



Kings Langley School

Unlocking Potential for Life

Kings Langley School

Character Repertoire

September 2026



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“Practical wisdom – the right way to do the right thing”

Barry Schwartz and Kenneth Sharpe

What is Character?

“Character is a set of personal traits that produce specific moral emotions, inform motivation and guide conduct. Character education includes all explicit and implicit educational activities that help students to develop positive personal strengths called virtues. Character education is a place in the culture and functions of families, classrooms, schools and other institutions. It is about helping students grasp what is ethically important in situations and how to act for the right reasons. Students need to decide wisely the kind of person they wish to become and to learn to choose between already existing alternatives or to find new ones. In this process, the ultimate aim of character education is the development of good sense, or practical wisdom; the capacity to choose intelligently between alternatives. This capacity involves knowing how to choose the right course of action in difficult situations and it arises gradually out of the experience of making choices and the growth of ethical insight.”

Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues 2017

Intent

Our vision at Kings Langley School is to enable students to flourish in all areas of their lives, by supporting their development into well-rounded, empathetic beings who are able to contribute and shape society and the wider world, whilst respecting and supporting those who live in it, through the teaching and modelling of good character.

We believe that character is “caught and taught” and students need to be given opportunities to put the learned knowledge and modelled skills into practice. We have planned a well-balanced and interconnected set of activities and programmes that enable all of our students to have the opportunities to be taught, catch and practise character. As teachers, it is important that we take all possible opportunities to not only model good character virtues and ethics, but also support students develop their characters through teaching and allowing them to practise. It is also crucial that we take time to reflect and consider the development of our own character alongside that of the students.



“The aim of our studies is not just to know what virtue is but to become good” – Aristotle

The Character Journey



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We introduced our core character virtues in April 2010 which are:

- Stickability
- Self-regulation
- Empathy

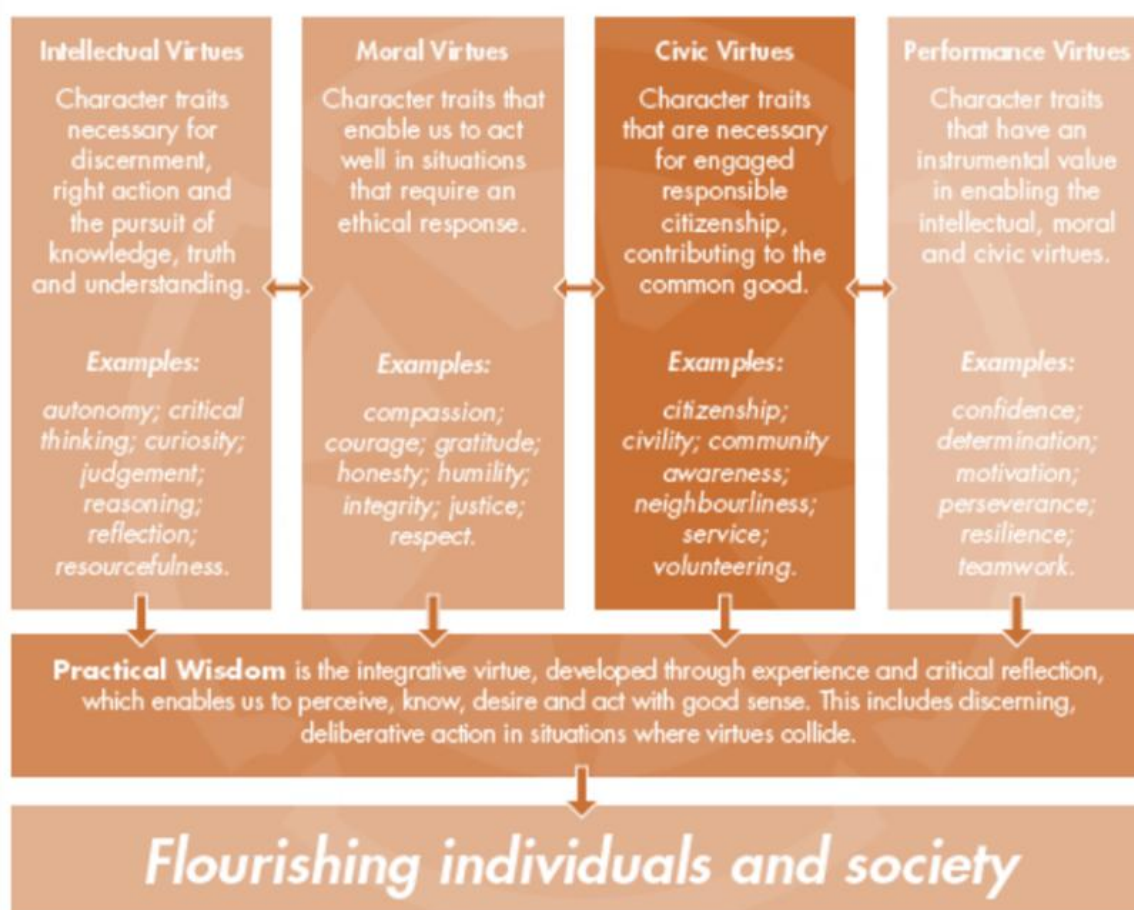


We drew on Demos research, specifically the three character capabilities outlined in the 2009 report Building Character: application, self-regulation and empathy as having equivalent worth to the achievement of academic success.

