Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School
V.E.S.P.A.
Developing a Growth Mindset

What is V.E.S.P.A.?

VESPA stands for **V**ision, **E**ffort, **S**ystems, **P**ractice and **A**ttitude. Together these elements describe a mind-set that will help students to learn well and achieve their best.

Sometimes this is also called 'evolving a ***Growth Mindset***',
i.e. adopting the attitude and habits to achieve your potential.
Students who are successful:

- Know what they want to achieve (**VISION**)
- Complete many hours of independent study (**EFFORT**)
- Organise their learning resources and their time (**SYSTEMS**)
- Practise and develop their skills (**PRACTICE**)
- Respond constructively to challenge (**ATTITUDE**)

At KGGS, we seek to embed into our curriculum opportunities for developing the kinds of habits, routines, attitudes, and approaches to study that will enable all students develop effective behaviours for learning.

When and *how* did we introduce VESPA at KGGS?

- VESPA was first introduced at KGGS in 2018
- Initially as part of a collaborative Lincolnshire grammar schools project to improve student attainment
- A sample of our KS5 tutor groups were selected to trial some of the developmental activities at KGGS
- We then rolled the initiative out to the whole of Key Stage Five
- It involves activities for students in form time and lessons to enable them to reflect on and build their skills

In which year groups are we now using VESPA?

- Key Stage Five and Key Stage Four students are currently using the VESPA Mind-Set Programme
- Heads of Year in these key stages have developed programmes for Guidance Lessons, such as activities to improve Systems and Attitudes, to support their learning and revision prior to examination periods
- Students complete a Diagnostic Questionnaire to help them to identify individual areas of focus
- At Key Stage Five, our tracking system is based on the V.E.S.P.A Model – in all subjects, learners undertake a self-review using the 5 VESPA areas, which forms the basis of a 1:1 review meeting with subject teachers
- All subject areas have also produced an ***Independent Learning Sheet*** for their Key Stage Five students, which details the kinds of subject-specific strategies students can utilise to reach their potential

Which particular skills will it help learners to evolve?

VESPA promotes ***independence***. Students consider how many hours of independent work they complete and reflect on whether tasks they undertake (their *Effort* & *Practice*) have a positive impact on their progress.
They are asked to review *how often* and *how well* they engage in activities that will lead to success, including:

- Reading through their class notes and information in textbooks
- Using online resources provided in subject areas
- Making and re-making class notes
- Highlighting and colour-coding key information in their notes and revision books
- Using a revision wall at home to embed core knowledge into their long-term memory
- Writing examination responses to time without being prompted by teachers to do so
- Reviewing model answers
- Planning past paper answers
- Studying mark schemes and examiner's reports published online
- Creating their own examination questions
- Creating and attending student study groups out of lessons
- Preparing for and fully engaging in one-to-one discussions and progress reviews with their teachers and tutors
- Initiating conversations with their teachers or tutors, or older student mentors, when they are needed

How does VESPA help us to differentiate our approaches for different kinds of learners?

- VESPA promotes a ***can-do mentality*** to enable learners to meet learning challenges with confidence
- It provides teachers with a framework for helping students to be more resilient learners when faced with more difficult subject content or parts of the curriculum they might be struggling to master
- The VESPA Model works on the idea that learners will all have different knowledge-gaps
- Classroom teachers are provided with teaching & learning strategies to help students to audit their subject-knowledge and skills
- Implementing VESPA involves teaching students to avoid procrastinating (by focusing on their areas of strength) and, instead, to prioritise areas for development when revising
- Teachers and students reflect on the relationship between classwork, set homework, and independent study, considering how each will lead to successful outcomes for learners

What evidence do we have that VESPA is having a positive impact on learning?

- The work we have done on VESPA in school has contributed to a more realistic tracking system
- New effort descriptors have enabled teachers to more accurately communicate KS4 and KS5 Effort levels to parents and carers at tracking points
- Students are now actively involved in reviews of their learning behaviours and more open to being honest about *inconsistent* levels of *Effort*

What is the feedback from our students about VESPA?

In a review of the initial implementation of VESPA at KGGS, students in Key Stage Five reported that:

- The work on *Attitude to Learning* makes them think about 'how to address improving the way that you think about things', commenting that 'the level of self-reflection in many of the tasks was really good'
- They also tell us that 'some of the activities prompted us to think about the level of independent study required at A level and the type of work we needed to be doing', that 'all that had been talked about before was how A level study was different, rather than teachers being specific about what we need to do' and '*how* we need to do it''
- One student commented that, 'the activities allowed us as students to share our experiences and skills'
- Whilst some students are naturally more organised and committed, we have found that VESPA-type activities encourage students who aren't to talk about their engagement with their studies and establish successful self-management systems with
- We also find it helps some students with no real *Vision* for future learning realise that they are not alone