Character Education

What are our initial thoughts on the Behaviour for Learning Policy?

What do we want it to say about how we expect students to behave in/around school?

Does the policy represent what we are 'about'?

Pride | Aspire | Respect

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What is Character Education?

- Education for character is already integral to the work of excellent schools. In these schools there is no tension between a rigorous and stretching academic education on the one hand and outstanding wider personal development on the other.

- Indeed, these and other aspects of the school's work all contribute to forming well-educated and rounded young adults ready to take their place in the world.

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Rationale

- The Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance (which applies to all state funded schools) makes clear that this is most effective when schools also actively promote good behaviour and positive character traits, including for example courtesy, respect, truthfulness, courage and generosity.

- Schools have an important role in the fostering of good mental wellbeing among young people so that they can fulfil their potential at school and are well prepared for adult life. Schools with clear expectations on behaviour and with well-planned provision for character and personal development can help promote good mental wellbeing.

- From September 2019, Ofsted inspections recognise the importance of schools' provision for character education through its inclusion in the new judgement on Personal Development in all Section 5 and Section 8 inspections.

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The Six Character Benchmarks

- What kind of school are we?

- What are our expectations of behaviour towards each other?

- How well do our curriculum and teaching develop resilience and confidence?

- How good is our co-curriculum ?

- How well do we promote the value of volunteering and service to others?

- How do we ensure that all our pupils benefit equally from what we offer?

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The Definitions of 'Character'

- This is not new!

- It is complex, the 4 aspects of focus are:

- The ability to remain motivated by long-term goals, to see a link between effort in the present and pay-off in the longer-term, overcoming and persevering through, and learning from, setbacks when encountered;

• The learning and habituation of positive moral attributes, sometimes known as 'virtues', and including, for example, courage, honesty, generosity, integrity, humility and a sense of justice, alongside others;

• The acquisition of social confidence and the ability to make points or arguments clearly and constructively, listen attentively to the views of others, behave with courtesy and good manners and speak persuasively to an audience; and

• An appreciation of the importance of long-term commitments which frame the successful and fulfilled life, for example to spouse, partner, role or vocation, the local community, to faith or world view. This helps individuals to put down deep roots and gives stability and longevity to lifetime endeavours.

Research suggests

- That there are enabling character traits which can improve educational attainment, engagement with school and attendance.

- High self-efficacy, or self-belief, is associated with better performance, more persistence and greater interest in work;

- Highly motivated children (linked to tenacity) driven internally and not by extrinsic rewards show greater levels of persistence and achievement;

- Good self-control (or self-regulation, the ability to delay gratification) is associated with greater attainment levels; and

- Having good coping skills (part of being able to bounce back) is associated with greater well-being

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Research suggests

- Schools which develop character well help drive equity and social mobility for their pupils.

- Access to character development opportunities in schools can lead pupils that take part to be highly motivated, report fewer absences and have lower levels of emotional distress, amongst other outcomes.

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Statistics

- The Omnibus Survey of pupils and their parents/carers found that 70% of state-school secondary pupils took part in clubs inside school regularly and 69% took part in clubs outside of school regularly.

- The Social Mobility Commission has reported that opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities are driven by the school attended, gender, ethnicity and geographic location, but that household income is by far the most important factor driving gaps in participation, with children from the poorest households much less likely to take part in all types of extra-curricular activities, but especially music classes and sport.

- Research by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues found that individuals who first get involved in service under the age of 10 were more than twice as likely to have formed a habit of service than if they started aged 16–18 years, and they are also more likely to be involved in a wider range of service activities and participate in them more frequently.

- In their inspections of schools under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005, Ofsted will be considering both the quality and range of provision and whether the least advantaged pupils take part in the co-curricular offer

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For us to consider

- We have an important role to play in ensuring that they offer a good range of co-curricular opportunities and that, critically, barriers to participation are minimised so that all pupils are able to access them, including the school's least advantaged pupils.

- Typically, barriers to participation in extra-curricular activities include:

    The direct cost of an activity and or the associated costs of equipment or transport;

    Difficulties in managing family logistics: for example, if children in the same family are at different schools, parents or carers need to make additional arrangements for children not attending the activity and schedule individual travel plans; and

    Concerns about physical safety of children travelling unaccompanied from school to another venue, especially if in a different neighbourhood.

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Which ones?

VIRTUE OF Wisdom
Strengths that help build your knowledge

CREATIVITY
Clever, A Problem-solver

CURIOSITY
Interested, Open to new ideas

JUDGMENT
A critical thinker, Fact-based and logical, Open minded

LOVE OF LEARNING
Excited to learn new things, Masters new skills

PERSPECTIVE
Wise, Gives good advice, Sees the big picture

VIRTUE OF Courage
Strengths that help handle challenges

BRAVERY
Shows valor, Accepts challenges, Faces difficulties, Speaks up for what's right

PERSEVERANCE
Hardworking, Overcomes obstacles, Finishes what is started

HONESTY
Tells the truth, Keeps promises, Trustworthy

ZEST
Active, Energetic, Enthusiastic

VIRTUE OF Humanity
Strengths that help build relationships

LOVE
Warm and genuine, Prioritizes relationships, A good listener

KINDNESS
Caring, Generous, Compassionate, Nice

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE
Understands others, Aware of own feelings and thoughts, Shows empathy

VIRTUE OF Justice
Strengths that help build community

TEAMWORK
Loyal, A team player, Shows responsibility to groups

FAIRNESS
Cares about what's right, Treats others fairly, Tries not to be biased against certain groups

LEADERSHIP
Encourages others, Organizes groups, Sets a good example

VIRTUE OF Temperance
Strengths that help find balance and manage bad habits

FORGIVENESS
Gives others a second chance, Accepts others' faults, Doesn't hold grudges

HUMILITY
Modest, Puts attention on others, Doesn't brag about accomplishments

PRUDENCE
Careful, Plans ahead, Thinks about consequences before acting

SELF-REGULATION
Self-controlled, Disciplined, Manages feelings and actions

VIRTUE OF Transcendence
Strengths that help one connect outside oneself

APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE
Feels awe in nature, Admires skills of others, Inspired by goodness

GRATITUDE
Thankful, Shows appreciation, Feels blessed

HOPE
Optimistic, Expects the best, Excited about the future

HUMOR
Playful, Enjoys bringing smiles/ laughter to others, Sees the funny side of things

SPIRITUALITY
Searches for meaning, Feels a sense of purpose, Feels interconnected with life

Questions to consider

Issue to consider	Current situation	Next steps
A) What kind of school are we?		
B) What are our expectations of behaviour towards each other?		
C) How do our curriculum and teaching develop resilience and confidence?		
D) How good is our co-curricular provision?		
E) How well do we promote the value of volunteering and service to others?		
F. How do we ensure that all our pupils benefit equally from what we offer?		

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Next Steps

- Student and staff voice
  - What are the traits of a 'good character'? Does everyone agree on the traits that make up a good character? Is it possible to develop virtues? How can we develop them?
  - Questions- Ask students and staff the following: - What is a virtue? - What is a trait of character? - Which traits or virtues help someone to develop a good character? - Is it possible to develop virtues? - How can we help to develop them?
- Proposal to draw up that drives the curriculum delivery, pastoral policies and co-curriculum offer
- By Christmas that we are secure what we want this to look like and how we will deliver it
- How will we know we have got it!?

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