

# An Introduction to 'Building Learning Power'

'Helping young people become  
better learners'



# 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*



# What is Learning Power?

Building Learning Power (BLP) is an approach to learning that we have begun to implement at Glemsford Primary Academy. This approach was created by Professor Guy Claxton. It is based on the idea that we are all capable of becoming better learners. BLP applies this idea directly to the work of teachers in the classrooms, to provide a practical framework for fostering lifelong learning in all young people.

At Glemsford Primary Academy, our school ethos is one of striving to be the best we can be, recognising that we all have different strengths and interests.

BLP allows us to nurture this ethos and build the children's learning power through a variety of strategies and techniques.





## 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. We are focussing initially on the ‘Resilience’ muscle.

# The Resilience muscle is made

## Managing Distractions

Recognising and reducing distractions; knowing when to walk away and refresh yourself. Creating your own best environment for learning.



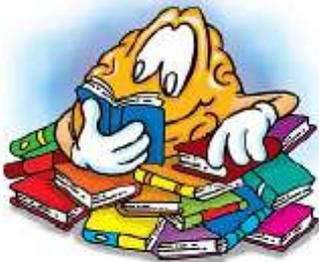
## Perseverance

Keeping going in the face of difficulties, channelling the energy of frustration productively. Knowing what a slow and uncertain process learning often is.



## Absorption

Being able to lose yourself in learning becoming absorbed in what you are doing; rapt and attentive, in a state of 'flow'.



## Noticing

Perceiving subtle nuances, patterns and details in experience.





# How can you help at home?

## Draw attention to, and model, positive learning habits

Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate/model sticking at things even if they are difficult.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Talk about how you feel when you are taking on challenges.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Praise your child when they persevere but also encourage them to take a break when they have had enough.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Help them to find interests and activities that are really absorbing.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Talk with them about what helps them to concentrate and manage distractions.</li></ul>
Resourcefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage questions</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate making links between different ideas</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Don't allow your child's imagination to shrivel up!</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Help them to find ways of using resources such as reference books, dictionaries, the Internet</li></ul>
Reflectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage them to take responsibility for preparing for school</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask not what they did at school, but what they learned</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Help them to think about, and plan, activities</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage flexibility and the ability to change a plan of necessary</li></ul>
Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate/model being a good learner</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Work, play and learn alongside your children, enabling them to pick up good habits through imitation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Make expectations of turn-taking and cooperation clear</li></ul>