As our journey continued we started to incorporate other virtues and used the model used by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham. This splits virtues into four categories with overarching concepts of phronesis (practical wisdom) and flourishing. The categories are:

- Intellectual
- Performance
- Moral
- Civic

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER



Over the last 15 years, we have progressed from our three core values, to the introduction of virtues with the four categories, then onto the concept of phronesis (practical wisdom i.e. making good choices). Our framework is based around the teachings of Aristotle and work of the Jubilee Centre of Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham, so using this model we are now extending the teaching element of our programme to incorporate the concept of flourishing – what is it? - and how do we do it?

These core terms should be familiar and embedded within our teaching and language around school. (These can be found in appendix I.) It is important that we not only teach the virtues and character concepts, we model them to students whilst giving them opportunities to practise them both in and out of school.

Research has shown that character can be taught, caught and sought – and we have considered these and put into place activities and programmes that should enable all students to have access. As it is important that all stakeholders are focussed on the same ethos and culture, our work is also with staff, Governors and parents.

Things To Consider:

Stickability

Self-Regulation

Empathy

- What do these look like in your subject?
- How can a student demonstrate them in your lessons?
- How do they know this? How have you communicated this to them?
- How do you enable them to demonstrate this in the lesson? What do you need to do to ensure this happens?

E.g.

If you want students to show:	Then the teacher needs to:
Stickability	
When you are stuck use the 6B's : • Be brave and have a go • Be still and think • Backtrack through your work • Buddy – ask a friend • Bits and bobs – look at resources • Boss – ask a teacher or adult	Ensure students have access to the first 5 Bs, and they have tried all five others before “Boss” Ensure all students have activities that they have to work on independently and are challenging to them as individuals!
Self- regulation	
Take yourself and your lessons seriously: attend school and be punctual; wear your uniform with pride; have your books and equipment and be ready to work	Model these points. Ensure you are “challenging” students regarding these points in a fair and balanced manner, using the language of character
Empathy	
Be able to work with other students and accept that other students’ ideas and thoughts may differ from yours, but will have value and are worth consideration	Plan group work activities, and regularly mix up working groups. Have tasks planned that encourage students to debate and discuss ideas with each other such as De Bono’s 6 hat thinking

We ask staff to help teach character to our students through the following paths:

- Character registration programme
- PSHE lessons
- Subject lessons
- Attitude to Learning (Assessment and Reporting)

Character Registration Programme

We teach character explicitly as part of our comprehensive and progressive registration programme. The character element is taught by form tutors on a weekly basis following the programme of study which can be found in the Staff Area: Registration Programme. This means that every student receives 19 hours of explicit character education every year.

Each year group has their own programme which are planned to spiral through virtues interconnecting between year groups, but becoming more demanding and detailed as students get older.

In general:

Year 7: We focus on the **language of character** and often frame these virtues with school scenarios to allow students to become familiar with the terminology. After the first half term, we introduce more and varied virtues and work on developing their **understanding of what a virtue is, and what they look like**.

Year 8: We focus on the same or similar virtues developing students' understanding of the virtues further. We look at the **balance of a virtue, known as the golden mean**. As an example: what does too much/ little courage look like? How might this affect the outcomes of a scenario? Is there a "perfect" amount of a virtue to have? The students consider these in a variety of situations through the introduction of dilemmas, which take them beyond school scenarios and look at different courses of action that can be taken.

Year 9: We start looking at scenarios or dilemmas **where two virtues come into conflict**, such as honesty and friendship. We encourage students to stop, reflect, look at possible courses of action, consider outcomes for everyone involved, and then choose the "right" course of action.

Year 10: We continue our focus on reasoned decision making by looking at the impact and outcomes for all of those involved and considering others above ourselves. We also introduce Aristotle (linking the English curriculum) and the concept of **what makes a good life, investigating flourishing and happiness** in more depth.

Year 11: They have a focus on their exam year, so we look and develop metacognition and revision strategies but continue to use the language of character. A focus on self-regulation and stickability become paramount, amongst other performance and intellectual virtues.

Year 12: We focus on **"Character in Action"**. We try to put these ideas and lessons learnt in contexts beyond school. It is about "How can I impact on other's happiness?" and the community around us rather than as "me an individual". It is about developing an understanding that social action, kindness to others, gratitude and continued self-development bring true happiness. Students are encouraged to take up leadership roles which will encourage students to make a difference and leave legacies for the future generations.

