character nation

a demos report with the jubilee centre for character and virtues

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DEMOS

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First published in 2015

Unit 1, Lloyds Wharf, 2-3 Mill Street
London, SE1 2BD, UK

ISBN 978-1-909037-85-4
Series design by Modern Activity
Typeset by Modern Activity

Set in Gotham Rounded
and Baskerville 10

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Executive summary

Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate.

Martin Luther King Jr, 'The purpose of education'[1]

The importance of developing good moral 'character' has historically been considered one of the core purposes of education. Rab Butler, the architect of universal education in England, cited the reason for the 1944 Education Act as developing 'our most abiding assets and richest resources – the *character* and competence of a great people'. While character received less emphasis in the education system in the latter half of the twentieth century, it is currently receiving renewed attention.

Much of this attention has been driven by research showing that character attributes like self-regulation (the ability to control one's emotions), application (the ability to commit to and complete a task) and empathy (the ability to put yourself in another's shoes) – to name a few – are correlated with higher educational attainment as well as good mental well being, good health and better outcomes in the labour market. There has also been increased attention on developing moral and civic virtues among young people.

With the election of a new Conservative Government, and the reappointment of Nicky Morgan MP as education secretary, developing character will very likely be a key priority in the Department for Education (DfE) over the next parliament. In this report we provide a series of policy recommendations for the new government to ensure that character development is embedded across the education system.

To do this we draw on recent research into character produced by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, as well as recent studies into

different attributes of character that are referred to as 'soft skills', 'social and emotional skills' and 'non-cognitive skills'. We consider past efforts to embed character development into the education system, detailing the role of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the citizenship curriculum, provision of extracurricular activities, as well as examples of best practice in schools.

We also held three workshops with teachers, head teachers, non-formal education providers, education experts, developmental psychologists, policy-makers and social action organisations; and conducted in-depth interviews with a range of experts and policy-makers who are highly knowledgeable in this field.

Terminology: defining character education

The Jubilee Centre defines character as 'a set of personal traits or dispositions that produce specific moral emotions, inform motivation and guide conduct'[2] and identifies four main categories of good character:

- *moral virtues* such as courage, honesty, humility, empathy and gratitude
- *intellectual virtues* such as curiosity and critical thinking
- *performance virtues* such as resilience, application and self-regulation
- *civic virtues* such as acts of service and volunteering

In our workshops with teachers and head teachers there was some disagreement about whether 'character' was the right word for this agenda, and many chose different terminology to describe what their school did (e.g. 'personal development', or 'developing skills for life'). Nonetheless, the term character has its strengths: a rich philosophical heritage, public familiarity, and inclusion of the moral and civic virtues that are often ignored in studies of 'social and emotional learning'.

Research into character

Numerous studies have shown that character attributes are correlated with educational attainment, school attendance and positive attitudes towards school. A recent review from the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) found that good character attributes at the age of 10 were more important than 'cognitive skills' (using measures of literacy and numeracy) at that age when it came to predicting mental health and life satisfaction in later life.[3] Research also demonstrates that character attributes are malleable – or educable – and thus can be developed through the right approach.

In 'A framework for character education in schools' the Jubilee Centre states that character is 'largely caught through role-modelling and emotional contagion' so 'school culture and ethos are therefore central', but 'character should also be taught' because 'direct teaching of character provides the rationale, language and tools to use in developing character'.[4]

In its report *Character Education in UK Schools*, the Jubilee Centre found that schools with a strong approach to developing character shared the following characteristics:

- A key person was present, often a senior member of staff, supported by the head and senior leadership team (SLT), who is responsible for character education throughout the school.

- There was a commitment to the development of the 'whole child'.

- Teachers felt that 'they could deviate from the standard curriculum without permission' and that they had time and flexibility to discuss moral issues 'always' or 'often'.

- Teachers also said they were more likely to say that their school placed a 'high' or 'very high' priority on moral or character education – with 80 per cent agreeing compared with 68 per cent in the bottom seven schools.

