Developing Character Skills in Schools

Qualitative case studies

Final report - August 2017

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Contents

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Summary

This research was commissioned to explore and share learning about how schools are delivering character education. It was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to inform the focus of policy activity on mental health and character education in schools and colleges in England. It is based on qualitative research carried out between May 2016 and February 2017. The research was set against a backdrop of growing evidence demonstrating the positive impact of emotional wellbeing on educational and other outcomes for children and young people.

Research approach (Chapter 1)

- The research formed part of a broader project which involved a mixed method approach, combining a survey and case studies of schools, colleges and PRUs. The survey was carried out to provide a representative profile of character education and mental health provision and an understanding of the issues that institutions face in delivering this (Marshall, Rooney, Dunatchik and Smith 2017)[1].

- Twenty-six case studies were carried out to extend the findings from the survey and to identify and share practice across the school and college sector. They were followed by a workshop at the DfE to consolidate the learning and recommendations from the research.

- This report presents findings from the 11 case studies focusing on character education. A complementary report presents the findings from the 15 case studies focusing on the provision of mental health support (White, Lea, Gibb and Street 2017)[2].

How did schools understand and approach character development? (Chapter 2)

- Case study schools saw character education as referring to support for students' (personal) development as well-rounded individuals. However, they cautioned against calling it character education as they viewed the development of character as being intrinsic to their aims and purpose, rather than a distinct set of lessons.

- Schools prioritised a number of different character traits including: resilience, self-esteem and confidence, communication skills, self-regulation, perseverance and motivation, respect, tolerance and empathy.

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[1] Marshall, L; Rooney, K; Dunatchik, A and Smith, N. (2017) *Survey of Character Education in Schools in England.* London: DfE

[2] White, C; Lea, J; Gibb, J; and Street, C. (2017) *Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges: Qualitative case studies.* London: DfE

- Schools took a whole-school approach to nurturing character which was influenced by the school's mission or philosophy; students' age and needs; the wider policy context; and by relevant research, theory and learning from others' practice.

- Headteachers, their deputies and other senior staff led on the development of their approach, sometimes with the support of students and parents. To varying degrees, all staff were said to play a role in character development – and were provided with training and support accordingly.

- Character development was mainly funded by the school budget, grant funding and parents paying for specific activities.

How did schools develop character? (Chapter 3)

- Case study schools embedded their approach to character development across the curriculum, in particular using the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) curricula. They also incorporated it in assemblies, tutor time, and other lessons. The *ways* in which subjects were taught (for example, such as to reward effort rather than simply achievement) were seen to further character development, and shape attitudes to education. House (point) systems and reward and award schemes also incentivised demonstration of selected traits.

- A wide range of extra-curricular activities were also used to develop character, more or less explicitly, including sports, clubs or trips, and special events such as 'health and wellbeing' weeks and award ceremonies recognising non-academic achievements. School councils, other positions of responsibility and charity work provided opportunities to develop leadership skills, empathy and self-esteem.

- The development of employability was most directly supported in secondary schools via sessions with careers advisors, careers fairs and work experience.

- Targeted support included mentoring, group work to, for example, develop friendships and manage stress, support with study skills, mediation, yoga and mindfulness sessions and counselling.

- Schools informed parents and sought their support with their approaches, via newsletters and other promotional materials, parents' evenings and special celebratory, sporting or cultural events. They aimed to involve parents more intensively where students were seen as needing more targeted support.

- Staff-student relationships were identified as key to developing character, with staff modelling desired traits, and being approachable and engaging.

- The most consistently raised barrier to furthering character development was time and staff capacity, in the context of competing pressures around academic performance.

What is key to success for developing character? (Chapter 4)

- Successful character development was felt to depend on a clear vision and whole school approach that was embedded across the curriculum. It needs to be delivered and modelled by staff with the appropriate skills, time and access to activities that can be tailored appropriately to the needs of students.

- Recognition needs to be given to the importance of character development and the resources and skills required to support practice, alongside the other requirements for academic success.

- Teachers need to be encouraged, developed and supported with activities to develop character.

- The government and wider sector could helpfully support schools by creating a database of organisations or a network where schools could discuss and share practice; and a menu or bank of tools and activities that have been proven to work.

Conclusions (Chapter 5)

- The research has provided evidence of the wide array of activities that schools are undertaking to develop character. It specifically highlights the importance of embedding the approach across the curriculum.

- In a tough fiscal climate there is even more of an imperative to work in a more integrated way, joining up the approach for character development and mental health as well as placing greater emphasis on earlier intervention.

- Schools expressed a need for the government and the wider sector to recognise and value the important work that schools and colleges are already engaged in to develop character.

- It is important that schools are supported and resourced appropriately to be able to create the infrastructure to develop their approach to character development. They need access to training, evidence based activities, and a means for judging and assessing the impact of their approach.

1.   Introduction

NatCen Social Research (NatCen) and the National Children's Bureau (NCB) Research and Policy Team were contracted by the Department for Education (DfE) to carry out research investigating the provision of mental health and character education in schools and colleges in England. It was commissioned in response to growing evidence demonstrating the positive impact of emotional wellbeing on the educational and other outcomes for children and young people. It is part of a programme of work being carried out by the DfE to inform the focus of further policy activity on mental health and character development.

The research involved a mixed method approach combining a survey and case studies of schools, colleges and other educational institutions. The survey was carried out to provide a representative profile of character education and mental health provision and an understanding of the issues that institutions face in delivering this (Marshall, Rooney, Dunatchik and Smith 2017)[3]. Twenty-six case studies were carried out to extend the findings from the survey and to identify and share practice across the school and college sector. They were followed by a workshop at the DfE to consolidate the learning and recommendations from the research. The case studies and workshop were carried out between October 2016 and January 2017.

This report presents findings from the 11 case studies focusing on character development. A complementary report presents findings from the 15 case studies considering the provision of mental health support (White, Lea, Gibb and Street 2017)[4].

1.1   The policy and research context

Many of the educational reforms that the DfE have pursued since 2010 have been focused on improving academic standards in schools and raising expectations around formal attainment outcomes for pupils. This has included emphasis on the importance of developing skills for life and work alongside securing academic excellence. The intention was to achieve an outcome for all young people to be well-equipped for adult life. Preparation for success requires the development of non-cognitive "soft" skills in school, alongside and underpinning high academic attainment. The embedding of those skills in the context of schools and colleges was termed "character education".

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[3] Marshall, L; Rooney, K; Dunatchik, A and Smith, N. (2017) *Survey of Character Education in Schools in England.* London: DfE
[4] White, C; Lea, J; Gibb, J; and Street, C. (2017) *Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges: Qualitative case studies.* London: DfE

In December 2014, the DfE announced a wide-ranging package of measures to support schools and other education settings to help pupils develop desirable character traits, including:

- Perseverance and resilience
- Confidence and optimism
- Motivation, drive and ambition
- Neighbourliness and community spirit
- Tolerance and respect
- Honesty, integrity and dignity
- Conscientiousness, curiosity and focus.

The plans included the launch of a £5 million Character Innovation Fund to support the development of character education in schools. This investment focused on: building the evidence base around character education; funding new projects that are based on evidence of what works and evaluated for impact; and recognising the success of existing efforts to embed character education in schools. It was acknowledged that such work could be undertaken in a variety of ways including through personal, social, health and economic lessons (PSHE), citizenship lessons, the broader curriculum or extra-curricular activities.

The growing body of evidence illustrates and supports the government's ambition to develop non-cognitive skills in children and young people. Research shows that character attributes such as resilience are correlated with good mental health and wellbeing and more generally, for allowing individuals to flourish as citizens. For example a 2015 report by DEMOS and the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues[5] suggests that character attributes like self-regulation (the ability to control one's emotions), application (the ability to commit to a task), and empathy (the ability to consider another's perspective) are correlated with higher educational attainment (and thus, better outcomes in the labour market). Another report by the Jubilee Centre[6] provides further context to the policy interest in schools offering their pupils character education, to support the development of 'moral integrity'. The report describes concerns about a decline in the 'moral fabric' of society, as a result of increasing emphasis on material consumption and immediate self-gratification. It also suggests that a failure to teach moral reasoning skills has left young people ill-prepared for adult life.

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[5] Birdwell, J; Scott, R. and Reynolds, L. (2015) *Character Nation. A Demos report with the Jubilee Centre for Character and virtues.* London: Demos.

[6] Arthur, J; Kristjansson, K; Walker, S; Sanderse, W; Jones, C. *et al* (2015) *Character Education in UK Schools Research Report* University of Birmingham, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues.

Also influential was the Early Intervention Foundation's review of social and emotional skills in childhood and the long-term effects these can have on adult life[7]. Exploring data from the 1970 Cohort Study, the review identified various social and emotional skills as being important for adult outcomes including self-control, self-regulation and self-awareness.

1.2 Research aims

The research was commissioned as a single project focusing on character education and mental health provision. The combined aims of the qualitative research were to amplify and extend the understanding of the survey estimates and illustrate the range of activities used to deliver character education and support the mental health of children and young people in schools and further education (FE) colleges. Specifically the case studies and the subsequent workshop aimed to:

- Provide in-depth understanding of the way schools, FE colleges and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) provide character education (CE) and support the mental health (MH) and wellbeing of pupils.

- Understand what underpins judgements and decisions about identifying and assessing need; the range of provision offered; who provides it; and how it is funded and delivered.

- Explore decision making about how activities are integrated into school or college programmes; learn about what schools and colleges say works best in terms of practice and delivery, including around universal or targeted approaches; and the range of staff needed to deliver this.

- Understand the facilitators and barriers for delivering character education and mental health support.

- Identify examples of specific activities which schools and colleges have found effective in supporting mental health and developing character.

1.3 Research approach

The qualitative research was based on a case study design comprising 26 case studies. Of these 15 were focused on mental health and 11 on character education.

The case study sample was designed to focus on mainstream primary and secondary schools that were more actively supporting mental health and developing character skills

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[7] Early Intervention Foundation (2015) *Social and Emotional Learning: Skills for Life and Work. Overview report. www.eif.org.uk*

(Table 1). FE colleges were only included in the mental health sample. Five special schools and five Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) were added to the sample to provide transferable learning about more specialist practice. For this reason special schools were selected with a focus on social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and communication and interaction needs. The sample was selected from the survey respondents on the basis of high levels of reported activity for mental health provision and character education.

Table 1: Case study sample

Educational institution	MH case study	CE case study	Total
Primary LA maintained	2	1	3
Primary academies	1	1	2
Secondary LA maintained	1	1	2
Secondary academies	2	2	4
Independent schools	1	2	3
FE Colleges	2		2
Special schools – primary	1	1	2
Special schools – secondary	2	1	3
PRUs – primary	1	1	2
PRUs – secondary	2	1	3
Total	**15**	**11**	**26**

Quotas were set to ensure the inclusion of sites reporting:

- A wide range of activities to develop character and support mental health
- Experience of specific challenges and barriers to delivering their practice
- A range of training for all or specific staff to support mental health or deliver character education.

The 11 character education case studies were selected from seven regions across England including both urban and rural locations and economically deprived areas.

The remainder of the report focuses on the character education case study design and findings.

1.3.1 The character education case studies

The 11 one-day case study visits were carried out between October and December 2016. They were designed to explore how each school[8] was delivering character education. During each visit up to 6 interviews were carried out with key staff (Table 2).

All interviews were based on topic guides which outlined the main topics that were to be addressed and the coverage was tailored according to the role and experience of the participant. A copy of the topic guide used with the lead person for character education can be seen in Appendix A and a list of the main topics covered during interviews is in Table 3. Interviews with the lead person for character education lasted up to two hours and all other interviews were around 60 minutes in duration.

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[8] As noted in Table 1, the character education case study sample did not include further education colleges. This is reflected in the analysis and conclusions, which focus on schools, special schools and PRUs.

