



# GCSE Success

and beyond

## Introduction

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Welcome to the future.

In this document we will outline some of the fundamental ways in which we will help prepare your son for his GCSEs and beyond. A successful education system can't just focus on a part or stage of learning; rather it has to be taken as a whole. This document outlines two of the essential approaches to your son's education. Firstly the principles of a Growth Mindset and the important role it will play in preparing your son for a lifetime of learning and change. Secondly, the intrinsic use of technology in our working lives and how this must be embedded in our education system.



# Mindsets

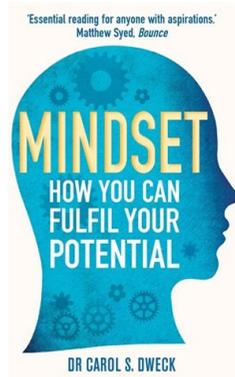
## Mindsets- Fixed and Growth

A mindset is a BELIEF about your abilities/intelligences

Fixed mindset – the BELIEF that your abilities/intelligences can't change. You are stuck with what you were given at birth.

Growth mindset – the BELIEF that your abilities/intelligences can be developed

These ideas have been developed by Carol Dweck. 'Mindset – How you can fulfil your potential' provides a good introduction to the idea of growth and fixed mindsets



## Carol Dweck

Key research – a maths test where students who thought (and were told ) that they were good at maths struggled with the easy questions at the end of the test after encountering the 'impossible' questions placed in the middle section of the test. The more 'average' students (who hadn't been told they were good) were not as put off by the impossible questions and were able to do the easy questions.

Dweck suggested that this first set of students had a fixed mindset such that they were put off when something (the tougher questions) challenged their status of being good.



Fixed Mindset (intelligence is static)	Growth Mindset (intelligence can be developed)
<p>leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* avoid challenges</li> <li>* gets defensive or give up easily</li> <li>* sees effort as fruitless or worse</li> <li>* ignores useful negative feedback</li> <li>* feels threatened by the success of others.</li> </ul> <p><i>As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.</i></p>	<p>leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* embrace challenges</li> <li>* persists in the face of setbacks</li> <li>* sees effort as the path to mastery</li> <li>* learns from criticism</li> <li>* finds lessons and inspiration in the success of others.</li> </ul> <p><i>As a result, they reach even higher levels of achievement.</i></p>

The effect on subsequent of learning and progress of having a growth mindset rather than a fixed one becomes more marked with time. Those with a growth mindset tend to develop into more effective and efficient learners.

Mindset	Intelligence is fixed	Intelligence is growable
Priority	Prove my learning (show I am bright)	Improve my learning (become brighter)
Seeks out	Quick wins, easy successes as these show that I am intellectually well endowed	Challenges, smart friends and other opportunities to learn and improve, as all these assist my development
Avoids	Tough challenges, effort, difficulty, higher performing peers	Tasks and situations that I've already mastered as there is no new learning
When things get tough	I become flaky, flustered or simply walk away from the task, doubting my capacity to accomplish. Maybe cheat?	I try harder or revise my strategy. I show resilience, creativity and grit and therefore become a better learner

## Growth Mindset at Watford Boys

The school wants to develop growth mindset traits in our students.

We are looking at how to develop a challenge-based, risk-taking culture in our classroom where making mistakes is celebrated. (FAIL...First Attempt in Learning).

We are looking to develop a growth mindset lexicon. The words and phrases that teachers and their students use affects how they think.

Fixed Mindset Phrases I Use	Alternate Growth Mindset Phrases
Work (something we do – probably reluctantly and for someone else)	Learning
High Ability	High skillset / High achieving
Well done/good/Excellent	Keep going
Homework - LOL	Good effort – specific, questioning, curiosity
Test – assessment opportunity	Excellent and have you thought . . .
Wrong – not yet (correct) learnt	High creativity
Lost	You have tried hard at .....
Setting	Potential for improvement
You're brilliant – that is an excellent effort at this task	Low ability/working towards
Low ability	Challenge
Sporty	I can learn from his work
Can't	This will further my understanding/this is interesting
Hard	Really good effort. You improved . . .
He did better than me	What did you find difficult? Why didn't you achieve so well here?
Do I need to know this	Working towards/improving
Poor effort	Working towards excellence
Targets	Different learning style /not yet fulfilling potential
Just behind	Not working hard enough
Gifted and talented	I can't do this yet but to improve I can . . .
Stupid	You have . . . (specify)
Lazy	Challenge for next lesson
I can't do this	Independent investigation
You got full marks	Information Application – when will a challenge appear?
You are good at drawing – implies black or white – good or not	Why is it?
Good	How can you improve/develop that?
It just is	Specific praise to your subject
Your're wrong – do it again	Progress



## Growth mindset at Home

Your children will be influenced by YOUR mindset and the language you use. Do you have a growth or fixed mindset? To what extent do you praise your children for attainment rather than effort?

