

# TEACHING AND LEARNING GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

Welcome to our newsletter offering guidance about ways to support your child's learning. Each month we share strategies we are using in school so that you might gain insight into ways we address issues and perhaps employ them at home to enhance progress for your son or daughter.

## BUILDING THROUGH REFLECTION

We have previously sent information about dedicated improvements and reflection time (DIRT), a strategy we use in class to ensure that pupils learn from past errors and build capacity for continued learning.

A simple technique we are developing is teaching students how to improve their writing by having them revise papers they have already written. Students who experiment with new sentence patterns and advanced grammatical structures, not from a textbook but from their own previous essays, are learning from application. For improved expression, this is far more motivating and worthwhile than going back to a less personal source. Pupils can be encouraged to do this with pieces written for homework or personal use at home.

## CHALLENGE

Challenge is a 'buzzword' in education but what do we mean in the classroom setting?

We advise our teachers to deliver lessons that are difficult and set work that causes students to think deeply and engage in healthy struggle. We want students to adopt a growth mindset as they are more likely to understand that hard work, effort and learning from failure are vital to their future success. Within reason, struggle supports learning.

We use a single, challenging learning objective in each lesson and as a result, our expectations remain high for all pupils, whatever their starting point. The role of the teacher, then, is to support all to reach, or even go beyond, this point.

To mirror some of what we are doing in school, you could challenge children at home to do an activity that is not too hard but just hard enough to make them have to think a bit. If you set the bar too high they will perhaps get bored and give up. However, just right and they can get excited by achieving or reflect on what they can do to keep on progressing. The possibilities for challenge are endless but often arise from a child asking how to do something and us as adults guiding them to find out for themselves how to do it, eg:

### Simple

Child: "How do you spell .....?"

Adult: "How do you think the word might start? What can you do next to confirm that?"

### More complex

Child: "My tire is flat on my bike. Can you get it fixed for me?"

Adult: "Go and have a look for a YouTube video on how to fix a puncture and then come back and tell me what we'll need to go out and buy."  
The child doing the practical activity could follow this up.

The examples given build independence and resilience.

## ADVICE OR ADVISE?

**Advice** is a noun and means a suggestion about what someone should do, eg:

- Let me give you some advice; stay away from Margaret.
- She gave him a lot of advice, but I don't think he listened.

**Advise** is a verb meaning 'to give someone advice', eg:

- I strongly advise you to lose weight.
- They finally did what we advised.

## ADVICE vs. ADVISE



When Tami advised Molly, she gave her advice