

## **Building Learning Power**

### **A Guide for Parents**

**'Term on term, year on year, a BLP school breeds young people who are more curious, more willing to take a risk and give it a go, more imaginative, more creative, more thoughtful, more ready, willing and able to learn with and through others. It's developing this adventurous spirit that counts'.**

**Professor Guy Claxton, originator of BLP**

**'Since we cannot know what knowledge will be needed in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance. Instead, our job must be to turn out young people who love learning so much, and who learn so well, that they will be able to learn whatever needs to be learned.'**

**John Holt**

At Chilmark and Fonthill Bishop we believe that the development of learning skills or what is increasingly being known as 'learning to learn' is inseparable from good subject teaching.

### **Key Principles**

- It is a learning culture that encourages children and teachers to become better learners
- It allows children to approach difficulties in learning without fear of failure • It allows the children to take small steps within learning
- It develops confidence
- It is not additional to teaching but should be grounded within everyday teaching and learning
- It gives clear labels for the children to use to develop understanding of learning processes

### **Why are we Building Learning Power?**

We believe that BLP is beginning to allow us to develop a common language for learning across the school. The language is used in all classrooms, with all children. This helps everyone talk about understanding learning to learn. We hope that this understanding will begin to spill over into life outside school, where you will be able to reinforce the ideas by encouraging the children to use their learning language in their everyday lives. The idea is that the four dispositions (4 Rs) are like a group of "learning muscles". Just as we can build our physical muscles with the right kind of exercise, learning muscles can also be developed and can grow in strength and stamina. It is these we are aiming to develop in the children.

### **What does BLP look like?**

You may have heard your children already using some of the language that has been introduced in school. Professor Claxton suggests there are four main learning dispositions:

- Resilience- not giving up,
- Resourcefulness- –being able to use a range of learning strategies and knowing what to do when you get stuck,

- Reflectiveness- being able to think about yourself as a learner and how you might be able to do this better,
  - Reciprocity- –being able to learn with and from others, as well as on your own.
- These dispositions are then split into seventeen learning ‘muscles’ that the children are encouraged to ‘stretch’ within their everyday lessons and activities and apply to different aspects of their learning.



## **HELPING YOUR CHILDREN TO BECOME BETTER LEARNERS AND ACHIEVE SUCCESS!**

### **HOW YOU CAN HELP DEVELOP THE FOUR R’s AT HOME?**

Our school works hard to help our children develop their learning skills. We do this through **Building the Learning Power (BLP)** which involves exercising the children’s skills in four key areas: **Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reflectiveness and Reciprocity**. Below are some suggestions that you might try with your children at home which will ultimately help develop their learning skills not just for school but for life! If you want any more information about the BLP please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s class teacher.

Ways you can help your child build their Learning Power at home:

#### **Resilience**

Demonstrate/model sticking at things even if they are difficult  
 Talk about how you feel when you are taking on challenges  
 Praise your child when they persevere but also encourage them to take a break when they have had enough  
 Help them to find interests and activities that are really absorbing  
 Talk with them about what help them to concentrate and manage distractions

#### **Resourcefulness**

Encourage questions  
 Demonstrate making links between different ideas  
 Don’t allow your child’s imagination to shrivel up!  
 Help them to find ways of using resources such as reference books, dictionaries, the Internet

#### **Reflectiveness**

Encourage them to take responsibility for preparing for school  
 Ask not what they did at school, but what they learned  
 Help them to think about, and plan, activities  
 Encourage flexibility and the ability to change a plan of necessary

#### **Reciprocity**

Demonstrate/model being a good learner  
 Work, play and learn alongside your children, enabling them to pick up good habits through imitation  
 Make expectations of turn-taking and cooperation clear