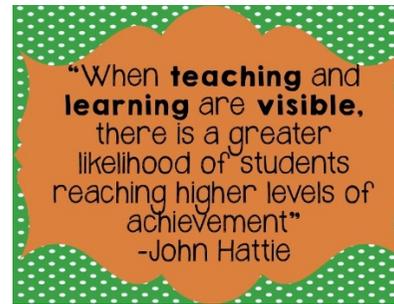


Learning at St John's Catholic Primary School



Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire.

W B Yeats



At St Johns' it is very important to us that children fulfil their potential and develop their skills as learners. We want them to recognise their own learning, how it is happening, where it is happening and when it is happening.

This is visible learning

The 'visible' refers to a few things. First, it refers to making student learning visible to teachers so they can know whether they are having an impact on this learning. Further, it also refers to making teaching visible to the student as well so that students learn to become their own teachers, an important component of becoming lifelong learners – something we want students to value.

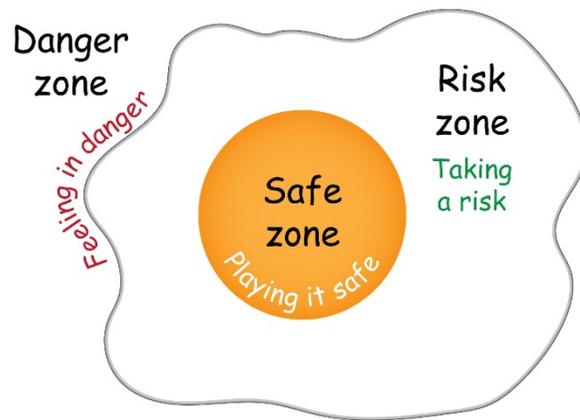
John Hattie Visible Learning 2009

In order to facilitate this, children are encouraged to recognise learning is an active process. Our job as teachers is not just to teach them the "right" answers. But rather to equip them to consider a range of solutions to any given problem, to choose one possible response and then explain why they made that choice. It may not be right, but the incorrect choice is a learning opportunity so that children can see how their approach needs to change.

For learning of this kind to flourish, children have to be willing to take risks and recognise learning is not about knowing the answers but being willing to have a go when you don't. That feeling of being unsure is not a negative emotion, it is resilience. Learning is a cognitive crisis. The brain encounters new information which clashes with what it currently understands and has to adapt to the new knowledge; learning occurs.

IT'S
okay
+
not know,
BUT IT'S
not okay
+
not try.

We can show this as follows:



The fried egg image helps children to recognise the feelings in the different zones. This image is used in the classrooms.

- The yolk is the comfort zone. It is an easy place to be, nice and soft but no learning is happening. Here children choose the easiest tasks and aim to achieve the minimum amount in class. They are reluctant to try new ideas and often give up quickly and seek adult help before even attempting things on their own. In the safe zone we only do what we are good at. Learning appears passive. A fixed mindset.

- The white is a little bit wobbly and that is the feeling we get when we are taking risks and learning new things. This is where the magic happens. It is about being resilient in the face of challenge and not just giving up. Children in this zone have a go at anything. Even if the work is new or challenging they get started and go as far as they can before asking for help. They see learning as active. A growth mindset.
- Sometimes there is too much new information and nothing to relate to and this is the danger zone where you start to panic. You can't make any links and it all seems too much to take in. It is like the burnt edges of a fried egg; too hot and dangerous. You may need help to get back to the risk zone. Children here may have missed learning due to frequent absence, or instead of asking for help they copy from their neighbour. They see learning as passive. Little learning happens here.

The Power of Yet.

Anyone can improve with hard work.

At St John's we discourage children from thinking *I can't do it* and instead *I can't do it **yet***. One small word makes a big difference. This is a growth mindset.

I'm not
telling you
it's going
to be
easy,
I'm
telling you
it's going
to be
WORTH IT.

For more information about growth mindset and the power of yet see the work of Carol Dweck.