Year 13: Once again it is an exam year so a refocus on metacognition and revision. This is now more of an individualised approach as students should have found methods that work for them and the subjects that they are studying. There is still a language of character, with more of a focus on aspiration and contributing to the community.

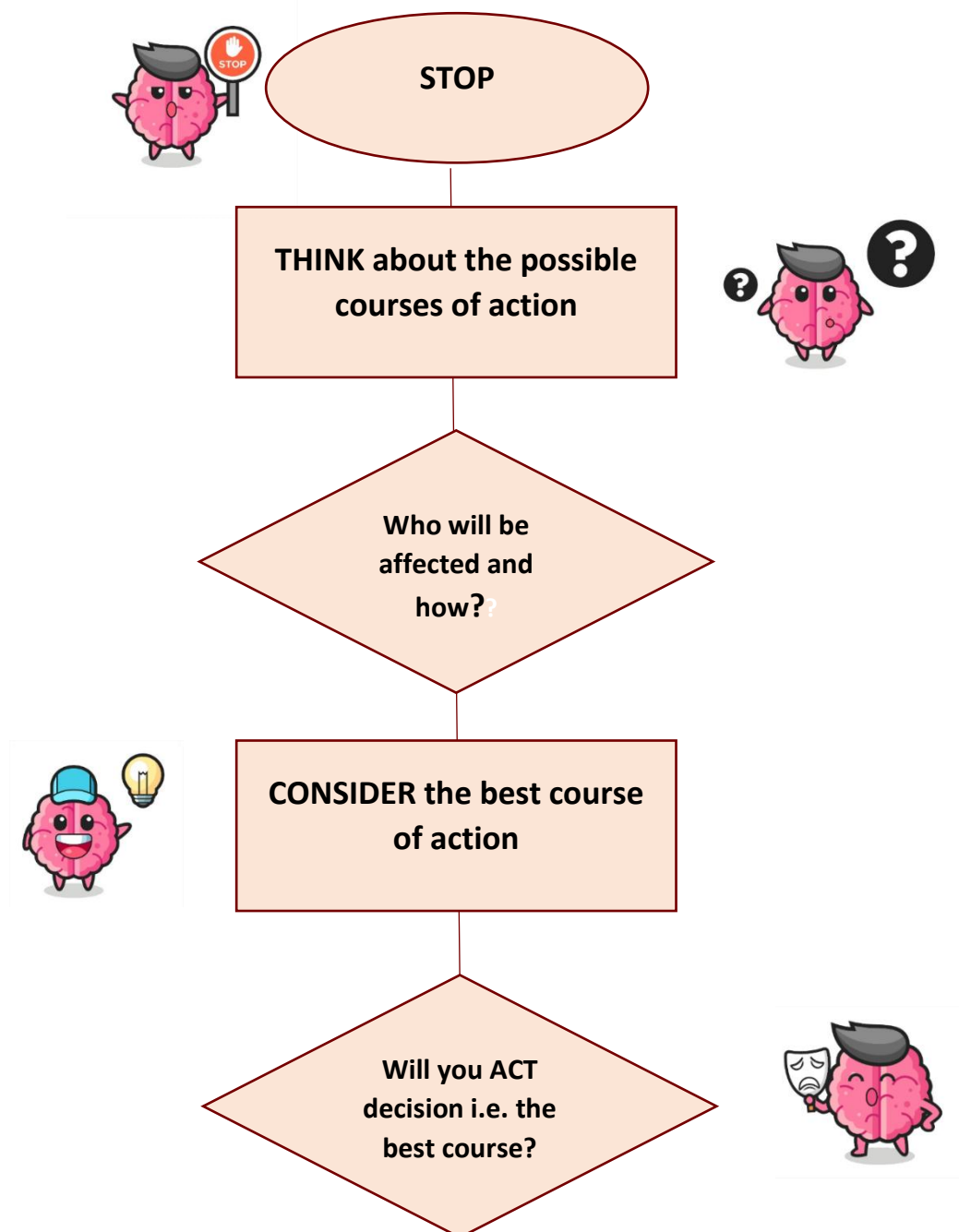
All staff are asked to follow the programme without adapting it or editing out sections to ensure that we have consistency of delivery and all students have access to the same material.

PSHE Programme

Our character registration programme runs alongside our PSHE programme. The virtues match and it is important where staff teach PSHE, they also take the time over character learning intentions that are weaved in alongside the PSHE learning intentions. You will often realise you are discussing the same virtue in your PSHE as you did in registration. You are also extremely likely to hear it in assembly as well as these have been planned to interlink, so that students can see virtues from different angles and in various contexts.

During the lessons, it is intended that teaching staff make explicit reference to the character virtue, often in the form of a dilemma within the PSHE topic. Encouraging students to stop, think about the possible courses of action, then discussing what the impact would be on each person involved before deciding on the best course of action is a good way for them to consider different perspectives.