Table 2: Character education case study participants

Character education case study participants
• **Senior staff**: Governors, headteachers/ deputy and assistant heads, managers
• **Curriculum leads**: Director of learning services, head of house, head of year, subject leads
• **General and specific teaching staff** (e.g. Citizenship, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) and Outdoor Education)
• **Pastoral and wellbeing staff** (including student support manager)
• **Learning support**: Coach and learning mentor
• **Programme coordinators or leads for programmes including**: Mindfulness, Nurture Group, ASDAN, Thrive and Forest School
• **Wider support staff**: Family support workers and key workers

Table 3: Character education topics

Character education topics
• Policy and goals for developing character
• Developing and funding character skills development
• The range of character development activities
• How character development is integrated in the curriculum
• Training, supporting and supervising staff to develop character skills
• Value and role of character development; and what works for developing character skills
• Facilitators and challenges encountered
• Changing or developing the approach to character skills development

1.3.2 Workshop

In January 2017, participants from across all case studies were invited to take part in a half-day workshop that was hosted by the DfE and facilitated by the research team. This provided the opportunity to share the findings with the participants, discuss the recommendations and consider how key areas of practice could be adapted for mainstream school provision. The workshop findings were incorporated into the analysis and reporting of the case studies.

1.3.3 Analysis

The case study interviews and workshop were recorded, transcribed and then analysed using Framework. This involved summarising the views and experiences of participants in a series of *Excel* worksheets which focused on the research themes. This process ensured that the findings were based on, and could be traced back to, the accounts of

participants. It also made it easier to draw comparisons across different types of educational institution.

1.4   Report coverage

The findings have been organised under the key research questions that we set out to address. The remainder of this report is divided into four chapters:

- Chapter 2 – Understanding character development in schools - explores how case study schools conceived of and referred to character education; and which character traits they were seeking to develop in children and young people.

- Chapter 3 – Developing character in schools - describes the range of whole school and tailored activities carried out in case study schools, along with challenges and barriers to delivery.

- Chapter 4 – Key learning on character development – draws together the key learning from the case studies about effective character skills development. It also considers participants' plans and aspirations for expanding and developing their approach.

- Chapter 5 – Conclusions - reflects on the key messages from the research.

Quotations and case examples have been used from across the sample to illustrate and substantiate the findings. The purposive nature of the case study sample means that it is not appropriate to draw any conclusions about the prevalence of the findings. For this reason the main survey findings have been integrated in the report to help set the case study evidence in context. In order to preserve participants' anonymity, case examples have not been identified in the report and quotations are labelled only with the type of school in which the participant was based.

2.   Understanding character development

The survey findings (Marshall *et al.* 2017) found that almost all institutions (97%) sought to promote desirable character traits among their students, although fewer were familiar with the term 'character education' (54%) prior to being approached to take part in the research.

This chapter considers how the 11 case study schools understood and approached character development. It explains how character education was conceptualised and described, and which traits were prioritised (Section 2.1); how schools understood their responsibilities (Section 2.2); and how they had developed (Section 2.3), staffed and funded their provision (Sections 2.4 and 2.5).

Summary of key points

- Case study participants saw character education as referring to support for students' (personal) development as well-rounded individuals. They described it as highly important, intrinsic to *all* their work, and as reflecting and promoting their school values, rather than as a stand-alone set of lessons or activities.

- Schools prioritised similar traits to those identified by the DfE for the purposes of this research. Among those mentioned were resilience, self-esteem and confidence, communication skills, self-regulation, perseverance and motivation, respect, tolerance and empathy.

- Similar aims and objectives were mentioned across case study sites, but there were variations in perceived responsibilities and priorities, depending on factors such as religious heritage, catchment area, and whether their provision catered for students outside mainstream education.

- Schools aimed to take a whole-school approach to nurturing character. Their approaches were influenced by the school mission or philosophy, students' age and needs, the wider policy context; relevant research, theory and learning from others' practice.

- Across sites, headteachers or their deputies led on the development of their approach with the support of other (senior) staff, and sometimes students and parents.

- To varying degrees, all staff were said to play a role in character development – and were provided with training and support accordingly.

- Sources of funding for character development included: the curriculum/staffing budget; pupil premium funding; school fees; free input mainly from external contacts; donations; fundraising; and grant funding.

2.1 Defining character education

Interviews began by inviting participants to define character education in their words, and to identify the traits that they viewed as important. This facilitated comparisons with the traits identified by DfE as prompts for the purposes of this research: resilience, perseverance and persistence, communication, motivation, hard work, self-control, discipline and good time-keeping, self-confidence, leadership and teamwork, honesty, integrity and respect for others; attitude, respect, empathy, and compassion, and curiosity and problem-solving.

Case study participants did not spontaneously use terms like 'character education' or 'character traits' but, when prompted, equated the terms with helping children and young people develop as well rounded individuals, and supporting their personal development. They variously referred to promoting a range of values, morals, virtues, skills, attributes, qualities, characteristics or pro-social behaviours. While they discussed a range of activities that they used – more or less overtly – to 'develop character' or nurture specific traits, this did not involve following a specific curriculum. Instead, character development was seen as intrinsic to everything they did with children, and often underpinned by their school philosophy, mission and values.

> "It's like the writing in a stick of Blackpool rock, running through everything we do. I suppose I see it as educating the whole child. To prepare them for the future, to prepare them to be positive, well-rounded, young citizens. Building character but with that building in sensible risk taking, building in dealing with failure, because that's something we all do, and celebrating winning at the same time."
>
> (LA-maintained Primary)

While schools rarely expressed strong views about the language DfE used, they were concerned that the term character education implied that character could be developed through following a particular curriculum, much as for Maths or English. It was also suggested that the term 'character education' was rather old fashioned, and unlikely to resonate with either staff or students. However, as one interviewee argued:

> "It doesn't matter what label it's got: it's about the holistic development of a child to enable them to be an active citizen, and to have those strategies in place to be able to do that, to make those choices."
>
> (Primary PRU)

2.1.2 Key character traits

Overall, case study participants prioritised similar traits for development and these were broadly in line with the examples highlighted by the DfE as among those of interest. All of the traits or characteristics in Figure 2.1 were mentioned by some schools as priorities for

development. While their relative size is not a strict indicator of frequency of use overall, interviewees tended to use the largest words in each cluster to refer to related concepts.

Figure 2.1 Traits prioritised by schools

The traits highlighted most consistently as important to develop were:

- Resilience
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Communication skills
- Self (or emotional) regulation
- Perseverance and motivation
- Tolerance, respect, empathy and compassion.

These traits were identified as important by both mainstream and special schools and pupil referral units. Nevertheless, those prioritised did vary to some extent, depending on the type of school, and student profile – as discussed further in Section 2.2.

2.2 Role and responsibilities for developing character

The survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017) found that the vast majority of schools placed a high priority on developing a broad range of character traits. The case study schools explained this more and linked it to their duty to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Given the huge amount of time children spend in school, it was considered inevitable that the experience *would* influence character (as would parenting); the key question was *how.*

For the most part, schools suggested that their responsibilities in relation to character development encompassed:

- Encouraging children to **understand**, **value** and **demonstrate** the positive behaviour traits which would make them well-rounded, grounded citizens

- Developing the **skills** required to function in and contribute to society

- Supporting the social and emotional development or emotional intelligence of young people, such that students better **understand themselves**, their strengths and weaknesses, and can work on the latter

- Instilling and developing a **moral compass about how** to interact with people and understand their behaviour.

However, the nature of the school and its students also influenced how interviewees described their roles and priorities in relation to character development. For example, there were differences between the traits emphasised in primary and secondary schools, with employability a greater priority in relation to older students (see section 2.3.1).

2.3 Approaches to developing character

Almost all schools (97%) that took part in the survey reported having a mission statement or set of core values intended to contribute to character education. In line with the survey findings, case study schools did not have formalised character education *policies*, labelled as such. However, interviewees often pointed to other relevant documents – for example mission statements, strategic plans or other policies on teaching or Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) or mental health and wellbeing, even if they did not explicitly identify these as polices for character development. For example, one school's mission statement referred to nurturing several of the traits highlighted by the DfE, including confidence, tolerance, teamwork and leadership. Elsewhere, strategic plans variously committed schools to fully developing students' talents, through extracurricular activities, 'learning for life', a 'curriculum for life', or 'developing the whole person'.

2.3.1 Rationale for approaches

Approaches to developing character were intrinsic to each school's philosophy, mission and values and were underpinned by a number of different factors.

Addressing students' needs

The approach adopted, and the traits prioritised, were driven by the nature of students' needs. To a greater extent than for mainstream schools, it was argued that PRUs and special schools had to prioritise the development of personal and social skills, emotional resilience and mental health, in order to overcome barriers to learning or address other vulnerabilities. This was essential to enabling their students' progress, academically and in other areas. Both special schools and PRUs presented their responsibilities and 'offers' around character development as highly individualised, stressing each student's particular needs.

In explaining their focus on building resilience, self-esteem and motivation, through providing intensive support and positive experiences, staff from a PRU highlighted that:

> *"They're quite low in self-esteem because predominantly all they've experienced is getting into trouble or not being successful in lessons."*
>
> *"We've got a responsibility to break the cycle of underachievement."*
>
> (Secondary PRU)

Likewise, in a Primary PRU, their priority was to develop emotional competencies, self-esteem and pro-social behaviour, taking a strengths-based approach and engaging families and partner (mainstream) schools in doing the same. They aimed to give the young person the skills to self-regulate - first within the PRU, and then back in a mainstream school and in the community. Developing resilience was said to underpin everything they did, with the intention that young people left the PRU better equipped to cope with challenges. As the headteacher explained:

> *"Strength-based education or whatever - personal, social and emotional development, because that's really what it is - was our starting point, so saying 'This is what we want to do as a PRU. This is what we can uniquely offer for the children that come here.'"*
>
> (Primary PRU)

Similarly, in special schools, staff saw their primary roles as supporting students to become good citizens; stronger, more confident young people who could self-regulate, have a sense of purpose, enjoy positive relationships and fit into society, as well as engage with teaching and, eventually, training and work.

"Every part of the curriculum has an element focusing on developing the resilience of the young person, their strategies for coping with life, a greater self-awareness, and on how they can impact positively."

(Primary and secondary special school)

There were distinctions to be drawn between the development of character in primary and secondary schools and how character traits operate at different ages and developmental stages. Case study secondary schools tended to mention employability, independence, initiative and leadership more than primary schools. This was in line with the survey finding that secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to report developing desirable character traits in order to promote employability.

Active citizenship was promoted in all types of case study site. However, in independent, fee-paying schools, with students largely from affluent backgrounds, character leads described placing a particular emphasis on compassion, gratitude, 'giving back' and the responsibility that comes with privilege to make a positive contribution to society.

In contrast, other schools serving less affluent intakes were keenly aware of different challenges, reflecting their pupils' needs. While all schools were concerned with the need to nurture resilience and the importance of learning from failure, those in more deprived areas emphasised their responsibility to nurture positivity and self-belief around achievement, combat low aspirations, and address barriers to learning stemming from emotional and behavioural problems, or difficulties at home. As one member of secondary school staff said:

"It's those stepping stones in between them coming through that door and them sitting in class in front of the teacher with the mindset… ready to absorb that learning."

(LA-maintained secondary)

It was also held that supporting students with personal development – and with *evidencing* achievements beyond academic results – could help them to compete with students from more privileged backgrounds. This was seen as particularly important given the role of transferable life skills in coping with a rapidly changing job market.

Religious values

For schools with a strong religious heritage and identity, discussion and promotion of '*being a good person*' and *'making a difference'* was viewed as being part of their ethos and core purpose. For example, interviewees from a Jesuit school explained that, since 1548, there had been two strands to their teaching; learning (education, as typically understood) and formation of character. They saw their role as assisting parents in the education of their children and their upbringing as good people, applying enduring values to contemporary challenges. In line with the tradition of Jesuit charitable and

humanitarian work, they felt a responsibility to encourage students to be compassionate, listen to their consciences, be cognisant of their strengths and weaknesses, and contribute to the community and "*causes bigger than themselves*". They argued that schools should be judged not just on academic results but - more importantly - on the kind of human beings they introduced to society. Likewise, another headteacher whose school promoted values aligned with their own Christian vision and history also described character education as their '*number one priority*'.

There was a sense that, because of their heritage and identity as faith schools, these responsibilities were understood as central to their provision, by children, parents and the broader community. However, it was not only religious schools which recognised these responsibilities, and those from religious schools argued that the values they promoted were equally applicable to young people adopting their faith, other faiths, or none.

Relevant policy, research, theory and practice

School approaches had also been influenced and driven by government agendas. Relevant publications that were mentioned included those promoting 'British values'[9] and '*Excellence and Enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning*' (DFES, 2005), alongside requirements from Ofsted to take account of personal development issues.