- The importance of school-home links was emphasised: 91 per cent of the top schools' teachers said they could rely on their school's families to develop good character in their children, compared to only 52 per cent of teachers in the bottom seven schools.[5]

Reviews of 'what works', analysis of winners of the Character Awards, and our workshops with stakeholders identified the following key approaches taken by schools with a strong focus on character:

- a whole school ethos
- student-led recording evidence of personal development, accompanying school-led approaches to measure character
- use of reward or award systems schemes
- structured reflection periods
- personal tutors or coaches
- older students working with younger students
- opportunities to take part in voluntary programmes and social action in school and in the local community
- consideration of moral issues in a cross-curricular manner
- involvement of parents, guardians and families
- classes in public speaking, philosophy and ethics lessons

Recommendations

The new government should embed the development of character throughout the institutions of formal and non-formal education across England. We recommend the following changes to policy:

Create a statement of intent and a character framework for education providers

- The DfE should create a statement of intent for education that strongly emphasises character development and produce a national framework for character based on moral, intellectual, civic and performance skills and virtues.

- This new character framework should be based on the existing evidence base and the outcome of a genuine and structured national conversation about what the character of a young person in contemporary Britain should be.

Assess character development: reform Ofsted

- The requirement of a school to develop students socially, morally, spiritually and culturally should be renamed as 'character development' and placed on an equal par with attainment measures. It should also replace the current requirement to encourage 'British values'.

- Following the example of Education Scotland, the remit for Ofsted should be expanded to include assessment of the developmental activities of students outside school and in the wider community against the national character outcomes framework.

- Ofsted should adopt a multi-criteria method for measuring character development rather than a single quantitative measure.

- Ofsted should assess the health and well-being of the school environment, to safeguard the character development of students and staff.

Embed character into school practice

- The DfE should introduce a new National Baccalaureate for 14–19 education that would include character-building components such as volunteering.

- Schools should adopt a strong and clear ethos that underpins their approach to character education, and this should be developed through a 'school community' annual general meeting that includes parents, governors, pupils, teachers and non-formal education providers.

- Character education should be the explicit responsibility of a senior member of staff at the school, and should be supported by the head and SLT.

- Secondary schools should adopt structured reflection periods and a tutor model of pastoral care, where a specific member of staff is responsible for the character development of particular students.

Support and incentivise character education

- School performance tables should focus more on good quality destination data, so that schools are judged on their real-world impact.

- The DfE should provide support for schools that wish to develop character education programmes, and guidance on how to evidence outcomes, through making the Character Education Unit permanent.

- The Character Awards should be continued and awarded every two years as a way of incentivising schools to develop character education programmes and highlighting best practice.

- The DfE should clearly lay out the respective responsibilities of regional schools commissioners (RSCs) and local authorities in supporting and monitoring schools in their area, and charge them with encouraging collaboration on character education.

- Employers should provide match funding to government investment in certified, non-formal education providers that want to form partnerships with schools for the delivery of character education.

Support teachers to develop character

- Government should ensure that initial teacher training (ITT) covers the delivery of character development and moral reflection.

- An evidence-based approach to character education needs to form part of continuing professional development (CPD).

- When recruiting members of staff, schools should consider candidates on the basis of their compatibility with the school's ethos and values.

1 Background: the value of character

In this chapter we outline what we mean when we refer to 'character', why character is important, and how character can be developed. Our definition of character includes the 'soft skills' and 'social and emotional skills' – such as resilience, self-regulation, delaying gratification – that are often discussed by policy-makers and academics, but it also goes beyond these traits to include moral and civic virtues, such as honesty, gratitude, service and volunteering.

What is character?