Teaching Decision Making Linked to Dilemmas:



"Having virtue means doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, in the right amount, towards the right people! - Aristotle

Whilst we want to encourage students to consider their choices and think through the consequences for not only themselves but for others too, it is important as adults and teachers we do the same. How easy is it to “let a child get away” with an action that you would scold or sanction another child for, just because they are “a nice child who never does anything wrong”. Yes, we believe in second chances, but by letting this child off we are showing others that we are inconsistent and unfair. These decisions also have consequences to other adults who may be consistent with their rules and sanctions, and then get told by students “Well, Miss let’s me do that”.

Our decisions have consequences too, so it is important to consider the different courses of action we can take, and consider the consequences, not just for ourselves but others too – then put the best of course of action into place.

Subject Lessons

We ask staff to find opportunities and take them to reinforce the character virtues in their own subjects. For some subjects this is far easier than others but all staff can promote both the intellectual and performance virtues in every lesson.

Our aim is not to distract you from your lesson, or use all of your curriculum time, but to take a few minutes to highlight character virtues in context. As part of our new programmes of study, all subjects should be making reference to areas where this will work well again ensuring that all students have equal access to such discussions and teaching.

The Jubilee Centre have some amazing ideas, which Kings Langley staff contributed to. You can find these at:

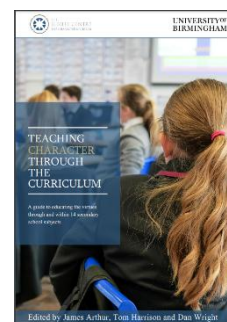
Teaching character through the curriculum

<https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/TeachingCharacterThroughtheCurriculum.pdf>



Teaching Through the Subjects

<https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1676/character-education/resources/teaching-character-through-subjects>



Things To Consider:

- What character virtues fit neatly into your programmes of study?
- Can you find at least one lesson per half term where you can reinforce the character virtues for each year group?
- Where possible, can you match the integrated themes that are in the PSHE programme, the assembly rota and the character programme?
- Can you cover all of the building blocks in your subject for each year group over the year?
- As you become more confident, can you find more opportunities for this in your lessons?

What does good character teaching look like in a lesson?

What we are looking for	What we are hoping to see
How is the virtue incorporated into the objective?	<i>Either two objectives- one for content and one for virtue OR combined objective</i>
Can the virtue be seen throughout the whole lesson? Is it explicit or linked to the lesson content or both?	<i>Looking for the virtue to be addressed at least once explicitly but also to be linked to content throughout the whole lesson. Ideally the teacher would make reference to the virtue as part of conversations or teaching throughout.</i>
Is there the opportunity for the students to engage with the virtue? (discussion, debate, dilemma etc.)	<i>We are looking for at least one activity where students engage with the virtue explicitly and ideally others where they are then linked to the lesson content.</i>
During the plenary/ review of the lesson is the virtue reviewed a) on its own b) by linking it with the subject content	<i>We would like to see that students have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt about the virtue explicitly and how it impacts on the content of the lesson.</i>

“Those who know, do. Those that understand, teach.” — Aristotle

Using the Attitude To Learning Matrix For Assessment and Reporting

A group of staff considered areas that we felt students needed to focus on to support their learning in school. They came up with five areas: conduct, participation in lessons, acting on feedback, taking initiative particularly linked to their own learning, and kindness to one another. We compared these areas with our character traits and made the links that you will see in the table to self-regulation, stickability, reflection, aspiration and empathy. The concept of wanting something that became our ethos, grew inside of us all, was where the idea of Flourishing DNA emerged. Great debate was taken over A – was it our child were absent of these qualities or as we decided, did they just prefer to avoid them?

With the table in place, we now use this with students as part of our assessment and reporting cycle. The ideal use is to ask students where they feel they are “performing” for each category reflecting on their performance, attitude and actions in the subject in question. This can be collected on a MSForm and there is a template available in the staff handbook for staff to download and use if they wish. Staff do the same for each student, and where time explaining any differences in opinion. The overall grade is taken as the lowest value with this area as an area for improvement.

For example: A child who achieves a D in self-regulation, an N in stickability and reflection, an A in aspiration and a D in empathy, would receive an A overall with an area of aspiration as a target for improvement.

As all classrooms have copies of this poster on their walls, we are hoping that teachers make reference to them and use the language within them with their students on a daily basis. We hope that students and staff alike understand these terms and explanations to support them on their journey to improve their attitudes towards their learning.

“The most important attitude that can be formed is that of desire to go on learning.” — John Dewey.