Key approaches or practice cited as inspiring or shaping schools' plans included: values-based education; philosophical education; strengths-based approaches; the Growth Mindset approach (Carol Dweck)[10]; Emotional Intelligence (Daniel Goleman)[11]; Maslow's hierarchy of needs and nurture group teaching; the Stepping Stones programme (a 20-30 hour PSHE/ Citizenship-based programme with an Award Scheme Development); and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

Staff backgrounds and experience were also reported as having guided and influenced particular approaches. For example, a headteacher who trained as an expressive arts therapist brought a '*massive toolkit*' to support the new focus on individual growth in a Primary PRU. In another case study school, a personal experience had resulted in the school lead learning more about adolescent brain development and the need for young people to take risks to develop. As a consequence, this lead emphasised the importance of the school providing 'good' risky activities to avoid students taking up 'bad' ones (such as drugs and alcohol).

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9 DfE (2014) 'Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools: Departmental advice for maintained schools'.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf
10 Dweck, C. (2017) 'Mindset - Updated Edition: Changing The Way You think To Fulfil Your Potential'. Little, Brown Book Group.
11 Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam Books.

2.3.2 Development of approaches

Case study schools had already established their approaches for developing character, with recent or ongoing developments designed to update or enhance them in line with new thinking and experience. Where a more substantial overhaul had occurred, this reflected other fundamental changes in the school.

At one extreme (in terms of historical origins), there was the Jesuit Pupil Profile (JPP), which was built on centuries old tradition, albeit formalised within the last decade. It was a values based approach that consisted of 16 values, illustrated and promoted in all aspects of school life. In contrast, a new headteacher in a PRU introduced a strengths-based approach, focusing on emotional intelligence, to turn around a 'failing' site.

The development of overall approaches was led by headteachers or other SLT members, but also involved some or all of their staff, and more exceptionally, young people and parents. There were particularly inclusive examples from a PRU and an independent school, as illustrated in Boxes 2.1 and 2.2 below.

> **Box 2.1: Developing an approach to character in a Primary PRU**
> Introduction of this PRU's new strengths-based approach and focus on emotional intelligence was driven by the new headteacher, but with input from staff and governors, to unpick the values they wanted to embed, and the detail around how to do it. They then tested their approach in discussion with children, prior to sharing it with parents and partner agencies. The school council also wrote the new school motto, focusing on uniting and being the best they can be.

> **Box 2.2: Developing an approach to character in a Jesuit primary school**
> The Jesuit Pupil Profile, which formed the basis of all this independent school's work on character development, was formulated in meetings of chaplains and headteachers from Jesuit schools across the country, and through discussions with staff, parents and young people. Over the course of a year, leads held a series of workshops to hone their final set of 16 words and supporting text.

Where overall strategies had been in place for some time, existing staff may not have played a part in their initial development. However, they tended to be actively engaged in periodic reviews of the approach, or in ongoing discussions about how best to tailor that approach for individual young people - particularly in PRUs and special schools.

2.3.3 Links with approaches to mental health

Approaches to character development and mental health were seen as linked – if not yet in practice, then at least in theory, with school leads aspiring to greater join up. This was either because a broader policy covered both areas and both were seen as prerequisites for effective teaching, or because character development was viewed as a way of promoting wellbeing and preventing mental health problems from arising or escalating. The concept of resilience neatly linked the two areas: character development was seen as equipping young people with skills which could enable them to self-regulate and to cope better with challenges and stressors.

It was further suggested by staff in one site that a *lack* of attention to character development - in mainstream as well as special schools – has meant mental health has suffered in recent years, as evidenced by rising rates of self-harm and increasing demand for NHS Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (NHS CYPMPS).

In some cases, there were explicit links between character development and mental health within schools' policy documents. For example, a secondary academy published a mental health and wellbeing policy stressing that young people (as well as staff) need to be happy to thrive, and that this is served by providing opportunities to develop as a 'whole person' through subject lessons and extracurricular activities.

Links between approaches also appeared particularly clear in special schools and PRUs, where students often had recognised mental health as well as behavioural problems, and building self-esteem and trusting relationships with staff was seen as key to addressing both sets of issues.

2.4   Staffing

The survey by Marshall *et al.* (2017) found that a quarter of schools had a dedicated character education lead, although respondents were not asked who this person was. As noted previously, across case study schools, headteachers, their deputies or other senior leadership team members led the approach to character development and they participated in aspects of delivery as well as overseeing the work of more junior colleagues. The complexity of the management arrangements and degree of delegation varied with the size of the school and extent to which the approach was embedded across it. While pastoral staff, SENCOs, teaching assistants and keyworkers supported students with higher levels of need, *all* staff were said to play a role in character development – and therefore needed support around this.

Recruitment was not systematically explored across sites. However, leads from different types of school mentioned that a preliminary step in equipping their teams to support character development was to recruit staff who understood the importance of students'

personal development, and were enthusiastic about contributing to it. These qualities were assessed at interview, and/ or through observing staff in some other capacity (e.g. teaching assistant, or external, visiting practitioner) prior to taking them on in teaching or other support roles. Leads highlighted the importance of staff having both strong personal qualities alongside other requirements that could be trained and developed. They variously identified a need for staff to be: self-aware, emotionally intelligent, able to demonstrate reflective practice, patient, caring, flexible, open-minded, willing to do things differently and take on board new approaches, prepared to help, and happy and confident.

In special schools, there were additional requirements relating to the medical and educational needs of their students. Otherwise these schools appeared to have a more prescriptive and developed specification for their requirements, with staff working in relatively small, cohesive teams to meet the needs of individual children. In contrast, in mainstream schools staff with responsibility for developing character were more dispersed across the school, even if they worked alongside a smaller pastoral team.

The survey evidence shows that most schools were offering training in character education to at least some members of staff (77%). More than two in five (43%) offered training to all staff members, a third (34%) offered training to some and a quarter (23%) offered no training. Focusing on state maintained schools, primary schools were more likely to offer character education training to all staff (46% vs. 29%) while secondary schools were more likely to selectively offer training to some staff (44% vs. 31%).

Across case study sites, staff had been provided with training and support relating to character development at various points:

- During the induction process
- When new activities and interventions were introduced to develop character
- On an ongoing basis, via supervision, CPD and meetings, to ensure the consistency and integrity of desired activities and interventions
- Intermittently, to refresh and extend their knowledge and skills through external training / events.

In addition, some other means of training, informing and supporting staff mentioned across sites included:

- Whole school staff conferences to exchange ideas, and ensure consistency
- Support, advice and training for class teachers to implement interventions, provided by family learning and SEND teams
- Open evenings, held in a student support centre, to familiarise staff with the support team's activities

- Workshops on how to address mental health issues and de-escalate situations in the classroom (While focused on mental health, this training was highlighted as relevant to supporting character development.)
- Inset days on coaching students, communication or self-awareness
- Advice or tools provided by external professionals (e.g. educational psychologists)
- Training in techniques for supporting emotional wellbeing and emotional literacy (e.g. ASDAN and CoPE, Social Use of Language, Elklan training)
- Reading from relevant websites (e.g. MIND).

Special schools and PRUs had more developed approaches for supporting, supervising and training staff; they also organised a wider range of specialist training courses for their teams. It appeared that their development and training offer incorporated their approach to character development, as illustrated by a PRU with a workforce development strategy and appraisal target around emotional intelligence.

Boxes 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 outline the ways in which staff in a secondary school, primary school and a PRU were supported to implement their school's approaches.

Box 2.3: Staff training and support in a secondary academy
In this school, following the introduction of a new approach to character development, staff were provided with training on personal development programmes like PiXL Edge and growth mindset. Since then, staff meetings have provided regular reminders of the key principles and individuals have also been able to access additional training as relevant – such as debating training for staff setting up a debating club. They have also had training days when external specialists (such as psychologists) visit to share strategies for use with students. Their PSHE lead attended training with the PSHE association and provided staff with schemes of work and resources. All staff and team (e.g. PSHE or Pastoral) meetings have allowed for mutual support, problem-solving and sharing of good practice or learning from training. Similarly, Year team meetings involving all tutors were designed to provide support on implementing programmes in tutor time. Staff could also access additional one-to-one support if needed.

Box 2.4: Staff training and support in an independent primary

In this school, all staff were trained in the Jesuit Pupil Profile and in how to help pupils understand and develop its characteristics. Staff were provided with in-house sessions as part of inductions focusing on Jesuit education (including how to approach teaching traits to pupils) with external follow up training to deepen their knowledge and understanding. The Deputy Head supported staff by regularly sharing guidance and resources (including material relevant to each of their monthly themes) and answering questions. He and other senior managers observed how staff covered the relevant traits in classes. They also provided inset days on specific techniques such as coaching skills, and trained a member of staff in neurolinguistic programming. Counsellors and independent listeners were also available for staff as well as pupils. Staff could also access extra training to deliver extra-curricular activities, for example, to be a running coach.

Box 2.5: Staff training and support in a Primary PRU

In this PRU, their workforce development strategy involved appraisals, support, supervision and reflective dialogue. The aim was to produce emotionally intelligent practitioners (as a prerequisite for effectively supporting students). Reflective team meetings were held every Friday afternoon. They used inset days to focus on communication, self-awareness, and their emotional approach. Training sessions covered assertive teaching strategies, compassion, dignity, trust, self-awareness, reflection and optimal teaching environments, (growth) mindset and nurture group approaches. Much of this training was instigated to change the staff ethos and approach to working with children, to give them the tools they needed, and to make them - as well as the students - feel valued.

2.5 Funding

Funding for character development was briefly explored, as this was not a key research question and school budget managers were not interviewed during case study visits. However, heads and other leads provided some relevant information.

To the extent that character development was pursued within PSHE, other subject lessons, or assemblies, these costs could be covered within curriculum and staffing budgets. Other sources mentioned across sites included the following:

- **Pupil premium funding:** this was variously used to (partly or fully) fund pastoral support, a student support centre, one-to-one interventions, an attendance officer, and (targeted) students' participation in extra-curricular activities or trips.

- **Fees:** these came from local authorities funding special school or PRU places, or from parents paying for places at independent schools. They were used to cover the costs of extra-curricular activities, environmental improvements, reward programmes and extra one-to-one support.

- **Staff working longer hours** to provide activities and to support extra-curricular programmes.

- **Fundraising**: this was mentioned as being undertaken to support students' participation in volunteering abroad or other character-building trips.

- **Approaching external contacts:** this involved leads networking and benefitting from goodwill and favours, for instance exploiting their own, governors' or parents' contacts to source (free) inspirational speakers or securing support from an external agency, for example to set up a vegetable garden.

- **External funding (and/ or provision) from foundations or trusts:** this was used across different sites to provide extra, stretching, opportunities for students. For example, the Jack Petchey Foundation[12] supported students' involvement in activities in areas as diverse as public speaking, dance and charity fundraising. Other named sources of funding or free programmes included: local football clubs' outreach programmes; the Premier League's Enterprise Challenge[13]; and First Give[14].

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[12] http://www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk/
[13] https://www.premierleague.com/communities/programmes/community-programmes/pl-enterprise
[14] http://firstgive.co.uk/

3 How schools developed character

This chapter describes the activities used by case study schools to develop character. The survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017) found that the overwhelming majority of schools (98%) offered at least one of the school-wide approaches, day-to-day activities (focusing on character in assemblies, registration periods, circle time or similar) and extra-curricular activities listed in the survey. Pupil leadership was also near-universal. House systems and peer support were also popular school-wide approaches used to promote character development, particularly among secondary schools. This broad range of activities was reflected across case study sites.

The chapter starts by detailing the range of activities employed to promote character development for *all* students at school or class level (Section 3.1). Sections 3.2 and 3.3 consider how activities were tailored or targeted to those needing extra support and the ways in which schools involved and engaged parents and carers. Finally, Section 3.4 discusses some of the challenges encountered in delivering these activities.

Summary of key points

- Case study schools embedded their approach to character development across the curriculum in various ways, particularly through the PSHE/ SMSC curricula and extra-curricular activities, but also in assemblies, tutor time, and other lessons. The *ways* in which subjects were taught were seen to further character development, and shape attitudes to learning. (Competitive) house systems and reward and award schemes also incentivised demonstration of selected traits.

- Employability was most directly supported through secondary schools via activities such as sessions with careers advisors, careers fairs and work experience.

- Staff-student relationships were seen as key, with staff modelling desired traits and being approachable and engaging, to encourage students to be open with them and take on board their advice.

