Learning, growing, achieving-TOGETHER

St Meryl School Learning Powers Overview for Parents and Carers

What are learning powers?

Building Learning Powers (BLP) is a programme designed by Professor Guy Claxton and used by us at St Meryl School.

Building learning power is about helping young people to become better learners, both in school and out.

Students who are more confident of their own learning ability learn faster and learn better. They concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable. Building Learning Power prepares youngsters better for an uncertain future. At St Meryl School we agree with the thinking behind BLP that today's schools need to be educating not just for exam results but for lifelong learning. To thrive in the 21st century, it is not enough to leave school with a clutch of examination certificates. Our children need to have learnt how to be tenacious and resourceful, imaginative and logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive.

BLP is about creating a culture that systematically cultivates habits and attitudes that enable young people to face difficulty and uncertainty calmly, confidently and creatively. This is done by getting children to cultivate and develop certain learning dispositions or ways of thinking that build up and increase their overall learning power.

The 4 R's

In BLP there are 4 learning power dispositions, often referred to as the 4 R's. These are: RESILIENCE, RECIPROCITY, REFLECTIVENESS and RESOURCEFULNESS.

RESILIENCE (the feelings to do with learning)	
What this is-being ready, willing and able to really focus on learning, knowing how to work through difficulties when the going gets tough. We call this 'stickability' and it is one of our school's core values.	**What you can do to help your child stretch this learning muscle and be a more resilient learner:**
Absorption-being able to lose yourself in learning-becoming engrossed in learning, 'in the zone.'	Help your child by allowing them the time to become absorbed in their learning and work undisturbed. Really channel their interests.
Managing distractions-recognising what distracts them and the effect this has on their learning. Learning strategies to help cope with and manage distractions.	Ensure your child is able to complete their homework without distractions such as the TV or other siblings. Engage them in a dialogue about what they find distracting and what they can do about it.
Noticing-seeing subtle differences, patterns and details in different experiences. Good learning is all about making connections and 'joining up the dots.'	Help your child to see patterns and to make connections with previous learning and other experiences. Help them to apply what they have learnt to other situations, for example, if they know the 3 times table, help them to see that this will mean they can also do division using the 3 times table.
Perseverance-keeping going in the face of difficulties, channelling the energy of frustration positively	Encourage your child to complete their homework, even if it is tricky. Encourage your child to stick at things such as a new club etc. Teach them to not just give up whenever they lose interest in something or find it challenging.

RECIPROCITY (the social side of learning)	
What this is-being ready, willing and able to learn alone or with others, effectively communicating and empathising with them	**What you can do to help your child stretch this learning muscle and be a more reciprocal learner:**
Interdependence-knowing when it's appropriate to learn on your own or with others and being able to stand your ground in debate	Encourage your child to work on their own at times and at other times with their brothers and sisters or friends. Help them to explain their views and thinking and stick to them.
Collaboration-knowing how to manage yourself in the give and take of a collaborative activity, respecting and recognising other view points, working as a team	Set up activities and games which mean your child has to give and take with other people who are playing. Help them to recognise other people's skills.
Empathy and listening-contributing to others' experiences by listening to them to understand what they are really saying and putting yourself in their shoes.	Encourage your child to understand how other people in your home feel and what it would be like to experience that feeling.
Imitation-adopting and using good habits and strategies used by others	Your child learns so much from you every day. By being a good role-model, having high expectations of good manners and a good work ethic your child will adopt these too.





REFLECTIVENESS (managing learning)	
What this is-being ready, willing and able to become more strategic about learning-to take a longer-term view by planning, taking stock and drawing out experiences as a learner to get the best out of oneself	**What you can do to help your child stretch this learning muscle and be a more reflective learner:**
Planning-thinking about where you are going, the action you are going to take, the time and resources you will need and the obstacles you may encounter	Involve your child in planning trips out; to the shops or somewhere else. Talk to them about how you will get there, what you will need, things you will need to remember.
Revising-being flexible, changing your plans in the light of different circumstances, monitoring and reviewing how things are going and seeing new possibilities	If your child is involved in an activity with you or you are discussing something that might have happened at school, take time to talk about how things are going, what could change and how it could be better
Distilling-looking at what is being learned, pulling out the key bits, identifying which aspects will help or be useful in the future-being your own learning coach	Ask your child to tell you the 3 most important things they learnt during the day. Talk about why they chose them and what difference it will make to them.
Meta-learning-knowing yourself as a learner and how you learn best-what works for you.	Talk to your child about what they have learnt and how they learnt it. Talk about how they like to learn-is it by listening, by doing, by reading?



RESOURCEFULNESS (thinking about learning)	
What this is-being ready, willing and able to learn in different ways using the resources available to them.	**What you can do to help your child stretch this learning muscle and be a more resourceful learner:**
Questioning-asking questions of yourself or others. Being curious, wanting to find things out.	Encourage your child to ask questions and explain the answers. If you don't know the answer, ask-'How could we find out together?' Encourage 'why?' 'what if…?' 'How do you think…?' 'What do you think…?' 'Can you explain…?' questions.
Making links-seeing connections between different events, weaving a web of understanding	Help your child to see links between what they learn in school and the real world. Help them to see links between what happens in the wider world and experiences other people have had with their own life here.
Imagining-using your imagination or intuition to put yourself through new experiences or explore possibilities. Wondering 'What if…?'	Encourage your child's imagination through story-telling, listening to stories, planning new experiences, enter their world and play along with them as they pretend to be other people in other places. Fly to the Moon in an imaginary space rocket with them!
Reasoning-Working things out methodically, constructing good arguments and spotting flaws in others' arguments	Encourage debates with your child and help them to carry out tasks at home in a logical way
Capitalising-using a full range of resources from the wider world-other people, books, the internet	Encourage your child to use a range of resources when they are doing anything at home; help them to try new things.