

Part Four

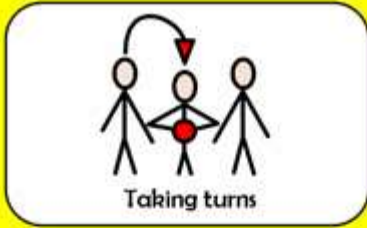
Relationships

(known as Reciprocity in the BLP approach)

Learning alone and with others

Building Learning Power (BLP) is about becoming better learners and throughout the approach with the children we refer to using our 'learning muscles'. Just as our physical muscles need exercising to grow strong, so too do our learning muscles.

The final part of the programme is all about Relationships (officially called reciprocity) – learning together with others in effective collaboration and teamwork, knowing when it is more useful to learn alone, and learning from others by watching and imitating their good learning habits.



Taking Turns

This is not just when playing games, but in conversation and the wider social context. It also involves the skill of noticing when someone is not taking their turn and inviting them in or giving them space to contribute. It relates to a sense of fairness and also self-awareness and self-confidence in expecting to have a turn and to be an equal part of a group. It implies a positive mind set where individuals expect their views to be heard and a sense of respect in allowing others to have their turn. This skill enables us to learn from others, soaking up their ideas and skills as we watch and listen.

Working Well On Your Own

This is about balancing self-reliance with sociability. There are times to work together, but there are times to work alone which brings its own satisfaction and time to follow our own dreams and ideas. It is about independence and the joy and sense of achievement that brings, but also the skill to know when to ask for help to allow you to then move on again independently. It is the balance between working alone and together – interdependence. This also relates to our sense of self and self-belief. ***It is about taking responsibility and control of our own learning.***

Working Well Together

To do this this you need aspects of the other three areas here. This is the skill of working with others, truly collaborating rather than just working along- side on the same project. This involves the ability to share, but also to communicate well. We often use phrases such as, 'Use your words'. This is just one way to encourage and remind ourselves that to successfully work together we need to let others know what we are thinking and feeling. It naturally then also involves listening and understanding what others are thinking and feeling.



Listening to Each Other

This goes beyond simply hearing what someone else says. It might mean that as a result you take on the ideas of others, picking up their positive habits or values. It might mean respectfully disagreeing and accepting that others have different ideas, values and beliefs to yourself. It will definitely inspire conversations with phrases such as 'I agree because', 'I disagree because' or 'tell me more'.

The Language of Relationships we use in the classroom

What do you enjoy about learning with other people?

How does this help you become a better learner?

When is it good to learn on your own?

What does it feel like when other people disagree with you?

What would help you stick with your own ideas?

What makes you change your views?

Maybe go and think about this quietly by yourself and sort out your ideas before working with others.

How could you help each other? Can you add your ideas to this?

I know you're excited about this, but if you all talk at the same time we won't hear each other.

What might you say that shows that you respect the person but disagree with the idea? (I agree because, I like how you shared your ideas, but mine are different I think....)

Thank you for listening so carefully.

I felt you were listening because.... (you kept your eyes on me, you smiled and nodded when I was talking, you answered me...etc)

That's an interesting opinion. How many more points of view can we find out?

Look at their faces. What do you think they are feeling?

What do you think might be the reasons why.... thinks that?

Look very carefully at someone you think is doing really well and think about how you can do it like that.

Who have you learnt something from today?

How can parents help children to have good relationships?

- Model them – let your children see and hear you having positive discussions and debates with other people
- When sorting out disagreements between siblings, help them to structure a reasonable discussion using the language used above to encourage good listening and respecting differing opinions
- Actively encourage your child to have their own views, ideas and thoughts
- Create opportunities to work together on collaborative tasks – it can be something as simple as a board game or baking some cakes together
- Encourage your child to do things alone to develop independence
- Show them what it is to be a good listener, even if you are really busy so that they know their thoughts matter and are valued.