- A wide range of extra-curricular activities were available to all students including sports, clubs or trips - more or less explicitly focused on character development. There were special events in school calendars, ranging from 'health and wellbeing' weeks to award ceremonies recognising non-academic achievements. School councils, other positions of responsibility and charity work provided opportunities to develop traits such as leadership, empathy and self-esteem.

- Tailored or targeted activities often overlapped with those designed to promote mental health. Mainstream schools took some form of tiered approach, with class teachers or form tutors described as the 'first port of call', with referral upwards as required to dedicated pastoral or support staff, before external referrals. In PRUs and special schools, all students tended to be receiving individualised support.

- Types of targeted support included mentoring, group work (e.g. on friendships), mediation, support with study skills, yoga or mindfulness sessions, counselling and provision of 'time out', revised timetables or access to external programmes.

- Schools sought to make parents aware of their approaches and gain their support, via newsletters and other promotional materials, parents' evenings, celebratory, sporting or cultural events, and/ or regular updates on students' character-related achievements. Efforts to engage parents were more intensive where students were seen as needing more targeted support.

- Challenges reported across sites included lack of time, capacity and funding, measurement issues, and difficulties engaging (some) students, parents and staff.

3.1   Whole school activities

Chapter 2 (Section 2.3) explained that character development was seen as an intrinsic part of school life. As a consequence it was often embedded across the school curriculum, with key values promoted and reiterated at different levels and in different contexts. Assemblies, tutor time, Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC), and extra-curricular activities were all cited as opportunities to '*drip feed'* the desired messages to students and encourage them to reflect upon, develop and demonstrate character traits. For example, a secondary school keen to nurture perseverance and resilience presented examples of growth and fixed mindsets in assemblies, class lessons and extra-curricular activities, to ensure pupils were familiar with, and took on board the lessons about effort and achievement. As one member of staff put it, *"We call this giving them the 'nudge'."*

Often, interviewees talked of how messages would be presented first to the whole school in an assembly, and then dissected further in form or tutor groups. Prominent visual displays and ad hoc conversations with staff were also mentioned repeatedly as reinforcing the importance the school placed on character and encouraging students to engage with this aspect of their education.

Case study schools promoted their whole school activities in various ways, including:

- Posters, display boards and other visual materials in classes/ around the school
- Presentations for students, staff, parents and/ or partner schools
- Events or activity 'fairs'
- Coffee mornings and parents' evenings
- Blogs, newsletters, websites, policies, mission statements and social media.

The remainder of this section sets out the various ways in which schools sought to develop character.

3.1.1 The curriculum

Schools varied in the degree to which their approach to character development revolved around their school values and was embedded throughout the curriculum. The survey found that 89% of schools used subject lessons to deliver character education – of whom 98% used PSHE/ Citizenship lessons, 82% academic lessons and 42% vocational lessons (for example, focused on preparation for employment or life skills).

PSHE and SMSC curricula

The PSHE and SMSC curricula were critical to the way schools approached character development, although there were variations in how they were described and taught. There were schools which delivered 'Personal Development' rather than PSHE, as part of their SMSC provision; and those which delivered Citizenship and PSHE as distinct subjects. In mainstream secondary schools, PSHE (or the equivalent) lessons usually took place fortnightly, whereas they were a *daily* feature in PRUs. This reflects the distinct foci of different case study sites, with the academic curriculum a more pressing concern for mainstream schools, where PSHE could be deprioritised for those facing exams. Figure 3.1 shows how one secondary school structured their SMSC curriculum.

Figure 3.1   Example of a school's SMSC curriculum

Strands	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Enrichment	Lunchtime clubs						
Student voice	Student voice which feeds into the Student Council						
Student voice	Student hub which is a place designed for students to facilitate all strands off SMSC						
SMSC	SMSC across the curriculum						
SMSC	Drop down events which are specific to year group needs						
SMSC	Themes of the half term: Assembly & SMSC tutor time activities based on the theme						
SMSC	Personal development lesson (1 hr per cycle)					Personal development lesson (1 hr per cycle)	
Careers	Transition	Careers (options advice)	Careers fair	Work experience	Careers (appointments and sessions)		
Careers	Independent Careers Adviser at all parents' evenings						
Careers	XC (2 hrs per cycle)		Leadership and challenge				
Leadership	PIXL The Edge + Apprentice		Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme				
Outdoor ed.	School camp			Tall Ships		World challenge	

The structure detailed in Figure 3.1 built on the school's values and their personal development curriculum. This programme covered personal wellbeing, keeping healthy,

social education, becoming an active citizen and economic and financial capability. The primary character traits they focused on were resilience, teamwork, cooperation with other students and employability. As can be seen, in Years 10 and 11, when students were preparing for their GCSEs, they did not have personal development lessons at all, and covered relevant topics only insofar as they were raised in tutor time or assemblies.

In primary schools, PSHE lessons were said to focus on understanding and applying the school's values. In secondary schools, they were used to develop a broad range of character skills or traits, and as a way to engage students in discussion. (See Box 3.1.)

Box 3.1: PSHE lessons in a secondary academy

Here, PSHE and Citizenship lessons were used to develop students' teamwork, communication and debating skills, compassion, and appreciation of their place in a multi-cultural society. British values ran throughout the PSHE and Citizenship programmes, with an entire unit in Year 7 focused on British values. The PSHE curriculum was also designed to develop a growth mindset and research skills. Students could introduce discussion topics, such as self-harm, according to their interests or concerns. Younger groups tackled Independent Learning Projects, geared to empowering them to be active and productive members of society.

Character development was described as facilitated through both topic-related teaching, relevant to life outside school, and through the ways the lessons were taught.

"It's about giving them a voice, and, in terms of PSHE, I would say that's a major area of personal development and character: speak up, be listened to, learn to listen."

(Secondary academy)

Employability

Secondary rather than primary school case studies described developing employability as part of their character education activities. However, staff in one primary school described teaching interview techniques, bringing in speakers from different professions, and highlighting in lessons where particular skills would be crucial for specific careers.

In secondary schools, activities specifically geared to developing employability included:

- Careers advisers running skill-building events for students with local companies
- Careers fairs and presentations from employers in school
- Work experience
- Mock interviews
- CV writing

- External providers offering employability qualifications
- A Global Entrepreneurship week, or 'Ambitions for the Future' week, in which the school became a workplace and pupils applied for jobs.

Staff in a secondary PRU described how employability was a key focus of their PSHE and other timetabled provision, as outlined in Box 3.2 below.

Box 3.2: A focus on employability in a Secondary PRU
In this PRU, PSHE covered work-related activities such as CV writing and mock interviews. 'Career Connect' (an external provider) visited to provide a Level 1 employability qualification for Year 10 and 11 students. They invited employers to give insights into different careers and took young people to careers fairs. Alternative vocational provision (three days a week, offsite) was tailored to students' needs and interests, with courses selected to challenge and stretch them. These courses covered a wide range of areas, from mechanics/ construction to sports leadership and supported the development and application of traits outside the classroom – for example, confidence in a practical setting, or taking responsibility for other young people. Work experience was arranged for Year 10 and 11 students via the local authority. Before students went on work experience, key workers supported them in developing soft skills to help them succeed, including communication, empathy and motivation.

Other subjects within the curriculum

The ways in which character development was embedded in other subjects in the curriculum depended on the subject. As with PSHE, the knowledge acquired from these lessons was seen to broaden students' understanding of themselves, of others and the community in which they lived. For example, Child Development GCSE and A-Level Sociology courses were viewed as helpful for character development, as the former covered intellectual, emotional and social development, and the latter awareness of others and social factors affecting behaviour. Likewise, the history curriculum could be used to explore the impact of individuals' decisions on other people.

Moreover, as with PSHE lessons, the *way* in which subjects were taught was said to further character development. In mainstream schools this involved, for example:

- Encouraging students to recognise any transferable skills they were developing in English lessons (for example, around communication).

- Giving students stretching problems in maths, which – with recognition of effort and persistence - helped to instil a positive attitude to difficult or stressful tasks.

- Creating leadership opportunities in physical education (PE), for example in running warm up sessions, umpiring matches, or reflecting on performance.

- Using Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials across the curriculum to develop the ability to independently assess and scrutinise, to work as a team, to self-manage, to be reflective and to think creatively.

In PRUs and special schools, there was even closer, more explicit attention to character development within and through subject teaching. For example, staff in a Primary PRU described giving out '*Effort makes my mind grow*' stickers during lessons, and praising pupils working well as part of a group, listening or taking turns. For them, attitude to learning was as important as the learning itself:

"You can't separate the two… within this setting certainly, they are totally and utterly intertwined, so it's within everything we do, the support for their social skills, emotional development and all of that."

(Primary PRU)

Similarly, in a special school, it was insisted that:

"Every member of staff is delivering character education because every lesson – English, maths – is about developing the child. Very person-centred."

(Primary and secondary special school)

Box 3.3 below illustrates a distinctive approach to lessons within a special school.

> **Box 3.3: ASDAN and a 'curriculum for life' in a special school**
> This primary and secondary school's 'curriculum for life' focused on personal and social development delivered through ASDAN (an activity-based programme designed to develop, record and certify students' achievements). It was applied across the curriculum. For example, in relation to making a placemat in Design & Technology, ASDAN recognised planning, design and construction stages. Students took pictures, annotated them, and used them as evidence to gain credits. The programme covered communication, community, environment, health, science, expressive arts and technology, and involved events during which students worked together on trust, teamwork, and problem solving.

3.1.2 Day to day activities and organisational structures

Case study schools also used their organisational structures or day to day activities – mainly assemblies, tutor groups and house systems – to support character development. This reflected the survey finding that 92% of schools used assemblies, 61% house systems, and 53% registration/ tutor periods for this purpose (Marshall *et al.* 2017).

Assemblies

Whole school assemblies were consistently used to convey and reiterate clear messages about character, at least in mainstream schools. These and other assemblies (for example, at house or year group level) were used variously to:

- **Launch** new approaches or initiatives (such as school values or award schemes)
- **Remind** students of school values
- **Illustrate** the application of values, for example, in the news, or through Bible stories in faith based schools
- **Celebrate** student achievements in demonstrating priority traits.

While playing an important role in primary and secondary schools, assemblies tended to be held more frequently and to play a greater role in the former. Examples of their use in a primary academy and an independent primary are provided in Boxes 3.4 and 3.5.

Box 3.4: Value-based assemblies in a primary academy
Here, a whole school, values-based assembly was held each Monday, with lots of repetition to drill home their six values, what they meant, and how they could be demonstrated in school and outside. On Tuesdays, class assemblies further discussed the same values. Another whole school assembly on Thursday followed up on the messages from the earlier slots. Finally, on Fridays, a 'celebration' assembly was held to which parents were invited; certificates were presented and the headteacher gave an award for excellent displays of that week's values.

Box 3.5: Value-based assemblies in an independent primary
Here, weekly assemblies focused on the two values which constituted the month's theme, providing examples of the values in action in and outside the school. Extra Friday assemblies involved reflecting on the week, including what pupils had to be grateful for, the good and bad things they had done, whether there was anything they needed to put right, and committing to improve relationships. In addition, they held sports assemblies, focused for example on the effort and perseverance required to excel and the challenges faced by Olympians and Paralympians.

The case study findings broadly concurred with those from the survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017), which indicated that primary schools were significantly more likely than secondary schools to focus on character in assemblies, through subject lessons and distinct character sessions, as well as offer other alternative means of developing character. Conversely secondary schools (81%) were nearly twice as likely as primary schools (44%) to focus on character during tutor periods and registration.

Tutor / form groups

In mainstream secondary schools, tutor or form groups were described as the 'first port of call' for students, or the 'first rung' of the pastoral system, and played a key role in supporting character development. Due to the frequency with which they saw the same group of students, the role of tutors or form teachers was comparable with that of class teachers in primary schools. As one form tutor explained, the day to day role involved:

"Challenging them on attitudes, being a role model on certain things, taking an interest in what's happening at home and getting them to reflect on what they might be doing in situations to get to that point."

(Secondary academy)

Aside from one-to-one conversations to better understand students' needs, tutor or form time was described as involving a range of character developing activities, such as:

- Further discussion of topics raised at whole school assemblies
- Discussion of wellbeing issues, such as healthy living, friendships and bullying
- Work on PSHE / SMSC topics or British values (via debate, discussion or quizzes).

Box 3.6 provides an example of the tutor system in one secondary school.