The DfE defines the 'character traits, attributes and behaviours that underpin success in education and work' as:

- *perseverance, resilience and grit*
- *confidence and optimism*
- *motivation, drive and ambition*
- *neighbourliness and community spirit*
- *tolerance and respect*
- *honesty, integrity and dignity*
- *conscientiousness, curiosity and focus*[6]

The concept of character begins with Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle argued that the 'good life' – a life in which humans 'flourish' to the greatest extent possible – is achieved by developing good character through acting in accordance

with a series of moral virtues such as courage, temperance, generosity, magnificence, pride, gentleness, friendliness, honesty, wit or charm.

According to Aristotle, each of these virtues represents a 'golden mean' between excesses: the virtue of temperance lies between gluttony on the one hand, and asceticism on the other. Developing the virtue of temperance comes through habituation and teaching in the early years of one's life and frequent application until it becomes a habit. Young people then also gradually develop *phronesis* (practical moral wisdom), which helps them reflect on and revise their habits. Importantly, in Aristotle's theory, while some people may be naturally more inclined towards the virtue of temperance, for example, anybody can acquire the virtues through the right education and practice.

Drawing on an Aristotelian notion of character, the Jubilee Centre defines character as 'a set of personal traits or dispositions that produce specific moral emotions, inform motivation and guide conduct'.[7] The Jubilee Centre's research identifies four categories of dispositions or 'virtues':

- *moral virtues* such as courage, honesty, humility, empathy and gratitude
- *intellectual virtues* such as curiosity and critical thinking
- *performance virtues* such as resilience, application and self-regulation
- *civic virtues* such as acts of service and volunteering[8]

In recent years, there has been a growing field of research investigating the importance of what the Jubilee Centre calls 'performance virtues'. These are often referred to as 'non-cognitive skills', 'social and emotional skills', 'soft skills', 'emotional intelligence' or even 'skills for life and work'.

A recent review of 'non-cognitive skills' undertaken by the Institute for Education and the Education Endowment Foundation explored the relationship between positive

outcomes for young people and 'non-cognitive skills' such as self-perception, motivation, perseverance, self-control, meta-cognitive strategies, social competencies, and resilience and coping.[9] Table 1 (pp 24–25) explains these concepts and their constituent components in more detail.

Similarly, the EIF, Cabinet Office and the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission recently launched a three-report review of social and emotional learning.[10] The first strand report analysed the relationship between positive outcomes and a list of 'social and emotional skills' similar to those included in the Education Endowment Foundation review: self-perceptions and self-awareness, motivation, self-control and self-regulation, social skills and resilience and coping.

In the US, Paul Tough, author of *How Children Succeed: Grit, curiosity and the hidden power of character*, draws on the work of the Knowledge is Power Programme (KIPP) schools and focuses on resilience or grit. KIPP schools put character education into practice in 162 schools in the US, focusing on the character 'strengths' of zest, grit, optimism, self-control, gratitude, social intelligence and curiosity.[11] The Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman has demonstrated that attributes like 'openness to experience' (related to concepts like curiosity and creativity), 'conscientiousness' (related to things like grit, self-control and perseverance) and 'agreeableness' (related to things like empathy, modesty and trust) are just as important as IQ to educational attainment.[12]

Missing from many of these studies, however, are moral virtues identified by the Jubilee Centre as core aspects of character, such as honesty and gratitude. Civic virtues, such as service and volunteering, are often also missing from these studies, but have recently received more attention through social action campaigns in the UK such as Step Up To Serve and Generation Change, as well as campaigns to bolster the citizenship curriculum.

Our definition of character, drawn from the Jubilee Centre, thus encapsulates the traits and behaviours included in studies of 'non-cognitive' or 'social and emotional' skills, but goes beyond to include moral and civic virtues.

In our workshops and interviews we tested attitudes towards the language of 'character'. The majority of participants felt that the concept of character was valuable. However, a sizeable minority felt that there were other terms (such as 'life skills' or 'skills for life and work') that better described the things that should be taught as part of character education.

