whole Education Launch event was a great way for us to hear about schools that had developed amazing projects. Hearing from other leaders and teachers gave us a flavour of what our own journey could look like.

The visits to other Whole Education member schools have been inspiring. Sending our staff to visit other schools with a clear shared culture enabled us to plan what we had to do within our own context. In addition, being supported and coached by other leaders as we developed our plans - through video conferencing enabled us to share ideas and receive some invaluable feedback.



Context:

Christ the King Catholic Primary School, Coventry is a two-form entry school on two sites with over 420 pupils on roll. The school also has a 52-place Nursery.

The last full inspection was March 2019 and the school was judged to be **Good**.

Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly in line with age related expectations.

At the end of KS2 the vast majority of pupils achieve at age-related expectations with a very good number of children exceeding ARE.

The number of children known to be eligible for pupil premium is in the lowest 20% of schools nationally

The number of children with SEND is in the 2nd quintile nationally.

The number of children with EAL is in the 3rd quintile nationally.

“As well as helping with the way children deal with challenges, what this process has also enabled us to achieve is a clear sense of shared responsibility and culture.”

What did the school do in their project?

Following the national launch of the programme in October 2019 baseline assessments were completed to establish where the children and staff were at in terms of their understanding of the notion of a Growth Mindset. This gave us a clear view on what action needed to be taken to best support children.

Following the initial baseline, we decided to have some focused lessons on the Power of 'YET!' in each class so that we could introduce the children to a new way of thinking. Once all children had been introduced to this new notion of a Growth Mindset, we felt we could talk about it as a whole school, in a special assembly.

Developing a shared culture and a shared set of phrases to support our initiative was what would prove to have the most impact. As we carried out learning walks a few weeks after we'd begun talking about Growth Mindset, the Power of 'YET!', and other related issues, it became apparent that children and staff had started to embrace a new way of thinking and a new way of dealing with challenges and setbacks.

A few months in, we thought it would be really important to involve parents and carers and, as such, we got the children to create a whole school Growth Mindset calendar. This was shared as part of our weekly newsletters.

We also introduced a Growth Mindset Reading Blog from Nursery to Year 6, with children choosing a new story every two weeks. When listening to the stories, children had to identify the Growth Mindset message. Great displays, based on the stories and the key messages were created in classrooms and across the school. Again, to involve parents and carers, we shared key messages on Twitter and on our school website.

As things were starting to be clearly embedded, we felt the children could be supported to come up with their own termly targets, based on clear examples of what growth meant and looked like.

To raise the profile of the importance of the notion of a Growth Mindset, we invited an inspirational speaker into school: Bart Gee, who was born with a severe disability but has achieved incredible things. This includes swimming over 1,500m in open waters. Bart Gee was able to share his inspirational #BreakingLimits story in assembly then led four workshops for the children to participate in.



Impact so far:

Clear expectations are noticeable in all classes. Staff and pupils use key phrases.

“A shared culture of growth is now visible across the school, with children tackling challenges and overcoming barriers much more easily.”

87% of teachers now feel that they have a **growth classroom mindset** (in the Autumn term just 28% felt this, and 72% felt they had a mixed mindset).

100% of teachers now feel that the **school has a Growth Mindset** (in the Autumn term 72% felt the school had a mixed, and 28% a fixed, mindset).

Example of data from a Year 4 class:

- + 75% of children fully met their individual Growth Mindset target
- + 25% of children partly met their Growth Mindset target

Any advice for schools starting their Whole Education journey?

“Ensure that all staff feel part of the journey and that they take ownership of their part in the development of the school project. It should not be an idea from one member of the senior team. The best way to go about things is to codesign what the project could look like.”

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