

A very brief guide to A²RH and Failing Forward

ATTITUDES

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ATTITUDES | APPROACHES
ROUTINES | HABITS

KNOWING I
Do you have a clear vision of what you want to achieve academically?
Do you believe in setting goals (i.e. defined by my effort) and tracking my performance against them (reward by myself)?

WHERE
Do you know what the purpose of what you are studying is?
If you focus always on course, the course material, what you know and understand and when you don't yet know and understand?

YOU ARE
Do you understand the differences between 'doing' and 'learning'?
Are you aware of the need to balance work and activities in your weekly schedule?

GOING

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
Do you believe in supporting others as they learn?
Are you always honest about the effort you put in?
Do you recognise how you use learning for yourself, not just parents or your school?
Do you recognise how every thing you do in learning terms is for yourself?

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND
Do you believe that the skills of learning can be learnt?
Do you use feedback?
Are you willing to try new ways of learning?

DEMONSTRATING RESILIENCE
Do you believe in making a commitment?
Do you fail forward?

APPROACHES

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KNOWING I
Do you focus on the skills you are learning as well as the subject content?
Do you use external material to understand and analyse 'test question' answers?
Do you evaluate your progress and your goals against the success criteria provided?

WHERE

YOU ARE

GOING

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
Do you organise your notes as you go along?
Do you use VLE resources and practice material?
Do you regularly go beyond work set by teacher?
Do you regularly review your work?
Do you ask for clarification when you don't understand?
Do you make the most of classroom opportunities?

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND
Do you focus on process rather than outcomes?
Do you practice study techniques to find out what suits you best in different circumstances?

DEMONSTRATING RESILIENCE
Do you try to 'unstick' yourself before asking for help on a task?
Do you review your mistakes and focus on how to avoid them reoccurring?

ROUTINES

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KNOWING I
Do you practise the 'art of habit' (over time, routine, reward)?
Do you set aside at least 15 minutes per week to review your learning?
Do you complete papers on the day they are set?

WHERE

YOU ARE

GOING

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
Do you undertake independent study activities each week?
Do you organise your non-lesson time effectively?
Do you use 'down' time effectively?
Do you complete half-finished workbooks?
Are you always ready to start the lesson when the bell goes (books, materials out and ready)?
Do you make sure that your work environment is free from distractions?

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND
Do you choose the best place for you to work in order to maximise independent study time (including sleep)?
Do you build in down time rather than keeping on working?
Do you recognise when you are pushing and take time out?
Do you recognise the 'worst' things first?

DEMONSTRATING RESILIENCE
Do you use the 10-minute rule when motivation is low?

HABITS

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KNOWING I
Do you use all available resources to guide your own learning choices?
Do you ask questions rather than expect answers?
Do you look for the 'next step' in learning in each subject and act on it?

WHERE

YOU ARE

GOING

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
Do you practise the skills so well as the knowledge?
Do you minimise (and) independent study opportunities?
Do you manage your learning by establishing flexible goals, monitoring progress, reviewing and adjusting learning strategies?
Do you regularly review what you have studied in order to embed it?
Do you take the 'long' process involved in the 'easy' ones?
Do you start with what you don't know (not what you do know)?
Do you set and stick to your own deadlines?
Do you draw on a range of skills and strategies to support your learning?

DEMONSTRATING RESILIENCE
Do you use feedback to inform your learning in a solution way?

KEEPING AN OPEN MIND

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FAILING FORWARD

Maintaining a positive attitude

Believing something didn't work but improvement can happen

Being open

Trying 'I am a failure'

Challenging our assumptions

Persevering

Taking responsibility

Learning from each mistake

FAILING BACKWARD

Giving up

Continually expecting to fail

Repeating the same mistake

Accepting lesson failure

Expecting never to fail again

A²RH

The academic curriculum at Lord Wandsworth College is underpinned by four principles known as A²RH. Through these principles, set out below, we aim to enable all pupils to find and develop a passion for learning that inspires them to improve and that will stay with them beyond their time with us.

Attitudes

Beliefs that you can and will improve your learning.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning determine their life-long engagement with learning, so at LWC we focus on helping pupils to develop and shape positive learning attitudes from the very first lesson. We encourage each pupil to seize every opportunity to learn while encouraging and supporting others in their learning, positive attitudes that we believe apply at school and in life. Shaping, questioning, and encouraging pupils' attitudes is at the heart of our learning values, as everything follows from this important life skill.