There was some resistance among participants to the idea of explicitly referencing or seeking to develop moral virtues among students. Some were concerned with who would decide what moral characteristics were desirable, or that it might be perceived as invasive or indoctrinating. This parallels the Jubilee Centre's findings in *Building Character Through Youth Social Action* that 'talking about moral virtues puts [some] providers outside their comfort zone'.[13] While this resistance should be acknowledged, the problem is principally with the language of 'moral education'. Participants were much more comfortable discussing the component parts of moral virtue, such as empathy and respect, than moral virtue as a whole.

Many schools (including those recognised for their approach to building character) argued that they do not refer explicitly to what they do as 'character' or 'character building' – and indeed some felt that assemblies or lessons that aimed to teach 'character' explicitly were unpopular with students. This highlights the point about character being predominantly 'caught' rather than 'taught', which is explored further below. Often, those critical or sceptical of the term 'character' disliked it because it was seen as elitist or militaristic, had connotations relating to private school or social class, and thought it would alienate teachers. However, these disagreements were primarily linguistic in nature, rather than substantive: the importance of the four categories of virtue identified above came up frequently in our discussions about what character education should include.

Nonetheless, the use of consistent terminology was viewed as important for implementation purposes, as it might be that people are talking about the same things, but thinking about – and measuring – different things. At the same time, it was felt

that a loose definition of character was desirable because it allowed greater autonomy for schools to develop an approach and language to character that was consistent with their context and intake. Many participants felt that teachers, parents and school leaders might resent an overly prescriptive approach to character education that was dictated from the top down.

Despite some reservations among some of the stakeholders we spoke to, we argue that 'character' is the right term for this agenda because of its rich philosophical history, and the fact that it is one that many people recognise and understand (even if they cannot define it precisely). But more than this, the term 'character' includes but also goes beyond 'social and emotional skills' to encapsulate the attitudes, dispositions and behaviour that are vital to the education and development of British students: moral and civic virtues.

Evidence of character's impact

Too often, the idea of schools developing character is presented as something that happens instead of academic instruction when in fact the evidence suggests that they are interrelated. Weber and Ruch found that 'character strengths of the mind (e.g., self-regulation, perseverance, love of learning) were predictive for school success'. They also found that 'love of learning, zest, gratitude, perseverance, and curiosity were positively associate with school satisfaction'.[14] Similarly, studies from Snyder et al in 2012 and Durlak et al in 2011 showed that interventions that aimed to develop certain character traits – including those often described as 'social and emotional skills' – led to improved academic achievement as well as positive behaviour, school attendance and attitudes towards schools.[15]

Leslie Gutman and Ingrid Schoon, authors of the Education Endowment Foundation report mentioned above, found in their research that 'factors such as self-control and school engagement are correlated with academic outcomes, financial stability in adulthood and reduced crime'. They also found that 'children's perception of their ability, their

expectations of success, and the extent to which they value an activity influence their motivation and persistence'. They conclude that 'improving these factors leads to better academic outcomes, especially for low-attaining pupils'.[16]

Similarly, the first report from the EIF Review of Social and Emotional Learning outlines the findings of their research into the relationship between outcomes and character attributes, based on a comprehensive review and original analysis of the 1970 Birth Cohort Study. The researchers found the following:

- *Self-control* and *self-regulation* in childhood were associated with various aspects of adult life, 'including mental health, life satisfaction and well-being, income and labour market outcomes, measures of physical health, obesity, smoking, crime and mortality'.

- Good or healthy *self-perceptions* and *self-awareness* – and related concepts of '*locus of control*' and *self-efficacy* – in childhood were associated with positive later life results relating to 'mental distress, self-rated health, obesity and unemployment'.

- *Social skills* are important predictors of later life 'mental health and well being, health behaviours, and marriage in later life'.