Box 3.6: Form tutor groups in a secondary academy
In this school, form groups met for 20 minutes daily to help students understand and apply the key attributes at the heart of the school's approach to character development, using content on mindfulness and emotional resilience material from Young Minds. Form tutors were the first port of call for students with home or school issues and aimed to support this with group discussions about emotional and mental wellbeing. Students could follow up with tutors privately, by email. Tutors got to know their students well and aimed to support resilience, self-regulation and emotional literacy, with form groups fostering teamwork and mutual support. If required, students received quite intensive support from tutors (for example, around coping with anxiety), and feedback on their skills.

House systems

House structures were used to help develop character across different types of school, where they were in place, though they were mentioned only exceptionally among the primary school case studies. Organised vertically (to engineer mixing of students from all year groups), they were used to foster healthy competition (between houses) and community and teamwork (within them), and to emphasise that activities and achievements other than academic ones had value. They also provided structures within

which students could be elected or appointed to positions of responsibility, such as house reps or captains, and play an active role in organising house activities. Activities delivered within house systems (where applicable) included:

- Sports, drama, music or storytelling competitions
- Charity fundraising
- Points systems based on demonstration of desired character traits.

Reward/ award programmes

Reward (or award) schemes, designed to incentivise character development, were used across all types of school case studies. They varied according to whether they were:

- Externally-designed programmes, such as PiXL Edge or Dojo online rewards
- Internally-designed schemes, including house points and individual rewards such as stickers, certificates, vouchers and entitlement to trips.

In mainstream secondary schools, the chance to evidence skills or attributes on CVs or university application (UCAS) forms was presented to students as an added incentive for engaging with such programmes (over and above any appeal to morality or altruism). In primary schools, special schools and PRUs, more tangible rewards played a greater role. Examples are set out in Boxes 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9 below.

Box 3.7: PiXL Edge in a secondary academy
This school had introduced PiXL Edge, a character-building programme focused on five values: Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Initiative and Communication. Students completed activities and earned awards progressing from Apprentice to Graduate to Master. Recording evidence on their 'digital CV' helped them to understand that extra-curricular activities and responsibilities at school could help them demonstrate leadership and other skills. Form tutors oversaw online recording each month and signed off the evidence. The scheme was delivered across Years 7-10 and there were plans to extend it to Year 11.

Box 3.8: Dojo online rewards in a primary academy
Here, children could gain points in class for displaying the value chosen as the weekly focus. They used the Dojo online reward system, awarding points for positive and removing points for negative displays of the school's six values. Parents were encouraged to access the system to monitor their child's points, and to reinforce the importance of the values. Annual and interim awards were presented; 100 points earned a wristband, 250 a letter of award sent home and 1000 points a special reward (for example, choosing a school trip).

Box 3.9: School-designed reward scheme in a secondary PRU

This PRU operated a reward scheme whereby students earned points for demonstrating positive behaviour in five key areas: communication, 'right place, right time', 'hands and feet', work completed and personal targets. Points were added to students' totals throughout the day on a board. Scores were sent home to parents and students' efforts were recognised and rewarded on Friday afternoons. If they earned over 100 points in a week their points were translated into money and they received a voucher for the total earned at half term. Particular classes had additional reward schemes, for example, with raffle tickets given out for positive activity like turn-taking or politeness.

3.1.3 The role of staff

The role of staff and their relationship with students was another key feature of a whole school approach to developing character. There were two aspects to this: firstly, modelling of desired character traits, such as communication, discipline, confidence and self-control; and secondly being approachable and engaging, such that students felt able to be open with them and to take on board their ideas.

Heads or other character leads described encouraging **all** staff to model appropriate behaviours and how to treat people with respect, and to normalise talking about emotions and feelings. It was argued that the more staff were seen as approachable, straightforward and trustworthy, the more opportunities there were for students to connect with someone – whoever they related to best – who could help them grow, achieve and tackle difficulties.

In special schools and PRUs, and to some extent independent schools, where teaching took place one-to-one or in smaller classes than in mainstream state schools, it was felt to be easier to build strong relationships. In mainstream schools, form teachers or tutors were perhaps in a better position than most (secondary school) subject teachers to develop relationships with students, alongside delivering activities as set out in Section 3.1.2. Other opportunities to build relationships arose for those running extra-curricular activities. As one member of staff stressed:

> *"They grow and learn because they see you in a different light when you are doing activities with them."*

(Independent secondary)

3.1.4 Extra-curricular activities

The survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017) showed that 97% of schools used extra-curricular activities to promote character. In line with this, case study schools identified extra-curricular activities as crucial to fostering well-rounded individuals. They were seen as especially important for providing new experiences for students who might not have such opportunities outside school, due to time and/ or financial constraints.

Case study sites offered a range of extra-curricular activities to all students (at school or class level). The extent to which schools devoted time to these activities, or incorporated them into the timetable as 'co-curricular' sessions, varied. There were independent schools which set aside parts of the school day, as well as after school and weekend slots for this purpose. Conversely, there were PRUs and special schools which found it hard to extend the school day as students had to travel long distances. As a result, they tended to offer activities during breaks or lunchtimes. Mealtimes were also mentioned as opportunities for character development in PRUs and special schools, as they allowed time for nurturing and social interaction; because some students struggled with eating at a table; and because a nutritious diet impacted positively on behaviour.

The boxes below (Boxes 3.10 and 3.11) provide overviews of two sites' approaches to delivering extra-curricular activities.

> **Box 3.10: Extra-curricular activities in an independent primary school**
> In this school, the extra-curricular programme covered around 50 activities (including being part of a TV crew, chess, mindfulness, climbing, sports, self-defence and neurolinguistic programming). Individually and as a package, the activities were designed to facilitate character development. Staff encouraged pupils to do three activities a week: one they loved; one they were good at and one that really scared, or stretched them. Taking on this last type was encouraged in order to help pupils build self-belief, perseverance and resilience.

> **Box 3.11: Extra-curricular activities in a special school**
> This primary and secondary school ran activities at lunchtime and trips during the day, including in the summer holidays as students could otherwise find the break and transition back to school very difficult. Lunchtime activities included a focus on drama, art, emotional wellbeing, sports and homework clubs. All activities aimed to boost social skills, confidence, independence and friendship skills, through interaction with other students and staff. Performing in music or drama clubs was cited, in particular, as helpful for boosting confidence.

The following sections set out in more detail examples of the many different extra-curricular activities used to develop character across case study sites.

Extra-curricular clubs

Among those responding to the survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017), 91% of schools used sports and performing arts clubs, and 72% outward bound clubs to develop character. Sports and other clubs were on offer across all types of case study school. Some were more explicitly focused on character development than others. For example, in one secondary academy, an after school club focused on learning attributes and involved hour-long sessions preparing an end-of-term activity. This was designed to build skills related to planning, teamwork and presentation, along with community links and good citizenship. Other examples included:

- Sports activities, including football, rugby, climbing, swimming and sailing
- Dance/ drama / music / choir / poetry recitals
- Debating
- Meditation, yoga and mindfulness
- Science clubs
- ICT and computer programming
- Book clubs
- A games club where board games were played (from chess to war gaming).

All of these activities were seen as encouraging students' development as well-rounded individuals. Sports and other activities involving performance were used to cultivate perseverance, teamwork, leadership and confidence (as well as appreciation of others' talents and efforts). Activities such as yoga and mindfulness were designed to develop self-regulation. Other clubs focused on hobbies provided opportunities to pursue personal interests while building friendships, social skills and relationships with staff.

Extra-curricular trips

A particularly notable activity, in terms of character development, appeared to be the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This was offered across mainstream sites and PRUs and was felt to develop leadership, commitment, self-reliance, resilience and teamwork – as well as facilitating conversations with students about skills they needed to work on.

As one headteacher described the expedition element of the Award:

> *"It's the ultimate team work because you're put in a situation of quite extreme hardship with a group of kids and told to get on with it. I think that can be really formative."*

> (Independent secondary)

An example of how the Award was used in a PRU is provided in Box 3.12 below.

> **Box 3.12: Developing character through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award**
> The Award was used by this PRU to help develop soft skills and to give students new experiences beyond their (deprived) local area. It was felt to be particularly useful for those struggling with societal expectations as it allowed gradually giving them more autonomy and developmental opportunities. On overnight expeditions students were taught navigating, cooking and camping skills, and were able to show perseverance and resilience when coping with challenges such as bad weather. Participants also earned certificates when they attained new skills (e.g. bike maintenance) and gained recognition for voluntary work.

Across sites, a range of trips were arranged which served some of the same character development goals as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition. Examples of these other trips – mainly on offer in secondary schools - included:

- Off-site residential trips for Year 7 students, involving activities and social events over four days at the end of the school year, to help monitor character and skills development over their first year at secondary school

- A four-day school camp for Year 7 and 8 students run by Bushcraft to build resilience, teamwork and communication

- The Tall Ships Challenge for selected Year 10 students, involving a one-week sailing programme requiring extensive teamwork

- Trips to nearby cities, mosques and synagogues, designed to develop tolerance and understanding of other cultures

- Charity work abroad (in some cases as part of 'World Challenge'), for example, involving building a classroom, and fundraising activity beforehand

- 'Retreats' for Year 6 to 8 students involving a day off timetable, with activities designed to: develop their understanding of themselves, boost self-esteem by focusing on positive traits in each other and help them relax through meditation.

As one member of staff explained, in relation to 'retreats' for his students:

"There's a lot of pressure on them to get into the schools that they want to be at. Just having a moment to just fully relax… to calm down and focus again… it's important."

(Independent Primary)

Charity and community work

In addition to supporting volunteering trips abroad, schools sought to develop positive traits through involvement with charities at home. This reflected the survey finding that 44% of schools used voluntary/ social action opportunities to cultivate character (Marshall *et al.* 2017). In some cases, students were involved in selecting causes, as well as in fundraising and/ or volunteering for them. Examples of some of the ways in which staff believed these activities developed character are set out in Boxes 3.13 and 3.14 below.

> **Box 3.13: Local charity work in a LA-maintained secondary**
> For this school, involving students in charity work was primarily about them taking responsibility and seeing a project through. Year 8 had collected for a local food bank and Year 11 had organised and run cake sales for Cancer Research, and bought toys for a children's cancer ward. They visited the hospital to hand over the toys so saw the end product of their work and appreciated the difference it made.

> **Box 3.14: Charity work in a secondary academy**
> This school involved students in team-based charity fundraising via the organisation First Give, which provided lesson plans. Charities came in to talk to (Year 9) students, some of whom went on to volunteer or do work experience with them as well as fundraise. The first stage for participants involved a presentations in class, followed by another in front of parents and councillors one evening. The winning teams went on to a centrally organised First Give evening and received money for their charity. The various stages of the scheme were thought to develop communication skills, confidence, empathy, and self-regulation.

Extra-curricular events

Across sites, a range of special events were geared to developing character, such as:

- Health and wellbeing weeks, which included yoga and mindfulness sessions

- Learning Skills days with activities focusing on the school's priority traits, including presentations by a holocaust survivor; a financial workshop run by McDonald's; a hike (for resilience) and dance/drama (for organising and performing skills)

- Cultural events; drama and music performances to develop confidence, tolerance, empathy, respect for others, teamwork and leadership skills

- 'Enrichment days' involving adventurous activities like aerial sling yoga and trips to outdoor pursuits centres, to build skills, confidence and relationships with staff

- Exhibitions of art work with parents invited, following preparation involving independent work, developing a portfolio, group work, reflection and choosing what to display – all geared to boosting self-esteem and confidence.

Student voice and additional responsibilities

Across primary and secondary schools and PRUs the school council, or pupil parliament was mentioned as providing leadership opportunities across all year groups. As illustrated in Box 3.15, these activities enabled young people to have their say and make a difference to the way their schools were run; and as a result boost their self-esteem.

> **Box 3.15: School council in a LA-maintained secondary school**
> This school council had representatives from each year group. They put forward ideas for improvement, which school staff considered seriously. Recently, members had supported the business manager with a review of their student toilets, and lunch queues. Involvement was believed to help develop leadership skills and understanding of budgeting. They were also invited to lead assemblies which helped develop confidence, communication and presentation skills.

StudentVoice[15] was highlighted as feeding in to the work of student councils in different (mainstream) sites. Opportunities to stand for election to the (national) Youth Parliament were also mentioned. School councils were not discussed in fieldwork with special schools, which tended to focus on students influencing their *own* education, rather than the running of the school more broadly. An example is provided in Box 3.16 below.