Attitude to Learning Matrix

Flourishing DNA	Flourishing students show fantastic attitudes. They are:	Students who are Demonstrating great attitudes. They are:	Students who we are Nurturing to show good attitudes. They are:	Students who are Avoiding adopting positive attitudes. They are:
Self-Regulation Conduct and manners	Considered a mature role model due to how they always conduct themselves.	Able to conduct themselves with great integrity, particularly when someone is watching.	Able to conduct themselves appropriately when being observed but struggle to maintain these standards when monitoring is not in place.	In constant need of reminding to behave and act appropriately, despite knowing what is expected.
	Conscious and deliberate of the way in which they communicate, both verbally and non-verbally, and what impact this will have on others.	Able to demonstrate great communication skills, both verbally and non-verbally, but not always able to consider the impact this will have on others.	Able to communicate effectively, both verbally and non-verbally, but may need occasional reminders on the impact of their language and actions on others.	Choosing to communicate, both verbally and/or non-verbally without considering the potential negative impact on others.
	Proactive and use their initiative, taking actions that are needed automatically and willingly to support themselves and those around them.	Able to take appropriate actions willingly to support themselves and those around them, but may need occasional reminders.	With guidance, able to take appropriate actions unenthusiastically to support themselves or those around them.	In need of direction and are generally unwilling to support themselves or thoughtless towards others.
Stickability Active participation	Conscientious, professional and always take pride in everything that they attempt or achieve.	Conscientious and take pride in all they achieve, but often need reminding that the perseverance and resilience shown is also of value.	Prepared to attempt all things in a positive manner, but often do not see the value in their own attempts or achievements.	Imprecise and show a carelessness or negative attitude towards things that they are expected to achieve or attempt.
	Able to take personal responsibility for their own development by being curious and taking opportunities to ask, answer and investigate questions, both in and out of the classroom.	Able to take responsibility for their own development when opportunities are presented to them, and will ask or answer questions, both in and out of the classroom.	Able to develop their own learning through set tasks and challenges set by their teachers. They are prepared to answer questions when asked but will only ask questions when they require support to complete a task.	Unwilling to take responsibility for their own learning and expect teachers to spoon feed or accept their refusal to engage with questioning.
	Constantly striving to achieve more by challenging themselves, taking risks and are prepared to grapple with information to find better and more complex answers.	Striving to achieve their best and will take risks and challenge themselves with support, though often are satisfied with their initial "correct" answers.	Striving to complete tasks with the maximum correct answers, rather than ensuring full understanding of the concept or topic.	Unresponsive to the teacher's support and guidance, preferring to not participate properly in work set.
Reflection Acting on and responding to advice and criticism	Honest and willingly review their own self and learning, and independently aim to develop any weaknesses and exploit strengths.	Willing to review and develop their own self and learning when considering strengths, but find analysing weaknesses harder and often need some guidance.	Able to review their own self and learning with scaffolding, but often their appraisal lacks some precision and accuracy. There is also a reluctance to work hard to develop these outcomes.	Unwilling to review their own self or learning honestly, and will avoid attempting to make any changes to strengths or weaknesses, unless it suits their purposes.
	Proactive in seeking out further feedback or clarification and take responsibility for actively responding to any advice given.	Responsive to advice and feedback given by teachers to enable them to make self-improvements.	Able to respond to advice and feedback when presented in a framework which gives clear actions and assigns time for these to be completed.	Unlikely to consider advice or feedback given and will often avoid taking responsibility.
	Considerate and make sound ethical choices based on evidence and good self-awareness, therefore taking responsibility for the impact of their choices.	Thoughtful and make the good choices that would be expected of them, as they want to be seen to do the "right thing."	Mostly aware of the right choices and expectations, but often need encouragement to do the "right thing" and need support to reflect on the impact of these.	Often aware of the "right choices" but will choose to follow the course of action that is easiest or best suits them.
Aspiration Independence and potential for life	Developing a sense of individuality by seeking and taking positive opportunities which will unlock their potential for life.	Enthusiastic and willing to take positive opportunities presented which will unlock their potential of life.	Willing to take positive opportunities when encouraged and are supported to see how these will unlock their potential for life.	Unwilling to take positive opportunities when presented to then unless they feel it benefits them.
	Striving constantly to be their "best" regardless of the circumstances or difficulties they may face; they respect that some choices are difficult but do not shy away from challenge.	Craving recognition for trying to do their best, and therefore will often rise above difficult choices or challenges.	Wanting recognition for doing well, but will often need nurturing through difficult choices or challenges to accomplish this.	Taking the easiest options, regardless of support or guidance, rather than face difficulties or challenges.
	Actively embracing additional learning which develops their cultural capital, supports their personal ambitions and goals, and challenges their minds and perspectives.	Accepting of additional learning which is asked of them or develops their own personal interests, ambitions or goals.	Reluctant to engage with additional learning without great support or instruction from the teacher; unless there is seen to be a personal reward.	Lacking independence with regards to additional learning despite teacher expectation and would rather choose sanctions than participate.
Empathy Member of the KLS community	Proud of being a Kings Langley student, and are proactive in supporting the community and leaving a positive legacy.	Happy to be a Kings Langley student, and will support the community when invited to do so.	A Kings Langley student who, when targeted and encouraged, will generally engage with the community.	Unaware of their role in the community, and think of themselves and their own personal gain.
	Positively promoting a caring environment by demonstrating kindness, and challenging prejudice or inequality.	Caring and show kindness to others, as would be expected of them, and will not demonstrate prejudice or inequality.	Kind and caring for their friends, but often need to be reminded about others. They will generally not demonstrate prejudice or inequality, but may need reminding in more complex situations.	Often inconsiderate of others, apart from their current friends and can demonstrate varying standards of prejudice and/or inequality.
	Helping to shape and support the school or local community, leading by example through good stewardship and social action.	Willing to support the school or local community when opportunities arise and are encouraged to get involved with social action or fundraising.	Willing to support fundraising efforts, particularly when there is a personal motivation, however they are less willing to give up time for social action.	Unaware of community spirit and do not generally engage with fundraising or social action unless there is some personal gain.