- '*Conscientiousness*' in childhood (related to concepts of self-regulation) is associated with 'adult well being, educational attainment, partnerships, income, labour market outcomes, and health and health behaviours'.[17]

Table 1 **Definitions of character in four studies**

School of thought	Character virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2014[18])	Character capabilities (Demos, 2009[19])
Conceptual understanding of character	Four broad areas of virtues, which are conceptually distinct but inseparable in practice: *Moral virtues*: character habits that enable us to respond well to situations in any area of experience, including but not limited to: · courage: acting with bravery in fearful situations · justice: acting with fairness towards others by honouring rights and responsibilities · honesty: being truthful and sincere · compassion: exhibiting care and concern for others · gratitude: feeling and expressing thanks for benefits · received · humility and modesty: estimating oneself within reasonable limits *Intellectual virtues* such as creativity and critical thinking *Performance virtues*: behavioural skills and psychological capacities that – while they can be used for both good and bad ends – enable us to put our character habits into practice, such as resilience and determination *Civic virtues* such as acts of service and volunteering, understood as the application of the moral virtues within society at large	Identifies three character capabilities: *Application*: the ability to concentrate, discipline and motivate oneself, underpinned by a strong sense of agency and self-direction *Self-regulation*: the ability to regulate emotion, bounce back from disappointment, delay gratification and cope *Empathy*: a relational capability that underpins social skills and allows effective communication

Non-cognitive skills (Gutman and Schoon, 2014[20])	Social and emotional skills (Goodman et al for EIF, 2015[21])
Eight key malleable competencies: *Self-perceptions*: an individual's beliefs about whether or not she or he can accomplish a task *Motivation*: various approaches to adjusting the rationale for a given task *Perseverance*: steadfastness on completing a task, whether through engagement or determination *Self-control*: the ability to resist short-term impulses in order to prioritise longer-term goals *Meta-cognitive strategies*: goal-oriented efforts to influence one's learning behaviours; focuses on awareness of thinking and selecting, monitoring, and planning strategies conducive to learning *Social competencies*: involve social interactions and relationships with others including leadership and social skills *Resilience and coping*: response to stress, coping involves skills that people use when faced with specific difficulties, whereas resilience is a process that follows the exercise of those skills *Creativity*: the production of novel and useful ideas	Five groupings of social and emotional skills in children: *Self-perceptions and self-awareness*: a child's knowledge and perception of themselves and their value, their confidence in their current abilities, and a belief in their efficacy in future tasks *Motivation*: the reasons for which individuals strive towards goals; belief that effort leads to achievement, distinguishes whether goals are set by other people or by oneself, and the value that is attached to the goal in question, aspiration and ambition *Self-control and self-regulation*: manage and express emotions, and the extent to which they overcome short-term impulsivity in order to prioritise higher pursuits *Social skills*: a child's ability and tendency to interact with others, forge and maintain relationships, and avoid socially unacceptable responses; they cover communication, empathy, kindness, sharing and cooperativeness *Resilience and coping*: demonstrated when an individual is able to adapt positively and purposefully in the face of stress and otherwise difficult circumstances

The researchers also found that at the age of 10 these character attributes were more important than cognitive skills (using measures of literacy and numeracy) when predicting mental health and life satisfaction in later life.

There is a long-running debate in the science of psychology about the extent to which various attributes are part of someone's personality (and are thus constant or fixed) or whether they can be developed in different contexts and situations. Gutman and Schoon, in reviewing the malleability of 'non-cognitive skills', suggest there is a spectrum ranging from context-specific factors (such as motivation), through malleable skills (such as self-control), to personality traits (like grit or creativity), which are the most difficult to alter.[22]

While the evidence base on the malleability of these traits – the extent to which they can be taught or developed – is still evolving, it is clear that moral and civic virtues are educable, as are many performance and intellectual virtues. But what are the best approaches to developing character?

How is character developed?

Aristotle suggested that the character virtues are developed through 'habituation' and practice throughout one's life, but particularly in the early years.