> **Box 3.16: Student involvement in reviewing their school experience**
> This special school used 'All About Me', a self-reflection exercise, in students' annual reviews. All young people created PowerPoint slides covering what was important to them, what they had had been taught, if/ why they liked coming to school, and what was working (or not) for them. The aim was to increase self-awareness and confidence by giving them a meaningful role in, and positive experiences of participating in, review meetings. They also encouraged students to praise each other's achievements, and involved peer and self-assessments in

Across sites, but particularly in mainstream secondary schools, there were many other opportunities for students to take on special roles - all intended to help develop and demonstrate positive character traits. These additional roles and responsibilities included: acting as house reps, form captains, or prefects; becoming ambassadors or hosts for

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[15] StudentVoice, supported by the Phoenix Education Trust, supports young people in representing their views on issues around education and schools. For more information see http://www.studentvoice.co.uk

visitors; mentoring or tutoring other pupils; or helping to plan and run events. Examples from two secondary schools are provided in Boxes 3.17 and 3.18 below.

Box 3.17: Additional roles and responsibilities for students
This secondary academy offered opportunities for students to develop leadership, communication skills and confidence. As well as becoming house reps, form captains or sports captains, students in each year group were required to take responsibility for something; Year 8 students did reception duty; Year 9s acted as ambassadors for visitors and Year 10s could apply for prefect posts, positioning them as role models. Year 11s could deliver activities to younger students, such as clubs, or paired reading, to develop their abilities to support others. Sixth formers could undertake a dance teaching qualification and then teach Year 7s. Some older students also helped run sports days, assemblies, or secondary transfer evenings – all aimed at developing teamwork and organisational skills.

Box 3.18: Additional roles and responsibilities for students
This independent secondary school had implemented the Advice, Care, Help and Empathy (ACHE) programme – a 16 week leadership training programme for 6th formers to enable them to become peer mentors and support younger children. This was geared towards developing listening skills and leadership. The prefect system in their boarding houses involved older students spending time with younger students to support them, eating and doing some cross-house activities together. Mixing with students from different age groups was also designed to prepare young people for the 'real world'.

3.2   Tailored (and targeted) activities

At the more tailored and targeted end of schools' provision were activities that often overlapped with approaches for supporting mental health. To some extent, this reflected the fact that students with social or behavioural problems may be more likely to be experiencing mental health issues. For further details of targeted support in *mental health* case studies, see White, Lea, Gibb and Street (2017).

Box 3.19 describes one secondary school's 'tiered' approach to targeted support for character development. This approach was similar to that taken in other secondary schools, in terms of the involvement of pastoral or student support staff. Others providing targeted support included: family learning, emotional wellbeing and SEND teams; (higher level) teaching assistants; emotional literacy support assistants (ELSA); school nurses/ counsellors; independent listeners; chaplains and key workers.

Box 3.19: Targeted character development in a LA secondary school
In this school, three levels of targeted pastoral support were provided for students struggling with social, emotional or behavioural issues. The **first level** involved teachers writing a report outlining the issues and exploring whether they could be resolved by changing seating, classes or sets, or by involving peers or parents – they set 'smart targets' with the students and monitored them on 6-week cycles. The **second level** of support, labelled 'Strategy', involved support from the student support team. They provided group sessions and one-to-one mentoring focusing on distinct areas: 'Making better choices' (self-awareness group), 'Mind over matter' (self-esteem and resilience group), 'Cope' (anxiety group), and ARC (Attendance related coping group). The attendance group, for example, involved stickered rewards and monitoring over 6 weeks. The team also ran friendship/ bullying groups involving 2-6 sessions with 4-8 students. Here, they discussed what outcomes they would like and focused on communication and listening skills, healthy relationships, resilience, having a voice; healthy arguments and strategies to deal with situations other than storming off. One-to-one support unpicked issues in more depth; looked at different areas of life and explored where students think they need help. The **third level** of support was external, from sources including the early help hub, counselling and youth support (for example drug and alcohol or youth workers.)

Primary schools tended to have smaller teams, when it came to targeted support. However, they also described overlapping provision for character education and mental health and wellbeing, as in the example in Box 3.20.

Box 3.20: Targeted character development in a LA primary school
Here, teaching staff identified pupils who might benefit from extra pastoral support or input around behaviour management. A Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) – who also led on support for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues - provided one-to-one or small group sessions on yoga or mindfulness along with counselling. She also ran "booster group" sessions focusing on social needs and pets as therapy (to calm anxious children, provide social support and help with literacy by for example reading to a dog). Sessions were carried out in their Learning Lodge – a comfortable, non-teaching space.

In PRUs and special schools, *all* students tended to receive some form of individualised support around character development. This was delivered in part alongside class

teaching, for example, if a PRU key worker spent time supporting a student to focus and cope in class, as well as providing one-to-one mentoring outside lessons (see Box 3.21).

> **Box 3.21: Mentoring support in a Secondary PRU**
> Each young person at this PRU had one-to-one mentoring with their key workers, who also accompanied them in class, focusing on their individual needs. Initially the mentoring started with issues raised in their referral *to* the PRU, such as anger management. If and when the young person was ready to return to mainstream school, the key worker might come with them and sit in on lessons for up to a week; offering advice to them and their school on addressing challenges.

Pastoral support (particularly in secondary schools) was generally accessible through student self-referral or drop in, as well as being triggered by staff referrals. Types of support provided included:

- One-to-one mentoring from support staff, focusing on problem-solving
- Peer mentoring, from older students
- Group work, focused on anger-management, self-esteem, resilience, anxiety, attendance, friendship difficulties
- Restorative work / mediation between peers, or between students and staff
- Support with study skills, such as organisation and planning
- Yoga or mindfulness sessions
- Counselling
- Timetable revisions (including 'time out', to study or address issues outside class).

In exceptional cases, schools described special, extra-curricular activities or clubs which were targeted (wholly, or partly) at students struggling in some way, and deemed likely to benefit – for example, via a 'boost' to their confidence or motivation – from new experiences. In one secondary school, these targeted opportunities included:

- **A 'Speak out' challenge** (an inter schools competition). This was targeted at selected Year 10s, and was designed to develop self-confidence, debating, research, presentation and organisation skills.

- **A football club resilience programme** for selected Year 9s finding school challenging (for example, with issues around behaviour, attendance, low self-esteem and lack of engagement). This involved a six-week programme of two-hour skills and discussion based sessions to develop resilience. It focused on goals and aims in life, challenges faced, anger management and role play and was delivered in school by a football club's education outreach programme.

- **The Premier League Enterprise challenge** for Year 9s. In certain years this was targeted at students not engaging at school. It was an inter-schools competition involving group presentations to develop confidence and teamwork.

- **A University 'Class of 2020' Programme,** involving schools from across the region. This involved regular sessions and activities that aimed to boost confidence, leadership, and ability to cope with stressful situations.

- **Access to Forest School –** In primary schools young people were selected to attend Forest School to help boost their communication and levels of self-esteem. This was either provided on site or children had to go elsewhere to access it.

3.3   Engaging parents

All case study leads emphasised the importance of engaging parents in their approaches to character skills development. Schools aimed to make all parents **aware** of their approaches and activities, and to gain parental **support** in the form of endorsement and reinforcement of key messages to their children. They attempted to engage parents with whole-school activity, and, if required, with some forms of targeted support.

3.3.1 Raising awareness

Schools attempted to increase parental awareness of, and engagement with, whole-school approaches by promoting them through various channels and activities:

- Intake days, introductory evenings or meetings, and parents' evenings
- School events such as prize-giving, sports tournaments, charity events or concerts
- Sharing hard copies or online versions of tools recording students' achievements
- Inviting parents to work with their children on character-related homework tasks
- School blogs, websites, newsletters and other promotional material.

Boxes 3.22 and 3.23 below illustrate some of the ways in which two schools attempted to engage the whole parent body with their approaches to character development.

> **Box 3.22: Engaging parents in a school's values-based approach**
> This primary academy issued parents with regular reminders about the school's approach. It was reinforced visually and verbally at events, and reflected in systems which parents accessed, for example the online (Dojo) points system which allowed parents to monitor their children's progress. The school also sent parents regular questionnaires, seeking feedback on all aspects of the school's performance, including on how their values-based approach was working. Their feedback was useful and the school have made revisions in response.

Box 3.23: Engaging parents in developing students' attributes

This secondary academy presented their '*My Learning Attributes*' approach to parents attending intake days. They had moved away from conventional parents' evenings and instead held student-led 'showcases' where pupils displayed their work and reflected on their learning and development. Form teachers rather than subject teachers engaged with parents at these evenings to provide an overview of their progress. However, alongside this, subject teachers also engaged parents via phone calls home and meetings as needed, encouraging parents to think about their children's skills and how they could be nurtured and displayed.

3.3.2 Engaging parents with more tailored activity

Schools also used a variety of means to engage parents in targeted character-related activity. For PRUs and special schools, *most* of their interaction with parents was of this more tailored variety, reflecting the centrality of character development to their work.

Across sites, engagement with parents around tailored or targeted work involved:

- Phone calls to discuss progress, or developing particular traits in their child
- Meetings to plan the child's timetable, activities, or responses to incidents
- Seeking permission to provide targeted pastoral support or interventions
- Offering workshops or courses to help parents support their child's progress
- Offering home visits, drop-in or appointment-based access to support staff including family support workers and pastoral staff working with their child.

Boxes 3.24, 3.25 and 3.26 illustrate approaches from a mainstream secondary, a special school and a PRU, designed to engage parents in targeted activities. In each case, building positive relationships was seen as key – just as it was with students.

Box 3.24: Engaging parents in targeted activity within a secondary school

Parental consent was sought for referral to this LA-maintained school's Inclusion Centre and staff called parents to tell them about any planned intervention(s). When the pastoral support team worked with students, they shared information and had in-depth discussions with parents (with students' permission). They tried to engage reluctant parents by taking a positive approach, including always giving at least one positive comment on their child, and inviting them in a few weeks *before* (potentially daunting) parents' evenings. As lack of parental engagement could be a barrier to student engagement, they tried to engage parents early on.

Box 3.25: Engaging parents in targeted activity in a special school

When students joined this secondary special school, the headteacher carried out home visits to build relationships with their parents. He talked about the school's philosophy of 'fresh starts', addressing barriers and being a better person. Staff regularly contacted parents with positive news of achievements. Every day, parents received the young person's 'green card' recording their points for that day. Staff gave parents tips on how to improve behaviour and wellbeing, for example, through diet, exercise, avoiding late night video games and good sleep routines. They had an open door policy so parents could visit anytime to resolve issues.

Box 3.26: Engaging parents in targeted activity in a Secondary PRU

At the outset, this PRU involved parents in student induction meetings, tours and assessments, and gave them induction packs to keep. Staff stressed that the PRU could do a lot for the student and their family, as their key workers operated almost as school-based social workers. Staff engaged parents in addressing behavioural issues rather than blaming them, offered advice without being patronising and tried to boost parents' own confidence. They provided positive as well as negative feedback on students' progress, behaviour and work. Many of the parents had had bad experiences of school themselves so staff tried to be non-threatening – for example, they ran their parents' evening as an informal drop in. They involved parents in many other activities: charity coffee mornings, structured meetings with staff to plan their child's timetables or behaviour contracts, progress reviews or debriefs after incidents, and engaged with them positively when attending multi-agency (such as CAF) meetings.

3.4   Delivery challenges and barriers

The survey (Marshall *et al.* 2017) found that three quarters of schools faced at least some barriers to developing desirable character traits in pupils. The most commonly mentioned barrier was competing demands on staff time (cited by more than half of respondents), followed by lack of pupil/ parent engagement and lack of knowledge or information, which were both mentioned by around a quarter. Case study visits provided further details of how these and other challenges were experienced by schools.

3.4.1 Time and capacity

Across sites, the most consistently raised barrier to furthering character development was time and staff capacity – not only to deliver activities, but to refine approaches and train staff appropriately. In view of the way character development was embedded across

the curriculum, and the need to ensure a consistent approach across teachers, finding time for staff training was particularly important.

Shortage of time was raised in the context of competing pressures from the introduction of new curriculum specifications and need to focus on academic subjects and results. Indeed, a common concern voiced by staff was that they were already under pressure working long hours, and had to prioritise academic teaching and results over the level of engagement with individual students required for meaningful character development. Performance-related pay which rewarded teachers of students who achieved top grades was also mentioned as reinforcing this. While teaching staff supported the importance of providing wider opportunities and extra-curricular outdoor activities for children, there was concern about the implications for them, as staff, and their families.

