**CHANGE YOUR LANGUAGE – CHANGE YOUR MINDSET: A guide for staff and students.**

**CHANGING YOUR OWN LANGUAGE**

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| **GENERAL FEEDBACK COMMENTS WITHIN THE LESSON** | | |
| ***Preface critical comments with:*** | * The comments I provide are quite critical, but I hope helpful. * Remember, I wouldn’t go to the trouble of giving you this feedback if I didn’t care about your learning and didn’t want you to achieve highly. | |
| ***When students succeed through effort:*** | * I’m so proud of the effort you have demonstrated in order to improve your grade, stay on task, complete your homework, get along with your fellow student, etc. * Congratulations, you used different strategies to solve that problem, complete that task, manage your time or behaviour, etc. * Well done! You really persevered with that task/challenging situation. * Well done – you must have worked really hard on this. * I can see how you improved this when you went back over it. * Please share one mistake that you learned from to help you improve. * You tried all kinds of different strategies to solve that problem. * Can you see how the effort you put into this paid off? * Compare the difference in this work to what you produced earlier. | |
| ***When students face struggle or failure:*** | * OK, so you didn’t do as well as you wanted to. Let’s look at this as an opportunity to learn. * What parts did you do well in? What parts were difficult for you? * What did you do to prepare for this? Is there anything you could have done differently? * Who else achieved in this? What did they do and can we learn from them? * When you are struggling, you are learning – it’s your brain trying to make new connections. * If it was easy you wouldn’t be learning anything. * Let’s try and break this down into steps. * It is okay to make mistakes, provided you learn from them. * Have a go – I can always work on the mistakes with you when I see where you haven’t got it yet | |
| ***When students succeed quickly with little effort:*** | * It looks like your skills weren’t really challenged today. Let’s look for ways you can challenge yourself more. * It’s great that you can do that. Now we need to find something a bit more challenging, so you can grow. * I’m sorry you didn’t find that task difficult. Next time I will make things harder so that you can learn more. | |
| **DIRECT REPLACEMENTS** | | |
| ***Instead of…*** | | ***...try:*** |
| “You are a talented student” | | “You have a keen interest in this subject” |
| “You learn quickly” | | “You find solutions to solving problems and you are keen to respond to tasks” |
| “You find learning easy” | | “You put in the effort so that you can acquire the necessary learning” |
| “You did really well” | | “You made excellent progress because of the hard work that you put in” |
| “You have a natural gift” | | “You put considerable effort into demonstrating what you know about the subject whilst being eager to discover more” |
| “You are a brilliant student” | | “You have demonstrated real skill in the application of learning” |
| ***Remember: Give praise for taking initiative, seeing a difficult task through, for struggling and learning something new, for being undaunted by a setback, or for being open to and acting on criticism.*** | | |
| ***Key words: Effort, perseverance, resilience, determined, enquiring, hardworking, conscientious, strategies, learning.*** | | |

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| **USEFUL PHRASES - REPORTS AND ACADEMIC CONSULTATION EVENINGS** | | | |
| ‘Shows resilience when faced with problems’ | ‘Acts upon feedback readily…’ | ‘Finds solutions to solving problems’ | ‘Is keen to respond to tasks’ |
| ‘Overcomes or takes on challenges’ | ‘Shows a willingness to take risks with…’ | ‘Understands that effort is the key to success’ | ‘Readily engages with the challenges of …’ |
| ‘Learns from mistakes’ | ‘Makes an effective contribution to…’ | ‘Shows persistence’ | ‘Demonstrates a desire to embrace new challenges’ |
| 'Focuses on the problems to be tackled’ | ‘Is highly committed to improving own learning’ | ‘Admits and corrects mistakes’ | ‘Keeps going when things get difficult’ |
| ‘Accepts/acts upon constructive criticism’ | ‘Tries all kinds of different strategies to solve problems’ | ‘Is capable of tackling challenging tasks’ | ‘challenges himself to continue to improve’ |
| **PHRASES TO AVOID – REPORTS AND ACADEMIC CONSULTATION EVENINGS** | | | |
| ‘Finds tasks easy’ | ‘Intelligent, Smart, Clever’ | ‘Natural talent’ | ‘Innate talent’ |
| ‘Completes tasks quickly’ | ‘Things come naturally’ | ‘Gifted/Talented’ | ‘Is a very clever pupil’ |
| ‘…learned that so quickly!’ | ‘Achieves levels quickly’ | ‘Natural ability’ | ‘a brilliant student’ |

**CHANGING STUDENTS LANGUAGE**

Be mindful of the language a student uses and be prepared to challenge it, making reference to the student’s mindset.

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| **FIXED MINDSET OVERTONES** | **GROWTH MINDSET OVERTONES** |
| Ability, more able, highly able | SKILLS, MORE SKILLED, HIGHLY SKILLED |
| Work (something we do – probably reluctantly – for someone else) | LEARNING (something we choose to do for ourselves) |
| Gifted and talented (implied genetic reason) | HIGH ACHIEVING (through effort, persistence and feedback) |
| Rewards (extrinsic) | RECOGNITION (intrinsic) |
| Level, Grade, Performance, Result, Mark | LEARNING, LEARNING, LEARNING, LEARNING, LEARNING |

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| **WHAT CAN STUDENTS SAY TO THEMSELVES?** | |
| ***Instead of….*** | ***Try….*** |
| ‘This is too difficult.’ | ‘This might take some time and effort’. |
| ‘I can’t make this better.’ | ‘I can always improve so I will keep on trying.’ |
| ‘I am making too many mistakes’. | ‘Mistakes help me to learn so the more the better!’ |
| ‘She/he is so good at that – I will never be that good’ | ‘I am going to learn from that person to see what they do differently to me’ |
| ‘I just can’t do Maths/PE/Art etc.’ | ‘I am going to put even more effort in to improve in Maths/PE/Art etc.’ |
| ‘I’m brilliant at this!’ | ‘If I don’t find something difficult, then I’m not learning.’ |
| ‘I give up.’ | ‘I will try a different strategy.’ |
| ‘I’m not very good at this.’ | ‘What is it that I am missing?’ |
| ‘I will never be able to do this.’ | ‘I am determined to learn more about this.’ |
| ‘It’s good enough.’ | ‘How can I improve my work further still?’ |

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| **…..YET** | |
| Make the students rephrase simple ‘I can’t’ statements with the word ‘yet’ at the end to indicate that learning and intelligence is fluid and can change over time. Just because they can’t do something at that specific moment in time doesn’t mean that this can’t be changed. | |
| ***Instead of….*** | ***Try….*** |
| ‘I can’t do this.’ | ‘I can’t do this YET.’ |
| ‘I can’t do these questions.’ | ‘I can’t do these questions YET.’ |
| ‘I’m not very good at this.’ | ‘I’m not very good at this YET.’ |
| ‘I can’t play a musical instrument.’ | ‘I can’t play a musical instrument YET.’ |
| ‘I’m not very good at high jump.’ | ‘I’m not very good at high jump YET.’ |
| ‘I can’t do algebra.’ | ‘I can’t do algebra YET.’ |

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| **F** IRST  **A** TTEMPT  **I** N  **L** EARNING | **M** EANS  **I**  **S** TART  **T** O  **A** CQUIRE  **K** NOWLEDGE  **E** XPERIENCE and  **S** KILLS |