Demos' research in *Building Character*, based on analysis of the Millennium Cohort Study, suggests that a 'tough love' approach to parenting that combines high levels of emotional warmth and care, with consistent enforcement of discipline, was found to have the strongest correlation with character capabilities among children, after controlling for a range of potentially influential factors.[23]

But parenting and the home environment is not the only factor: there is a substantial body of research that suggests that school-based programmes can have a significant impact on empathy, resilience, self-belief and problem-solving ability. According to one study,

Findings from a meta-analysis of 213 USA school-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes (most of which include, at least, some moral-character relevant ingredients) showed that, compared to controls, SEL participants demonstrate significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour and academic performance that reflects an 11-percentile-point gain in achievement.[24]

The second strand report from the EIF review, undertaken by the University of Galway, detailed a number of programmes based inside and outside schools that had strong evidence (including a randomised control trial or quasi-experimental evaluation) of positively impacting on development of character attributes.[25]

What works to build character in schools?

The Jubilee Centre's 'A framework for character education in schools' outlines broadly how character development takes place in schools. They argue that 'character is largely caught through role-modelling and emotional contagion' and that 'school culture and ethos are therefore central'. But they also argue that 'character should also be taught' because 'direct teaching of character provides the rationale, language and tools to use in developing character'.[26]

Their report *Character Education in UK Schools* – which investigated the *moral* character development of young people in the UK – provides insight into best practice approaches to developing character. Based in 68 schools across every country of the UK, with a sample of 255 teachers and 10,207 students, the Jubilee researchers asked students to self-assess their character and take part in moral dilemma tests, in addition to interviewing teachers.

The schools with the strongest focus on character shared the following characteristics:

- There was a key person in the school (often the head teacher) with a special mission to foreground character.

- The school had a commitment to develop the 'whole child'; with at least one designated teacher responsible for character education.

- Teachers felt that 'they could deviate from the standard curriculum without permission' and that they had time and flexibility to discuss moral issues 'always' or 'often'.

- Teachers also said they were more likely to say that their school placed a 'high' or 'very high' priority on moral or character education – with 80 per cent agreeing compared with 68 per cent in the bottom seven schools.

- It also highlighted the importance of school-home links: 91 per cent of the top schools' teachers said they could rely on their school's families to develop good character in their children, compared to only 52 per cent of teachers in the bottom seven schools.[27]

The report also found a small positive influence if the school was a faith school, and very small negative influences (worse performance) from a higher proportion of free school meals eligibility and levels of unemployment in the surrounding local authority.

There were no correlations between whether a school had a strong approach to character and:

- the size of the school

- whether the school was based in a rural or urban area

- the percentage of students achieving five GCSEs at grades A* to C

- the Ofsted grade of the school

- whether the school was an independent or a state school

This perhaps demonstrates that the current methods for assessing school quality are not sufficiently capturing the extent of character education in the school.

We can also learn about best practice in character education from the DfE Character Awards. The common activities in schools that have a strong approach to character are listed in table 2.

Table 2 **Common activities in schools that have a strong approach to character**

Activity	Examples
A whole school ethos based on character attributes	'Aspiration, achievement, self-awareness, professionalism, integrity, respect and endeavour' (King's Leadership Academy in Warrington, Cheshire). 'Professionalism, grit, spark, eloquence, expertise and craftsmanship' (School 21 in Newham, London). 'Reciprocity, reflection, resourcefulness and resilience' (Oakthorpe Primary School in Derbyshire). 'Perseverance, self-regulation and empathy' (Kings Langley School in Hertfordshire).
Students use of portfolios or 'passports' to record evidence of their personal development	An 'iMap' personal portfolio at the Queensbridge school in Birmingham. The 'King's passport' at King's Leadership Academy in Warrington. The ROPE (record of personal excellence) programme at Therfield School in Leatherhead, Surrey.
Schools use reward systems or award schemes to encourage the development of character skills and virtues	The use of the 'Lets Get Smart (LSG) approach and reward system at Lane End Primary School in Buckinghamshire. The Emmanuel College Award Scheme (ECAS) at Emmanuel College, a secondary school in Gateshead.
Schools provide structured reflection periods	Whole days for reflection at the conclusion of projects, as part of the project-based learning approach at School 21. The introduction of a Mindfulness programme at Wellington College.

