<u>Learner Qualities: Mid-Session Review February 2017</u>

During session 2016-17, to support further development of **visible learners** at Dalkeith High School, we have been promoting the language of learning with a particular focus on **Learner Qualities**. The aim is to develop learning and teaching across the curriculum which encourages our young people to be:

- **Responsible**
- **Resourceful**
- **Resilient**
- **Reflective**

These qualities were introduced to staff through training at the beginning of the session with further consolidation in December 2016. PT(C)s were then asked to work with their departments to consider the following questions:

- What are our strengths in developing the Learner Qualities?
- What evidence do we have to support the view above?
- What are our development needs in this regard?
- How might we address these ahead of the next round of Learning Walks/ Visits?

The following information comes from a summary of departmental responses.

What are our strengths in developing the Learner Qualities?

Responsible

- Telling learners about different strategies for studying and revision and encouraging them to experiment (Modern Languages)
- Pupils have to manage a variety of deadlines (English)
- We link the Learner Qualities with skills for learning, life and work (Expressive Arts)
- Taking responsibility for the use of the equipment (Science)
- Engaging in home learning and meeting deadlines (Science)
- There are systems in place to encourage pupils to look after their work e.g. organising and saving work on the computer, putting materials in project bags (Technologies)
- Learners can be responsible in lots of ways such as researching for debates and reports (Social Subjects)

Resourceful

- Encouraging pupils to use their jotters/ classmates/ books rather than ask the teacher as first resort (Modern Languages)
- Pupils are encouraged to access and use resources without always having to seek permission (Expressive Arts)
- Pupils use study clubs to seek the support they need (Science)
- YPI is a clear example of pupils having to demonstrate their resourcefulness (Humanities)
- Exemplar work from previous students is used so that pupils know what they should be aiming for (Technologies)

Resilient

- Resilience is developed by using mistakes as a springboard for learning and showing that I can't/ I won't are two different things (Modern Languages)
- We have a particular focus here on the use of the learning pit and stuck strategies (Maths)
- Using the idea of the learning pit and having classroom resources to hand if pupils think they are 'stuck', and encouraging them to ask peers (Science)

Reflective

- Learner conversations give pupils the opportunity to reflect on their learning (Modern Languages)
- The use of regular feedback and self/ peer assessment (English)
- Giving the opportunity for reflection after misbehaviour to encourage pupils to find their own solutions (Modern Languages)
- The use of visual displays helps pupils to see where they should be aiming (Expressive Arts)
- Pupils are encouraged to identify the Learner Qualities through their plenary activities (Expressive Arts)
- Setting targets based on personal development (Science)
- Pupils engage in discussion and debates and must demonstrate their points of view (Humanities)
- Pupils evaluate their work by comparing it with expectations and thinking about how they can do it better next time (Technologies)

What evidence do we have to support the view above?

- Dictionaries always on desks and most pupils prepared for their lessons (Modern Languages)
- Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes (Modern Languages)
- Pupils are finding new ways of learning vocabulary (Modern Languages)
- We use pupils' work to model success and find areas for improvement (English)
- Study clubs are largely pupil led (Expressive Arts)
- We could do more 'project' work to develop the Learner Qualities (Maths)
- The use of audits as part of Visible Learning to evidence the good pupil/teacher relationships in the faculty, which support the development of the Learner Qualities (Humanities)
- There is extensive use of exemplar materials through wall displays and practical examples (Technologies)
- BGE pupils engage in activities such as researching DHS lunches ('Are they healthy?), researching the Syrian conflict, deciding whether or not Scotland should be an independent country (Social Subjects)

What are our development needs in this regard?

- Work on getting pupils to take responsibility for catching up with work when they've been absent (Modern Languages)
- Making more use of the school website to improve communication between department/ home and pupils (Modern Languages)
- Developing the use of self evaluation including more targeted learner conversations (English)
- Staff need to be more explicit in referencing the Learner Qualities, particularly in the Senior Phase, to ensure consistency across the faculty (Expressive Arts)

- More explicit references to the Learner Qualities and trying to embed the language e.g. what quality have you developed most today? (Science)
- We need to carry out more pupil evaluation (Humanities)
- We will create a pupil forward planner to support pupils in managing revisions and assessment deadlines to encourage them to take more responsibility for their learning (Humanities)
- Ensuring focus on brief, meaningful learner conversations (Technologies)
- Our biggest gap is in resilience as we need to ensure pupils don't always have to rely on the teacher and can find strategies to get out of the learning pit (Social subjects)

How might we address these ahead of the next round of Learning Walks/ Visits?

- Involve the young people more in decision making processes, giving them a choice/ voice (Modern Languages)
- Piloting an evaluation/target setting sheet (English)
- Beginning work of Faculty Learning Walks (Expressive Arts)
- Making use of the same visuals across the faculty (Expressive Arts)
- Encouraging pupils to use appropriate language e.g. avoiding phrases like 'I'm stuck' (Maths)
- Making learner conversations more natural and embed the language of learning (Science)
- We will complete and S3 audit on this topic towards the end of the session (Humanities)
- We will create a pupil forward planner to support pupils in managing revisions and assessment deadlines to encourage them to take more responsibility for their learning (Humanities)
- Staff will be provided with visual materials to develop the idea of the learning pit (Humanities)
- We'll use DMs to highlight areas where there are opportunities for pupils to learn from each other (Social Subjects)
- We'll focus on what pupils should do before they ask the teacher for help (Social Subjects)

The responses above indicate that the **next steps** for Visible Learning in the school as a whole should focus on:

- The further development of **resilience** in our young people
- Engagement with '**stuck strategies'**; what to do when you don't know what to do
- Supporting the use of visuals such as the **learning pit** or resilience trees across departments/faculties
- Continuing to **embed the language of learning** through all classroom experiences but, in particular, through learner conversations

Action to support these next steps:

- SLT will engage in **Learning Walks** focusing on the Learner Qualities in both March and May 2017
- All staff will be involved in **Learning Visits** with the same focus in May 2017
- **Assemblies** for pupils focusing on Learner Qualities and how they relate to classroom experiences (with input from classroom teachers)
- Visible Learning Working Group to produce **visual materials** to support increasing resilience in the classroom