

A Growth Mindset

Much of our understanding about having a growth mindset and the psychology behind this simple term stems from the work of Carol Dweck, outlined in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Ballantine Books, 2006). In her work, Dweck describes two ways of thinking: fixed and growth mindset.

A fixed mindset assumes our character, intelligence and ability is rigid and cannot be changed. This leads individuals to place limits on what they can achieve.

A growth mindset is based on the understanding that innate ability is just a starting point and that a person's abilities can be developed through hard work and perseverance. These individuals have the confidence to try new things and view failure as an opportunity for growth and develop a love of learning.

Dweck explains that individuals do not necessarily operate at the mindset extremes, but sometimes apply differing mental processes to different areas of their life. These strategies of thinking can be developed both consciously and intuitively at quite a young age and determine how an individual will instinctively operate.

A growth mindset is liberating, as it places hard work and practice as the determining factors for improving a person's skillset. Dweck found that even very young children have already adopted a mindset. When offered a choice some children will choose the task they know they will succeed, whilst others will be inclined to try a new task in which the outcome is unknown. Dweck's research not only identifies the key aspects of this mindset but explores how the brain operates and how it can be reprogrammed for greater learning.

In reality, we appreciate that not all aspects of a person's life can be developed to the same extent, but there is a truth and wisdom around a breadth of learning and a holistic approach to education.

At Fig Tree Pocket State School, a growth mindset underpins our learning framework which specifically encourages children to attempt new challenges with their learning. The consistent message to our students is that they need to apply themselves to their learning, focusing their minds on the process of learning as well as the outcome. This is why Student Reports record attitude and achievement. Our learning assets of collaborating, self-management, communication, thinking and research enable our students to be active learners. At Fig Tree Pocket, we aim to instil a growth mindset, enabling our students to be highly literate, numerate, and actively curious about the changing world.