Modelling by staff

Whether we intend to be or not, as teachers we are role models. The question is role models of what? We do not want robots and everyone to be the same, as students need a choice of who they want to look up to, however there are the basic virtues that we want all students to develop to enable them to flourish.

We ask students to be polite, using please and thank you and being respectful to all; to be patient, walk on the left and queue without pushing in; to demonstrate self-regulation, by using appropriate language and not getting out mobile phones; to be kind and empathetic, to understand that you do not know what kind of day someone else is having; to name but a few. But ultimately, it is about making good and reasoned choices. These are all basic virtues and actions we would hope our staff would adhere to and thereby role model to students.

You may not always be aware, but remember there is always someone watching – and forming a picture, not only of you but also of what aspects they may wish to copy. It is worth asking yourself “Would I want someone to copy this?” before completing an action or making statements. Scary thought, but something we need to constantly reflect on.

“Being a role model is the most powerful form of educating.” – John Wooden

Themes, Assemblies, Celebrated Days, House Competitions

The assembly programme is written each year linking to the virtues that are planned within the PSHE and registration programmes. The topics are added using those virtues as a base, and try to link in requests from staff and/or celebrated days/ weeks. It is therefore important that the programme is referred to and used when planning assemblies, and that there is a character element within these. This allows a cohesive approach and enables students to see virtues in action, in a variety of contexts to help formulate a deeper understanding.

We hope that by using these themes in multiple areas across the school i.e. linking themes with celebrated days which in turn link to a House competition or assembly, that students will be saturated within the week. Attacking their different senses and interests, we hope that messages linking to virtues and phronesis will be imparted.

Parent training events

It is important that during parent training evenings, we also train our parents in character development. Using an occasion dilemma or asking them to consider policy and procedures from other points of view are often an eye opener for some parents. For example, when a parent asks if their child’s red card was fair for just being a little bit silly, ask them to think of the other 31 students and their parents. What would those people say?

It is important to constantly drip feed these messages within all our training, as well as all other forms of communication such as letters, newsletters etc. It is not about us prescribing or deciding what is right but asking parents to think and consider all aspects from different perspectives. Facilitating discussions at parent meeting / training evenings allows parents to talk amongst each other, realise they are not the only ones, and no they are not the only parent that does that! It is extremely powerful, just setting a scenario and letting them talk and one that should be used at all opportunities.

Recognitions

As you should be aware our recognition system is written to embody our character ethos, and I would suggest that you read the recognitions and rewards guide if you are new to the school. Please also use our Attitudes to Learning poster which is in this booklet to support you with identifying areas for recognition. Whilst praising and using positive behaviour management strategies initially seems false and clumsy, it is deemed to have greater impact and we encourage the use of them. However, finding a balance between false praise and encouragement can be difficult – no-one wants to be told they are doing a good job when clearly, they are not. Or another way to think about it is, if I get praise when I am only working at 60%, why would I do more?

We switched from a pure rewards system as it is not about rewards but recognising when someone does something good. Consider what you remember the most, a child who buys you a bottle at the end of term or the one that writes or speaks to you with a kind message? We want staff to vocalise their recognition to students, being explicit about what it is that they are praising.

Some examples of this might be:

“Thank you for holding the door open for me”

“Well done for helping Katie with that question”

“Thank you for picking up that litter, especially as it was not yours.”

“The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated. – William James”

Behaviour system

Even within our behaviour system, it is about students getting a second chance and being able to make choices. This is why we have the “inform, warn” approach, but it is therefore important that we highlight that they have a chance to change and need to take time to reflect on the situation.

So as teachers we need to verbalise what the student has done wrong, explain that they may want to reflect on the situation and make a change when we both inform and warn, prior to further actions. Doing this with warmth, and with take up time, hopefully means that students will feel that they have a chance to change and moderate their behaviour. Then ultimately, they make a choice and will have to take the consequences of their actions.

When tackling behaviour, it is useful to try to ask students to see things from another perspective to enable them to start the decision making process and consider other people, not just themselves. Given that the decision making process that we teach to our students involves several stages, it is very important that a decent amount of take up time is given for this to be completed properly and effectively. Therefore no student should be informed and warned within minutes of each other, unless the situation is a dangerous one – and in this case it should be an incident report.