When people are asked what is the single thing that they attribute to achieving a goal, they rarely mention natural ability. Here are some of the more common reasons that people attribute to their attainment of a goal:

Effort	Advice
Support from others	Bouncing back when I failed
perseverance	Imagining myself doing it
determination	Constructive feedback
Risk taking	Having a vision
Having a go	Sacrifice
Enjoying the process	Self discipline
Patience	Sacrifice
Coping with obstacles	Proving others wrong
Practice	Trying a different approach
Planning	Encouragement

## Future Learning - 1:1 Computer Access

### Introduction

The use of ICT in the workplace is now totally pervasive due to its impact on productivity and innovation so why should things be different in schools? We need to prepare and educate students in the use of ICT so they see it as a tool to enable success and not just for leisure. To reinforce this point an influential study has found that students are not learning enough of their digital skills in school. A further study, by the OECD recommends that governments integrate the use of ICT throughout the educational curriculum.

Embedding ICT in the curriculum can improve academic performance. However, that is not the main reason for adopting the strategy at WBGS. Instead it is the way in which it can change the learning experience, increase curiosity and independence and prepare students for a digital rich future.

Having a digital device available in all lessons does not mean that it will be used all of the time; students will still predominately write in exercise books using a pen, will work in groups, conduct role plays, have debates, read from books and engage in a myriad of other learning experiences.

All students in Year 9 will be expected to have a digital device from the start of school in September

### Benefits

At present, e-learning is limited at WBGS by the availability of PCs and laptops. In order for a class to engage with e-learning, most teachers have to book a computer room or a set of laptop – resources in very high demand! We want to integrate e-learning into all lessons so that it can be used when it is appropriate, not simply when a computer room is free.

The advent of new GCSEs has also sparked a publishing revolution and many of the new text books are coming in a digital format with added content and dynamic learning experiences.

### The Device

The scheme that we are running allows a lot of flexibility in the type of device that students are allowed to use. Any type of WiFi enabled tablet or mini-book is suitable, however the device must be able to keep a charge for longer than 5 hours which rules out laptops as there will be minimal opportunity to charge the device during the school day.



## Frequently Asked Questions

Please find detailed below a list of FAQs and our responses.

### Why are we introducing this scheme?

In summary:

- Students are more motivated and enjoy their learning.
- Access to educational software and resources at home.
- Access to digital learning including interactive and multimedia content.
- Ability to work anywhere (e.g. on field trips).
- Students are skilled for work or further education.
- Students are better prepared for this 'digital age'
- Support for a growth mindset education
- Have the potential to increase student achievement even further.

### Does my son have to bring a digital device into school?

Yes, all year 9 students in September will be expected to have a suitable digital device.

### How will we balance use of digital devices with other resources?

The idea of students using ICT 24/7 does not appeal to parents. Nor does it appeal to teachers.

Anytime/anywhere access does not require that students must use them at all times and in all places – there is a big difference between availability of access and actual usage. The purpose of this scheme is that it permits appropriate use of ICT for parts of lessons and for some, but not all homework. This scheme will allow ICT use amongst other learning activities in a judicious blend in any one lesson. Students will not become robots incapable of communicating with one another face to face simply because they use their devices for some of the time; e-learning does not replace other learning – it supplements it.

### Can my son use his smartphone?

Phones and phablets have direct access to the internet so are not restricted by the school's WiFi network and security policies. Unregulated internet access might prove too much of a distraction to some students and will not allow the school to provide the safe learning environment that you would expect and that we now have an obligation to deliver.

### How will we ensure that no student's handwriting will suffer?

Students will still be required to write for exams and in life, although it's worth noting that more and more people need typing skills in their jobs. The students need to be able to do both – once again, the strategy must ensure that there is a balance of use. In addition, we will be running touch-typing courses.

### Won't these devices run out of battery life during the day?

Improvements in battery technology have lagged behind other developments but the position has been greatly improved. The devices that we recommend and other similar tablets and mini-books have a reported battery life of over 5 hours. Therefore, the battery life will be sufficient if students are trained to charge their devices at home each evening. If there are problems that emerge during the course of the day, facilities will be available from the ICT team so that learning doesn't stop.