At LWC, we believe that everyone can develop positive learning attitudes.

- We encourage pupils to focus on learning goals rather than outcome goals.
- We encourage pupils to value feedback.
- We encourage pupils to be honest about their learning.
- We encourage pupils to be comfortable with 'failing' as an integral part of learning.

Approaches

The right strategies to respond to different learning challenges.

Having the right attitude is the first step to building and maintaining effective approaches to learning. Just as there are many different paths to success in learning terms, so there is a range of different approaches necessary to achieve the goal. In class and in tutor time we encourage and guide pupils to shape and adapt their approaches as challenges evolve, or as they change from one key stage to another, or as mastery of one skill 'unlocks' a new level of challenge.

At LWC, we work with pupils to help them build the right approaches to learning, including:

- Flexibility in thinking.
- Open-minded.
- Emotional self-awareness, especially when facing a learning challenge.
- Willingness to *fail forward*.
- Awareness that the core aspects of one's approach will grow and develop.

Routines

Repeatable personalised behaviours beneficial to learning.

Once pupils have established positive attitudes and approaches to learning, we support them in establishing a range of different learning routines, driven by their learning approaches, and governed by their learning attitude. These routines will change as their learning challenges change. Some routines will depend on the pupil having the right approaches, as inherent frustrations or 'bumps in the road' will rely on the pupil being able to demonstrate emotional, behavioural, and even metacognitive self-regulation.

Through coaching conversations in class, tutor time and in house, we help pupils to build life-long routines. These routines may be to set aside time to practise a skill, or to review content from the previous week's lessons. It might be always to read ahead in a particular subject, or to review and learn from feedback on a piece of PREP. It might have a more general aim, such as setting aside 15 minutes at the end/beginning of each PREP time to review learning, or to complete half-finished worksheets.

Habits *Embedded personalised behaviours that support learning.*

At LWC, we encourage pupils to develop simple habits that support their learning routines. At the same time, we encourage them to develop habits that support positive mental health.

Once it feels right to:

- Practise skills as well as topic content.
- Start with what they don't know, not what they do know.
- Use feedback effectively.
- Review work and take *effective* notes.
- Make every PREP moment count.
- Work in a clear, clean, quiet environment.
- Remove all distractions when focusing on learning.
- Take meaningful breaks from work.
- Focus on excellence in performance rather than perfection in outcome...

...then pupils are building powerful, supportive habits that will help them not just at school but also in later life.

Failing Forward *Learning from mistakes.*

It can be hard for pupils to rid themselves of that zero-sum game: 'good marks = intelligent, bad marks = stupid', and that the learning journey is therefore of little importance. Instead of asking for guidance or feedback, pupils often remain silent rather than 'expose' their 'failure' in a public way in the classroom.

We combat this by encouraging our pupils to recognise two approaches to failure, defined as failing forward and failing backward. One is the 'right type' of failure, and the other is not! The concept is a simple one, but it demands strength of character, self-awareness, and bravery if it is to have a long-term positive impact.

Failing forward is tougher and takes time to learn. If we are honest, we are probably never fully comfortable with the concept. It involves taking risks, taking responsibility, recognising that there are times when you have to be brave *and that it might not work*, whilst having the resilience to stick with the belief that failing forward defines you positively as person. It's about extending one's comfort zone, not 'going beyond' it. Extending suggests that you are using, shaping and challenging what you know so that you can know and do more. It needs everyone's help, from the teacher who encourages those steps through constructive feedback and intelligent questions, to the other pupils in the class on the same journey, who will themselves seek that same support when they too are in a similar position.

Creating a culture of failing forward empowers pupils at all stages of their learning and attainment. The importance of sometimes choosing the difficult path over the easy one, of being comfortable with making mistakes to improve rather than being frightened of investigating places where mistakes might be made, is a significant part of the learning journey. It is most effective when pupils know that what matters for sustainable success is the process, not the outcome, and that embracing failure is a vital part of that process. If our aim is to equip young people for the challenges of the adult world, then one of the biggest responsibilities of a school is to create and celebrate a healthy approach to failure that lasts a lifetime.