All interactions resulting in consequences for the student should be linked to a restorative justice conversation, where both parties should reflect on their actions and consider actions from each other’s point of view. This is built into our behaviour management process, but the way in which we tackle these is strongly supported by our character ethos and culture.

If you need some help with any of these situations or policies, please see SHA or BUT to support you.

“Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness.” - Seneca

Language

The language of character is something that we should all be using as a daily process. Use of the different virtues, reflecting on them, how we and others act then out; and making good and reasoned choices should be part of our common language when speaking to each other and students.

Consider in your classroom, how the use of intellectual and practical virtues are central to any subject. How can you teach without expecting students to be confident; show resilience; show curiosity; show reason and judgement? Talking about these explicitly and discussing these skills with students alongside your subject knowledge and content will help develop independent learners which we will all benefit from in the long run.

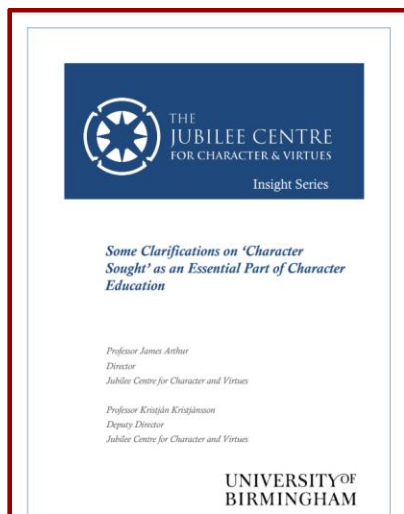
Taking all opportunities to discuss the moral and civic virtues, whether they be as part of the registration programme, in assembly, in lessons, or just as part of an everyday conversation, develops students' understanding by seeing these in different contexts. It is also useful to discuss them in contexts of dilemmas or situations where students may have to consider conflicting virtues and courses of action they may have/ want to take.

We talk about our school having a character ethos and culture – it is the language as well as the actions that we use which embodies this and makes this the case. So when we reflect on our own language – do we embrace the language of character?

If you struggle with the concept of language of character or how to embrace it fully, please see JEN or MOY for some guidance and support.

We are what we
repeatedly do.
Excellence, then,
is not an act, but a
habit.

ARISTOTLE



A paper to consider reading:

Some Clarifications on Character Sought as an Essential Part of Character Education

James Arthur
Kristján Kristjánsson

May 2022

https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/insight-series/JAKK_CharacterSought.pdf

“Character sought involves the desire to discern and freely pursue one’s own character development....

Character sought is more likely to become operational as the student matures, but it can be introduced and guided by the teacher at an earlier age.”

What do we mean by character sought?

- Reflecting on the person we want to be
- Making good and wise decisions
- Seeking out opportunities and taking responsibility for our choices

So how do we help students with seeking character?

- We need to encourage students to reflect on the person they want to be
- We need to teach students how to make good and wise decisions
- We need to give students opportunities to action and take responsibility for their choices

Encouraging students to reflect

As part of our registration programme, we ask students to write a weekly reflection one linked to the character programme (Tweak to transform) and one to the thought for the week (Adapt to achieve). We can not expect students to be able to do this unassisted at the beginning and we will need to scaffold this process for them. Asking them simpler questions, giving them ideas and choices about what to focus on, and then how to decide on an appropriate and achievable action. The more we do this with students, the better they will get at this – and since this also links to our curriculum assessment and feedback principles, they should be getting a lot of practice. At the end of the week we ask students to reflect on their progress (Pause to prosper).

A good way to get yourself into this mindset is to try it yourself. If you find this difficult maybe start with a gratitude log – in the evening, when you reflect on your day, what are you grateful for? This will become habit forming and become part of your daily routine. Then as you grow more confident and the process becomes more “normal”, you can extend it into what could I have done better? What small change/ tweak can I make to be a better person enabling me to flourish?

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” - Aristotle

Teaching students to make good and wise decisions

We have already looked at how to break down decision making earlier. So it leaves us to consider when we might use this technique. I would suggest this is as often as possible – when a child is stuck on a question in your classroom; when you catch a child running down the corridor; when a child does not do their homework; when a child decides not to follow your instructions; when you are discussing a character or situation in your subject lesson; in assembly. By all using the same techniques and principles, the students will pick up its consistent use and it will become a habit.

Seeking opportunities to test and practise character virtues and decision making

We offer our students a wide range of opportunities within the classroom; at breaks, lunches and after school; during activities week; drop down days or assemblies; charity walks and team building days; residential trips and day visits linking or not to curriculum; house or other competitions; productions; visiting speakers and assemblies; Duke of Edinburgh; World Challenge; leadership roles; charity and fund raising; and volunteering!