### What about the safety of the device and possible theft

When similar schemes have been adopted in other schools there have been no increases in aggravated theft. Similarly students have taken personal responsibility for the devices and have kept them locked away when not in use. It is also advised that a protective case is used to help minimise accidental damage. A comprehensive ground rules guide will be given to the boys as part of our induction process. We will be encouraging our students to carry devices inside their school bags so that they are less visible and we will encourage them to give up their devices without any resistance in the very unlikely event of street robbery.

Finally it is worth checking home contents insurance to see if the device will be covered outside of the home and if not whether you think it is worthwhile purchasing separate insurance.

### Why a BYOD scheme?

Schools have never had the capacity to purchase a computer for every student even though, educationally, it is in their best interest. There is no prospect of this changing. Having a BYOD scheme means that students that already have a suitable device at home can use it with no added expenditure and those that don't can select the device that is most appropriate. The school will provide a list of recommended machines but other similar devices can also be used.

The school has already invested heavily in the Wi-Fi infrastructure to support these devices and has a robust plan going forward to ensure we provide the necessary capacity and support for this new learning environment.

### Can I use my existing device, i.e. iPad, ChromeBook, Surface etc

Yes, you can use any existing device that you already own as long as

- It has enough battery life to last the school day/ 5 hours of use
- It should have a protective case
- It is not too big so as to make transporting it and locking it away an issue. This coupled with battery life is the reason why we would suggest that a full laptop is not suitable.
- It is not a phone or phablet.

### Do I need a dedicated keyboard for the device?

No, however it is preferable. If you already have a suitable device but it doesn't have a keyboard, then please don't feel obliged to buy one immediately, rather wait and see how your son uses the device during lesson.

### What happens if a student doesn't have a suitable device already and parent(s) cannot afford to buy a new device?

The school aims to work with its parents to help all students access the best education. If parents encounter difficulties or unexpected changes in circumstances, these should be discussed in confidence with the school as soon as possible. We will strive to find a solution. We fully subscribe to the principle of equity.

### Where will the devices be stored when they are not in use?

All students in Year 9 are issued with a locker which they can use whilst their device is not required (e.g. at break, during games and lunchtime).

### Is there a Code of Conduct for the use of the device?

Yes, a group of students drew up a code of conduct which can be found at the end of this document.



### Do you have a recommended device if we want to buy a new device?

The three devices that we would recommend are detailed below. This list is not exhaustive and gives an idea of what type of device you could get. On Moodle we will also be posting further details over the next few days. In all instances this is a direct relationship between you and the supplier.

ASUS Z Series 7" approx £80.00 - <http://www.uk.insight.com/en-gb/productinfo/tablets/0005007556>

Linx Win 10 tablet approx £135.00 – <http://www.uk.insight.com/en-gb/apps/nbs/results.php?K=linx+w10>

HP X2 210 approx £190.00 - <http://www.uk.insight.com/en-gb/apps/nbs/results.php?K=hp+x2+210>

### Will my son be using the device too much?

Within lessons your son will be using the device as appropriate to the task(s) and will not be excessive. The school network will also limit their access to inappropriate websites and content. If you have concerns about your son's use of the device during break, lunch and at home then there are a range of "apps" that you can buy to help monitor &/ or restrict access to the device.



## Student Agreement – BYOD Device

This agreement is between the Student, Parent/ Carer and School. The device mentioned in the Code of Conduct is the one, owned by the student/ parent and which has been bought into school to aid learning. The device must be either a tablet or mini-book and cannot be a phablet, phone, games console or laptop. The decision on the suitability of the device remains with the school.

By bringing a device into school you are agreeing to abide by this Code of Conduct, the School's Acceptable Use and eSafety policies.

- I will not take out the device or use the device in lessons unless told to do so by the teacher.
- I will only use the device to aid my learning and access appropriate resources as directed by the teacher.
- I will make sure the device is fully charged every night, ready for school the next day.
- I will use the device appropriately and follow the rules in the Acceptable Use/ eSafety agreement.
- I will not use the device to take photos or record other media of my fellow students or teachers and will not distribute any material produced by others.
- During the PE and Games I will take full responsibility for the safety of the device by securely storing it in my locker.
- The device will be locked away in my locker during any time when it is not on my person.
- I understand that if I do not follow all of the rules I will receive a sanction based on the seriousness of the incident and that the device may be confiscated:
  - for the lesson
  - for the remainder of the day
  - so I can't take it home at night
  - until my parent/ carer comes into school to collect the device and meets with staff