> *"At our school we have children in the holidays left, right and centre, but that also means staff giving up their holidays….well, you'd go out at weekends… but there's an expectation that the staff will continue to do things, but you can't keep on squeezing something at both ends, because it pops in the middle. All these new initiatives - it's fine having them all happening, but the staff need time to deliver it, plan it, do it well."*

> (LA-maintained secondary)

Even in PRUs and special schools, where the development of personal and social skills, emotional resilience and mental health was paramount, finding time in the school day was still an issue. Staff in a special school explained that there was a tension between finding the time to engage students in a sufficiently 'solid' education to satisfy Ofsted and to support the development of soft skills as a priority.

Time pressures were also mentioned in relation to frustration about the amount of paperwork and recording involved in some activities – while recognised as important, this did compete with time spent delivering. There was also concern about the limited time available to keep character values and/ or traits at the forefront of students' minds. PRUs had particular challenges managing the turnover of short term placements and the ever-changing group of students which made it harder to develop and plan the coverage of character-related issues. An additional strain on capacity was said to stem from the increasing demands on staff to provide pastoral and other specialist support.

3.4.2 Funding constraints

While schools appeared to deliver character development in some low-cost ways, funding constraints had curtailed the range of activities they could provide. For example, there were a limited number of places on targeted programmes, and the budget for trips had to be reduced in circumstances where neither schools nor parents were able to make up the difference. Funding cuts had also reduced the money available to support students in after school sessions, so fewer were able to attend activities than in the past.

3.4.3 Measurement challenges

Tracking progress and success in the development of what could be rather intangible character traits was reported as another challenge. In essence, the difficulty centred on being able to measure that they had turned a pupil into a 'good person'.

"It's recognising that character education often is… intangible. You know it when you see it but there are some things that we can do, I suppose, that you can measure, that give you an idea that one of the by-products will be that they develop character"

(Independent Secondary)

"Being able to say in concrete, set in stone, 'you've hit this target' is very, very difficult – nigh on impossible – because they are soft skills and impersonal and intangible…. It's more the learner's ability to demonstrate those skills, not necessarily within a test, but over a prolonged period of time. It's very, very difficult."

(Secondary PRU)

Interviewees often reported feeling confident that their approaches were working. However, staff described lacking concrete, robust measures for tracking progress against their targets. They based their judgements on observations about students' progress and development, their attitudes and behaviour, and the way they communicated and engaged with their teaching and activities. They also considered whether students showed increased levels of self-confidence, resilience, self-reflection and understanding about their own strengths and weaknesses, or if they seemed to be 'generally happy'. These reflections had sometimes been supplemented and confirmed by feedback from students or external feedback from parents and governors.

3.4.4 Engaging staff, parents and young people

Staff reservations

Leads described most or all of their staff as willing and committed to character development. However, where challenges were mentioned in this area, they involved:

- Staff not valuing character development or not buying into the approach. Such staff had expressed reservations about what they were required to do, expressing a preference for a more traditional, less 'touchy feely' approach, or that they felt uncomfortable 'bonding' with young people.

- Individual staff becoming frustrated at a lack of instant results with some pupils. They could fail to appreciate that it could be a longer term, drip-feed process.

- 'Teething troubles' where new initiatives meant longstanding staff had to radically change their approach – although these appeared to be largely resolved.

Parental engagement

A lack of engagement by parents and families was arguably as much about their child's education *per se* as it was about character development. Poor engagement was perceived to have resulted from:

- A lack of aspiration among families which could discourage students engaging and undermine efforts by a school to instil higher aspirations or perseverance

- Barriers around language and a lack of available interpreters

- A stigma attached to accepting support for their children, for example, via mentoring, if they perceived the offer as a slight on their parenting

- Conflicting beliefs or values to those of the school. This, for example, resulted in a parent objecting to their non-Muslim child visiting a mosque. It was also reflected in different aspirations for children, such as in the case of arranged marriages.

Student engagement

Aside from some students simply not being interested, or not buying into the values or approach, challenges around student engagement included:

- A limited number of opportunities for students to engage in activities, such as a school council, to develop their character

- A lack of time to engage in extra-curricular activities (especially without impacting on time for homework) if, for example, they had to travel long distances to school

- A perception that young people might not appreciate the value of developing their character as they were preoccupied by other activities and interests.

Finally, some students were described as coming from families who did not tend to talk about emotions or values and were defensive about opening themselves up to conversations of this kind. Staff reflected that students appeared reticent about seeming vulnerable in front of their peers or admitting that they needed to work on personal issues or develop soft skills.

4.   Key learning on character development

The previous two chapters have considered how 11 case study schools were developing character, highlighting the range of activities adopted and any associated delivery challenges. This chapter draws together the learning from the school case studies, identifying what participants perceived as critical for successful character development (Section 4.1). It also identifies the nature of the support case study schools would value from the government and the wider sector (Section 4.2) and the areas where they were considering expanding and developing their provision (Section 4.3).

Summary of key points

- Successful character development was felt to depend on a clear vision and whole school approach that is embedded across the curriculum. It needs to be driven forward by strong leadership, and delivered and modelled by staff with the appropriate skills, time and access to activities that can be tailored appropriately to the needs of students.

- Recognition needs to be given to the importance of character development and the resources and skills required to support practice, alongside the other requirements for academic success. Teachers need to be encouraged, developed and supported with activities to develop character.

- The government and wider sector could helpfully support schools by creating a database of organisations or a network where schools can discuss and share practice; and a menu or bank of tools and activities that have been proven to work.

4.1   Successful character development

Building on the evidence presented in this report, this chapter reflects on the key principles for successful character development. These are based on the collective views of all the case study participants from both mainstream primary and secondary schools, special schools and PRUs. They have been organised around the development of the approach, the staff team and delivering practice.

4.1.1   Developing the approach

Schools emphasised that the development of character starts with a need for a clear vision and whole school approach that is outlined in a blueprint or mission statement, or incorporated into a strategic plan. This will contain the aims, purpose and goals of the approach, and the range of traits that are to be developed. They recommended that a senior lead should promote the approach as a priority, instil it across the school with appropriate resourcing and funding, and inspire and motivate staff to adopt it and to value it.

They also recommended that the approach needs to:

- Be developed collaboratively involving the school governors or executive board, the staff, students and parents.

- Take account of existing practice and build from what is already working effectively.

- Be tailored appropriately to meet the needs of students; as well as the underlying philosophy of the school.

- Employ dedicated pastoral staff who can take the lead and provide support for teaching staff.

- Be embedded across the curriculum as part of SMSC and PSHE, and incorporated within the school day through assemblies, lessons and extra-curricular activities.

- Consider using some form of outdoor education to engage students. This was not just viewed as being for 'fun' but for building essential skills and creating an alternative teaching environment.

- Adopt evidence-informed activities that will help to support children and develop their emotional intelligence. The choice of activities will need to appeal to staff, students and parents if they are to engage them effectively. They also need to be relevant and meaningful for students and applicable to other areas of their life.

- Be promoted and communicated to reinforce and remind staff, students and parents about the importance of personal development; and encourage parents to reinforce the learning at home.

4.1.2 Developing the staff and the team

Schools reflected on the importance of having a team with the qualities and the 'right' approach to support the development of character. Staff need to be:

- Person centred and to appreciate the importance of emotional development as a foundation for later life.

- Emotionally intelligent and resilient. They need to display resilience, happiness and confidence to children.

- Clear about the approach and how to support and role model the key character traits or behaviours; resilience, empathy, communication and team working were all specifically mentioned.

- Consistent in their delivery. There is a need to ensure different teachers will be developing and reinforcing character and character traits in a consistent way across a school.

- Appropriately supported and developed. Formal and informal support networks need to be put in place for staff.

- Recognised, rewarded and valued for providing wider opportunities and extra-curricular activities for children. Staff achievements need to be celebrated and rewarded much as they need to be for students.

4.1.3 Effective delivery

Effective delivery was believed to depend on:

- The quality of the staff-student relationship and the need for a positive, trusting bond. This was consistently mentioned as being key to the successful development of character. This will take time to develop and will be easier to build when there is a higher staff-student ratio and there are opportunities for individual meetings.

- Having the capacity and time to listen to students and to encourage their curiosity about themselves, those around them and the world they live in.

- Delivering a consistent approach. Schools emphasise the need to create opportunities for staff to develop and share knowledge and skills through whole school training alongside time for reflection on their practice. This was identified as being critical to delivering a consistent approach.

- Having a range of opportunities and activities for developing character traits. Arts, theatre and outdoor activities including Bush craft, Forest school and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award were all identified as effective ways to develop confidence, resilience, communication, leadership and teamworking skills. Other suggestions included organising a student council, or setting up a peer mentoring scheme or nurture groups to aid teaching, or support and develop resilience.

  - Using a range of tools to explore and identify students' needs. For example to explore individual needs in relation to physical health, social media, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

- Ongoing reflection and assessment to ensure that schools learn what works and for whom, and which activities are not effective.

4.2 Supporting schools to develop their provision

Case study participants were briefly asked at the end of their interviews about the support that schools need from the government and the wider sector to help them develop character. Their requirements covered two broad areas.

The first requirement was about recognising the important work that schools are already engaged in to develop character. As has been illustrated in earlier chapters, schools have been actively engaged in developing character even if they did not label it and promote it in this way. For this reason, there was concern expressed that existing

practice in schools will be overlooked and replaced by a new set of requirements, adding to the pressure and demands that teachers already feel under.

"This… must not be just another kind of fad or passing phase or whatever, because it's too important for children. But if we truly want to develop active citizens… developing their unique potential, then this is absolutely essential..."

(Primary PRU)

A related and specific issue was made about allowing teachers the freedom to be creative in the way they develop character and not having to work to a specific curriculum and complete paperwork and assessments.

The second requirement was concerned with the government acknowledging the importance of character development and creating the infrastructure to support schools with the development of practice.   Underpinning this requirement was a plea for the government to acknowledge the wider context in which schools are having to operate and the pressure and stress staff currently feel they are under to meet their academic targets. There is a need for more capacity (both skill and time) for schools to be able to effectively focus on personal development.

Interviewees said, for example, that it would help to re-balance the focus and recognise that equipping pupils in more than just an academic path requires different skills, resources and commitment from teachers. Schools need to be better supported with the resources and tools and teachers need to better prepared for this role. Currently, it was felt that there was not enough in the teacher training syllabus to help prepare teachers for the amount of social-emotional support they are required to provide. Equally teachers need to be encouraged and rewarded for focusing on child wellbeing as performance related pay was perceived to favour performance on academic targets. It was also suggested that the inspection process should attach a greater value to the importance of interactions between pupils and staff and the development of character. Despite wellbeing being added to the Government and Ofsted performance and assessment framework, schools perceived that the framework was overly focused on academic achievement and did not give sufficient credence to the work they were doing to support mental health and wellbeing. In particular, it was suggested that the framework and inspections process were resulting in much more pressure on schools with an academic focus to deliver curriculum outcomes, and served to side line or even overlook the importance of mental health and wellbeing.

There were two specific suggestions made for how the government and the wider sector could helpfully support the development of practice.

- Create a database of organisations or a network where schools could share and discuss practice

- Create and promote a menu or evidence bank of activities that have been proven to work and tools and advice about how to monitor and assess progress on these. It was of note that the EEF toolkit[16] was not mentioned as a potential source of evidence and guidance in this area.

4.3   Expanding and developing their provision

This final section considers the plans and suggestions that schools made about ways they could expand or develop their approach to character development. However, beyond updating the resources and examples they used with students so they were relevant and appropriate, not all schools wanted to make changes to their approach. Instead they wanted to allow time for it to evolve and to ensure it was being delivered consistently by teachers across the school. Where specific suggestions and plans were made they included:

- Taking a more strategic approach to developing character by writing a policy, incorporating it into a strategic plan, or producing a mission statement.

- Raising awareness and promoting the idea of character development more widely across the school to teachers, to students and to parents.

- Further embedding their approach into the curriculum by incorporating it into literacy, maths and science.

- Aligning their approach to character development with a more developed approach to mental health. It was suggested that they might be able to use the learning about the behaviour displayed, or responses given by students, in relation to certain traits, as providing early signs or indications of a mental health condition.

- Involving children, young people and parents more in the development of their approach and the content of their programme of activities.