Through our new system we are starting to track what opportunities take up and those that are getting left behind. But the more we offer, the more students we can target. As subject teachers, it is worth considering are there opportunities that your subjects can offer? A curriculum trip or competition? Can you bring in a speaker to enhance a particular topic or lesson? As a person, are there charities close to your heart or local organisations that you are involved in that need volunteers? Whilst we are trying to encourage students to seek opportunities, it is also true of staff – what opportunities are we taking to develop our character to flourish and find happiness? Can we help others by encouraging our students to get involved with various activities?

This of course also applies to our parents and Governors, and something where opportunities arise that we should try to encourage them to get involved with too!

Having given students these amazing opportunities, it is important that we encourage them to reflect and review any actions or choices that they made. Would they make the same decisions next time? Or would they do it differently? Did they make their choice by considering others or just themselves? How would it have felt to be the other person in that situation? How would they have felt? So it is important that any activity or opportunity comes with a review and reflection, so that students can not only celebrate their accomplishments of completing the activity but also their personal development.

“We do not learn from experience.. we learn from reflecting on experience” – John Dewey



Kings Langley School Core Character Traits

Stickability – *the ability to stick at something even if it hurts*

Self-regulation – *the ability to control your actions and communications*

Empathy – *the ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes*

Meta-virtue of Phronesis: Good sense, practical wisdom

- Phronesis is a Greek term which means 'practical wisdom' that has been derived from learning and evidence of practical things. It is the virtue that overarches the other virtues, hence called a meta-virtue.
- Phronesis leads to breakthrough thinking and creativity and enables the individual to discern and make good judgements about what is the right thing to do in a situation.
- The best measure of moral judgment is choice, since choices are always made voluntarily by means of rational deliberation.
- We always choose to aim at the good, but people are often ignorant of what is good and so aim at some apparent good instead, which is in fact a vice.

Moral virtues:

- **Compassion** is showing care and concern for others
- **Caring** is looking after and providing for the needs of others
- **Courage** is acting with bravery in fearful situations
- **Empathy** is being able to understand the thoughts and feelings of another person and to put yourself in their position
- **Fairness** is treating others equally
- **Forgiveness** is giving someone another chance after they might have hurt you
- **Friendship & Friendliness** is the ability to make close friends and acting agreeably towards strangers
- **Generosity** is giving something for someone else's benefit
- **Gratitude** is a feeling of appreciation towards someone or something
- **Honesty** is telling the truth and being sincere
- **Humility** is not boasting and being aware of how much you owe to others for your success
- **Integrity** is the quality of having and following strong moral principles
- **Justice** is to have an understanding of what it is to uphold what is right
- **Optimism** is the ability to be positive
- **Patience** is the ability to wait and to tolerate difficulties you face as you try to achieve your goals
- **Respect** is showing regard for someone's feelings, wishes or rights
- **Self-discipline** is the ability to control yourself and to be organised
- **Tolerance** is the ability to be able to accept differences

Intellectual virtues:

- **Autonomy** is the ability to be critically independent in your thinking and actions
- **Co-operation** is working well with others
- **Communication** is having skills of verbal and written engagement as well as listening to others
- **Creativity** is being able to create and to use your imagination
- **Critical Thinking** is the ability to think reflectively and to come to independent conclusions
- **Curiosity** is being eager to know or to learn something new
- **Focus** is when you pay close attention to something and block out possible distractions
- **Open Mindedness** is not being prejudiced about new things, peoples and ideas
- **Reasoning** is the act of making a decision or judgement with the help of evidence
- **Reflection** is the ability to ponder alternative possibilities and not jump to conclusions
- **Resourcefulness** is the ability to find a quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties
- **Respect** is having regard for others and valuing them non-instrumentally as persons
- **Wisdom** is making the right choices at the right time

Civic virtues:

- **Citizenship** is your involvement in your community and society
- **Civility** is being polite and courteous in behaviour and speech
- **Community Awareness** is to actively and meaningfully learn from, and share information with different parts of the community
- **Friendliness** is the quality of being kind, thoughtful or affectionate towards another person
- **Neighbourliness** is a disposition to be friendly and helpful to others
- **Service** is the act of doing work that benefits other people
- **Social Justice** is being able to attend to fairness, entitlement and deservingness
- **Volunteering** is giving your time to help someone else

Performance virtues:

- **Ambition** is having a strong desire to want to achieve something or reach a certain goal
- **Confidence** is being certain in your own abilities or that a certain course of action is best
- **Creativity** is being able to create and use new ideas
- **Determination** is focusing your energy on finishing a task, especially when it is difficult
- **Leadership** is helping yourself and others to do the right thing by setting a direction or building an inspiring version
- **Motivation** is having a strong reason and drive to accomplish something
- **Perseverance** is the steady persistence in a course of action, especially in spite of difficulties
- **Problem Solving** is finding solutions to problems
- **Resilience** is being able to recover quickly from struggles and setbacks
- **Teamwork** is the ability to work with others effectively and efficiently

