

# BUILDING LEARNING



# POWER

Part One



# Resilience

**Bouncing back and sticking at it!**

Building Learning Power (BLP) is exactly what it suggests. It is about helping children people become better learners, both in school and out. It is about creating a climate that cultivates habits and attitudes that enable young people to face difficulty and uncertainty calmly, confidently and creatively.

Pupils who are more confident of their own learning ability, learn faster and learn better. They concentrate more, think harder and find learning more enjoyable.

This is not an instant programme but it takes root and develops over time. How well you learn is not a matter of how bright you are. It is a matter of experience and good coaching. Being a good real-life learner means knowing what is worth learning, what you are good (or not so good) at learning, who can help, how to face confusion without getting upset and what is the best learning tool for the job at hand.

At St Ippolyts School we believe in giving our children these skills, teaching **how** to learn alongside the necessary academic, physical and social skills. We already have some of the principles of BLP embedded in our practice at St Ippolyts, but through this project aim to make these elements more explicit so that children can articulate and recognize learning skills for themselves.

## Good concentration

Being involved and concentrating are perhaps obvious tools to have to be a better learner. Concentration and real involvement can be seen from birth as children try to make sense of the world around them. You only need to look at photos of children completely absorbed in their learning, a picture tells a thousand words as you see them intent on what they are doing. However, the development of this skill takes time when it is required in things that perhaps do not naturally capture our interest. So then, this is also about developing a love of learning, whatever the subject. Paying attention and noticing lead to concentration.

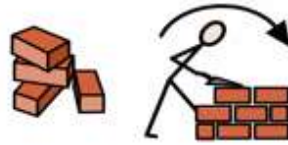


### Don't give up – try, try, again Perseverance

Facing a challenge raises a multitude of feelings. It can be disappointing or make you feel like you will not succeed. However, if everything was easy how would we develop the skills we need to solve problems?

***Learning is not easy and just because you face a challenge does not mean that you are not capable.***

These are important messages. Being able to shift away from these feelings and instead to focus on the challenge is the key to developing a spirit that shouts, 'I won't give up!' What a sense of achievement when we succeed.



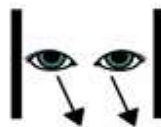
Don't give up



Don't worry if you make a mistake



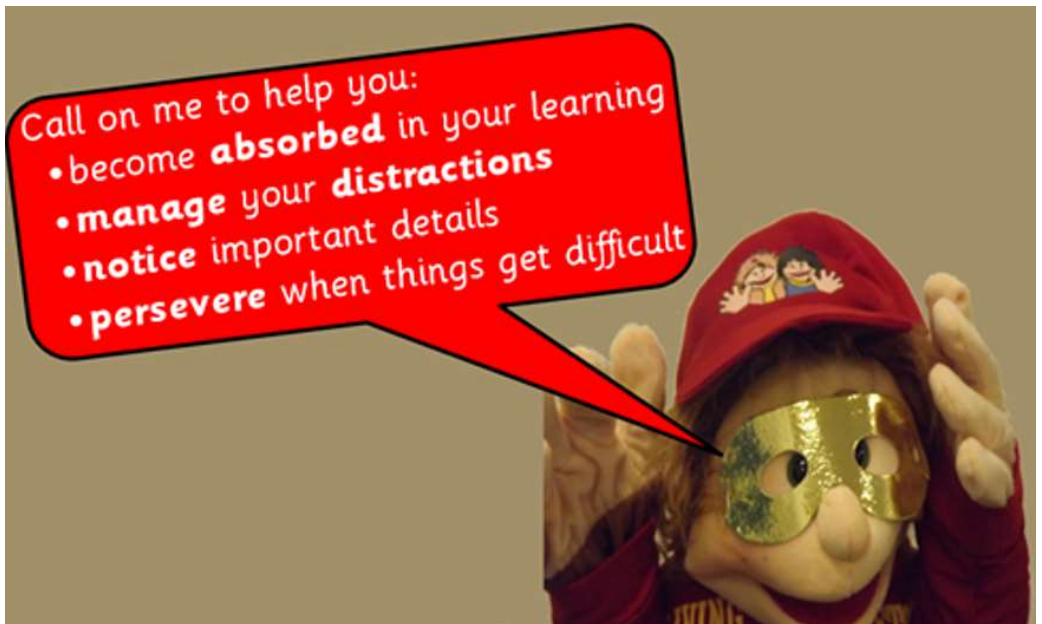
Managing distractions



Good concentration

## Managing distractions

Many things can distract us from what we are doing, even our own minds! Being able to manage distractions is a vital 'learning tool'. Paying attention, noticing, persevering and having a go (even when you want to be doing something else or are hungry, tired or in a noisy environment) is a learnt skill. Helping children to identify and manage their own distractions and settle back to tasks after an interruption are key skills for learning. This is also really useful for homework too – some children work better straight after school, some after they have eaten and some only if there is silence and they are physically comfortable.



## Don't worry if you make a mistake

Being willing to have a go is a vital prerequisite for learning and life. If we are not confident enough to try, we achieve nothing. Sometimes we can experience anxiety about having a go because we are worried about making a mistake, or not knowing what to do. If children grow up with the message that 'getting things right' is what is important, they will be reluctant to even attempt new things; this can create real anxiety issues. *Talking to children about the value of making mistakes helps them understand and believe that mistakes are a key way we learn and improve.*

## The Language of Resilience we use in the classroom

You look as though you are really enjoying puzzling over that.

What did it feel like the last time you got really into something?

What do you think might help you feel like that again?

What do you find gets in the way of your learning?

What would help you to avoid these distractions?

What can we do to help you focus on what you want to do?

What can you do to help focus yourself?

Great! I noticed you went back to your learning quickly after that interruption.

Imagine you are in a good place for learning. What is it like?

What is this? Touch it, smell it, listen to it, look at it. What do you notice? What are your senses telling you?

Let's be patient a little longer and see what else we can notice about...

We can do it! Don't give up!

What happened when you got stuck before, what did you do to work it out last time?

I'm not really sure about how to do this. Any ideas?

I made a mistake here. I wonder why that might be? How can I move on?

Everyone finds learning difficult at times.

Great! You've come through that confused feeling, what helped you?

## How can parents help children to be resilient?

- Talk with your child about times they have overcome obstacles in their learning such as riding a bike or mastering handwriting
- Reinforce the message that 'getting it all right' isn't the main thing – but having a go and sticking at it is the key to learning
- Help your child identify their own conditions for learning at home with homework tasks – such as quietness or the time of day that suits them best
- Model perseverance and draw your child's attention to times you may find yourself facing a challenge as an adult – so that children see that learning is for grown ups as well as children!
- Support your child to 'bounce back' from any disappointments – for example if they don't get full marks in their spellings, the part they wanted in a school show or get chosen for something. Help them to understand that in life not everything will go their way – children who can develop this ability to 'bounce back' develop a much calmer and rational outlook as adults.