- Expanding their practice and range of extra-curricular activities to include more outdoor learning activities; techniques and approaches to support students' self-reflection and management of their anxiety and behaviour (e.g. through neuro-linguistic programming, CBT and Mindfulness); and involvement of parents and families in the support provided.

- Raising awareness about how to identify and intervene earlier to help prevent social and emotional problems.

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[16] The Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit: An accessible summary of educational research on teaching 5 – 16 year olds.
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/resources/teaching-learning-toolkit

- Developing tools for tracking and measuring progress for developing character (e.g. developing a pupil profile).

5   Conclusions

This research was commissioned to provide learning about how schools are delivering character education. It was commissioned by the DfE as part of a programme of work to inform the focus of policy activity on mental health and character education in schools and colleges in England. The research was set against a backdrop of growing evidence demonstrating the positive impact of emotional wellbeing on the educational and other outcomes for children and young people. This final chapter reflects on some of the key messages raised throughout the report.

- Schools defined character education as referring to support for students' (personal) development. However, they cautioned against calling it character education which they associated with a specific curriculum, akin to teaching specific lessons, such as, in Maths or English.

- Schools saw themselves as playing a pivotal role in developing character. They considered this central to their aims and purpose and intrinsic to what they have always done, even if they did not label it as such. The formation of character, as they saw it, enabled children and young people to develop into well rounded individuals and reach their potential both personally and academically. This role for schools was believed to be even more important where parents may lack the skill and capacity to parent effectively. Equally they emphasised the way in which supporting the development of personal and social skills and emotional resilience can help to overcome some of the barriers to learning for children with additional needs.

- The research has provided evidence of the wide array of activities that schools are undertaking to develop character or nurture specific traits including resilience, self-esteem and confidence, communication skills, self-regulation, perseverance and motivation, respect, tolerance, and empathy. Their approach to developing character underpinned their school mission or philosophy and values, as well as being tailored to the needs of students.

- The findings highlight the importance of embedding the approach across the PSHE and SMSC curricula accompanied by a programme of extra-curricular activities, as well as using assemblies, tutor time, and other lessons. House systems and reward and award schemes also incentivised demonstration of selected traits.

- Successful character development was felt to depend on a clear vision and a whole school approach. This needs to be driven forward by strong and inspiring leaders and delivered and role modelled by staff with the appropriate skills and time, who have access to activities that are tailored appropriately to the needs of the students.

- The type, size, location and resources of a school appeared to have a bearing on the approach adopted and the ease with which they developed character skills and traits. Smaller schools with higher ratios of staff to children, special schools, and PRUs with a stronger culture and ethos for engaging and nurturing children, schools with abundant resources, or those located with good outside facilities appeared to be building from a stronger foundation and infrastructure.

- Approaches to character development and mental health were seen as linked, at least in theory, with leads aspiring to greater join up. This was either due to there being one policy covering both areas (and seen as a prerequisite for effective teaching), or because character development was viewed as a way of promoting wellbeing and preventing mental health problems from arising or escalating.

- Arguably, the concept of resilience neatly linked the two areas: character development was seen as equipping young people with skills which could enable them to self-regulate and to cope better with challenges. In a tough fiscal climate where schools need to optimise their budgets and work in a more integrated way, joining up the approach for character development and mental health could help to reduce any duplication of resources and help to encourage earlier intervention.

- The most consistently raised barrier to furthering character development was time and staff capacity, in the context of competing pressures around academic performance. There is a need for the government and wider sector to take account of the demands on teaching staff to achieve academic targets, and to recognise and value schools' and colleges' existing work on developing character.

- It is important that schools are supported and resourced appropriately to create the infrastructure to develop their approach to character development. They need support with the development of their practice, access to high quality evidence based activities and a means for assessing the impact of their approach.

- Teachers and pastoral staff need to be better prepared and supported for this role. They need access to training and supervision. Currently, it was felt that there was not enough in the teacher training syllabus to prepare teachers for the amount of social-emotional support they are required to provide. Teachers need to be encouraged, developed and supported with activities to develop character. It was also suggested that the inspection process attach greater value to the importance of interactions between pupils and staff and the development of character.

- Despite wellbeing being added to the Government and Ofsted performance and assessment framework, schools perceived that the framework was overly focused on academic achievement and did not give sufficient credence to the work they were doing to support mental health and wellbeing.

- The government and wider sector could helpfully support schools by creating a network of organisations where schools can discuss and share practice, and a

menu or bank of activities that have been proven to work as well as guidance and tools on how to monitor and assess progress on these.

Appendix A. Character education lead topic guide

*Exploring how schools and colleges provide **character education** and support the mental health of pupils*

Topic Guide for Head/Deputy/School Lead

Aims of the Case Studies - to:

- Provide in-depth understanding of the way schools, colleges and alternative education institutions provide character education (CE) and support the mental health (MH) and wellbeing of pupils;
- Understand what underpins judgements and decisions about the range of provision offered; who provides it, how it is funded and delivered;
- What works for identifying and engaging children and young people in different circumstances; and how their needs are assessed;
- Explore decision making about how activities are integrated into school or college programmes; learn about what works best in terms of practice and delivery, including around universal or targeted approaches; and the range of staff needed to deliver this;
- Understand the facilitators and barriers for delivering effective character education and mental health support;
- Explore how the workforce have been developed and supported; and the ease with which school, health and other community based professionals are working in partnership;
- Identify best practice approaches which facilitate effective, innovative and high quality approaches to the provision of support for mental health and character education.

Definitions: Researchers will avoid providing a definition of CE as we are keen to explore the way their school defines CE. Where the participant is struggling with this - we are defining CE as any activities that aim to develop certain character traits in pupils. So this might include traits associated with academic attainment or employability, or traits that will help pupils make a valuable contribution to society as good citizens

Focus of CE: Researchers to focus on both the 'caught' and 'taught' aspects of character education. Much of CE is delivered through the way the school is set up, its core values, the teacher/student relationships / activities it offers, etc. (referred to as the 'hidden curriculum').

1. **Introduce self and Research Team**

- The National Children's Bureau (NCB) (working with NatCen who carried out the survey) have been commissioned by DfE to carry out research to:
    - Explore how schools/colleges support character development of pupils
    - Reflect and identify approaches to develop key 'character' traits and support the mental health of pupils

- The findings will be used to share and promote good and effective practice across the sectors; and to identify any additional support that is needed
- We are carrying out 26 case studies in a cross section of schools and colleges
- Consent for digital recording
- Reassure about confidentiality – we will not be sharing information between colleagues or passing on any personal or organisational information to the DfE.
  - Explain that we will not name any of the case study schools/colleges in the report
  - We will present a short profile of each of the 26 schools/colleges in the introduction but only refer to them as Case Study A etc. and will ensure that nothing is written that is unique to the school/college or that could lead to identification of the school or college.
  - We will send a copy of the report and the case studies of good practice to them when published
- Emphasise voluntary participation
- Check interview length (60 to 90 minutes)
- Any questions/concerns

2. Participant Background (BRIEF)

- Briefly describe role(s) and responsibilities; length of time in post
- What specific role do they have for developing character and delivering CE
- Can they (briefly) provide a profile of the pupils/students who come to their school/college; how many in total; and where is their catchment area

3. Developing an approach/policy for delivering CE

Can we start by discussing what traits you think are important to develop in young people
- How would they **define 'character education'**; what words do they use

> *Traits of interest to the government include: Resilience, perseverance, communication, compassion, motivation and hard work, self-control, discipline, good time keeping, self-confidence, leadership and team working*

- What do they see as the **primary role and responsibility of their school/college** for developing Character traits/delivering CE; what do they see CE as covering
- How **much of a priority** should schools/colleges attach to developing these charcter traits and delivering CE
- What (if any) **policy and goals** have they set for delivering CE
- **Which character traits** are they trying to develop (e.g. communication, teamwork, motivation, self-regulation, resilience, compassion and coping skills); Why these traits vs other traits
- What are they **aiming to achieve** by developing these traits (e.g. improve educational attainment, employability, citizenship)
- **Why they adopted the approach** they did; what influenced their decisions
- How did they **develop their approach** to delivering CE; who was involved in developing it (governors, staff, pupils, parents etc.)
  - What **role did staff, governors, children, parents/carers** play in the development of their approaches
- How **does their approach vary for different age groups**; reasons why
- How **easy was it to develop a policy/approach**; what if any challenges or difficulties did they encounter; how did they address these
  - What (if anything) would have made it easier to develop their approach
- How do they **promote the development of character and C**E (through their school prospectus/website mission statement; what do they say about delivering CE)

- How **would they describe CE to staff, pupils and parents**; what words do they use
- How have they **funded** their provision
- How does their **approach fit with other school policy/agendas**; broader school/college ethos
  - How (if at all) do they see their **approach for CE relating to provision for supporting MH** needs
  - To what extent do they try to join up their approach to supporting the MH needs of pupils with the delivery of CE; how well does this work

4. **Overview of their approach to delivering CE (ask questions as appropriate for individual)**
   School College Lead: Ask all questions
   Head/Deputy: Ask questions according to their level of involvement

- How is the **delivery of CE coordinated and managed** in their school; views about how well this works
- Can they **describe how they develop character** and deliver CE in their school

- [*Use findings from the survey to probe responses]* **What activities** do they engage in to deliver CE; how are the activities **integrated into the curriculum**:
  - **Information and advice leaflets**, online provision
  - **Which classes, whole school approaches, extra curricula activities do they employ (e.g. PSHE lessons,** integration into other lessons , school assemblies, after school clubs, trips outside school, visits to employers or voluntary settings,
  - **More targeted approaches**: resilience training, Mindfulness, peer to peer support and mentoring
- **How are the activities** intended to help pupils **develop character** traits
- **Which initiatives support which traits** (e.g. improve educational attainment, employability, citizenship); in what way does it vary
  - How does their approach vary for delivering different character traits
- Aside from the 'taught' activities **how else is CE integrated into school life**; what other ways is it covered such as through the way the school is set up, its core values, the teacher/student relationships – aspects of school life that might be referred to as the 'hidden curriculum'
- **Which school staff** are involved in developing character (e.g. form tutors, teaching and learning support staff, learning mentors etc.)
  - What role do they play
- **What if any provision is outsourced**; to whom; reasons why
- How easy is it to work with other external practitioners/providers
- How (if at all) do they **engage parents/carers in their CE**; how if at all do they encourage parents to support the development of CE (inform them about the initiatives or engage them in family activities etc)
- How easy has it been to **engage students, staff and parents** in their CE; what worked best for engaging students, staff and parents
- What **challenges and resistance have they encountered**; how did they address and overcome these
  - Capacity and resourcing barriers
  - Commitment barriers
  - Delivery and teaching barriers
  - Other barriers
- What **training guidance and support have they provided** to staff delivering CE; developing Character traits
  - Who receives this training (e.g. for the whole school – CPD/Inset day or for specific teachers with responsibility for developing character)
  - How is the training delivered
  - How are staff supervised and supported
- What **other training do individuals**; all staff need

5. Reflections about CE

- What is the **value and role of CE**; why is it important to develop character traits; which ones are the most important
- How well is their **approach to developing character working;** who does it work well for; **what activities/initiatives work well/less well**; **how do they know this**
  - which activites are **more effective**
- How do **they know whether pupils are developing these traits**
- How (if at all) do they **monitor the success and track outcomes** of the activities they deliver
  - What tools / methods are used; which outcomes are they tracking
- Whether they **gather feedback from parents children and young people**
  - (Where they do this) How do they collect feedback from children, young people and parents
- What is **key to effective practice** and encouraging development of CE
- What **support do staff need** to deliver CE
- What **workforce development / training** is required to deliver character education
- How (if at all) would they want to **expand or develop their CE approach in the future**:
  - Their approach and the tools they use
  - The way they engage children and young people
  - The way they deliver their approach
  - The support and training of staff
- What, if any, **additional advice or support would be beneficial** as they develop their approach in future
- What **recommendations would they pass on** to other schools and colleges about how best to effectively deliver CE
- What would be the best way for us to **carry out research with children, young people and parents** to explore their views about the delivery of CE
- How **feasible** would it be to speak to children and young people who have engaged in specific interventions to support their CE
- What **feedback would it be helpful to collect from children and young people** and their parents

6. Closing
- Is there anything we have not covered which they think is important
- Reiterate confidentiality assurance.
- **Tell them about the workshops which will be held in the w/c 16 January 2017**

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