(Table 2 contd.) Common activities in schools that have a strong approach to character

Activity	Examples
Students have personal tutors or coaches	The tutorial system at the Laurels School, where a tutor takes direct and personal interest in each child's character development and discusses it with parents. The use of 1:1 coaching for personal development in School 21 in London. Weekly tutorials concerning values at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Derbyshire.
Older students working with younger students and serving as good role models	The use of sixth formers as role models for younger students in the Cooperative Academy of Manchester. The use of older students as playground activity leaders at St Michael's Church of England Primary School, London.
Students having sufficient opportunities to take part in voluntary programmes in school and in the local community	The Acorn project and the Eco warriors programme at St James's Church of England School in Stourbridge.
Students consider moral issues in a cross-curricular manner	The exploration of moral issues across multiple subjects at The Cooperative Academy of Manchester. The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) through multiple subjects, for example education about the Holocaust, at Royal Wootton Basset Academy.
Schools develop bespoke programmes to teach character	The Character-Based Tutorial Programme at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Derbyshire. The year 7–9 character development programme developed in partnership with international law firm Hogan Lovells by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School in Islington.
Schools develop tailored approaches to measuring character	The use of the Effort Profile as a measure of effort, focusing on pupils' resilience, independence, self-management and challenge in Gordano School in North Somerset.
Schools ensure the involvement of parents, guardians and families	Parents and pupils voting on the values and character traits they want to see developed by the time they leave school in St James' Church of England Primary School in Stourbridge, West Midlands. Strong links with parents and significant efforts to ensure support for students whose circumstances means they might be at risk of becoming vulnerable at Emmanuel College in Gateshead.
Students take classes in public speaking, philosophy and ethics lessons	The teaching of moral arguments and their applicability to real life in specific lessons at Oliver House Preparatory School.

A detailed case study of King's Leadership Academy, which was the overall winner of the Character Awards, is included in the appendix to this report (along with case studies of other winners and notable schools that we reference throughout this report).

The Knightly Virtues and the My Character programmes, both designed and run by the Jubilee Centre, also provide insights into how character can be developed in schools through specific interventions.

Focusing on primary school students, the Knightly Virtues programme was developed by the Jubilee Centre with the aim of enhancing 'virtue literacy through stories'. As part of the programme, the Jubilee Centre produced teaching packs with lesson plans and other resources based on legendary stories – such as *El Cid*, *Don Quixote* and *The Merchant of Venice* – to enable teachers to draw out the virtues at the heart of these stories, such as gratitude, courage, humility, justice or honesty. Over 7,000 primary school pupils have taken part in the programme in the UK, and an evaluation of the programme was conducted across 26 schools with over 1,300 pupils. The evaluation found that, among other results, the implementation of the programme increased pupils' ability to 'apply virtue language and concepts in personal contexts' by 24 per cent compared with a control group.[28]

The My Character programme was developed by the Jubilee Centre with the aim of developing moral virtues and 'futuremindedness' (the ability to set goals and work to achieve them) among 11–14-year-olds. Based on a randomised controlled trial study of its impact, as well as interviews with students and school case studies, the evaluation suggests that students benefit from opportunities for structured reflection on character development – in other words, to 'think about who they are and who they want to be'. The evaluation also found that developmental tools were valuable because they provided students with 'structured opportunities not only to identify their goals, but also consider how they might reach them'. Moreover, the importance of involving new technologies – as well as co-creating tools with young people themselves – were seen as vital to boosting engagement among young people on these issues.[29]

Our understanding of what works to build many of the attributes of character described above has also been furthered by the second report of the Review of Social and Emotional Skills, conducted by researchers from the University of Galway. Based on their review of 39 school-based programmes with strong evidence of impact, the Galway researchers identified the following characteristics of effective school-based interventions:

- *Focus on teaching skills, in particular the cognitive, affective and behavioural skills and competencies as outlined by CASEL*
- *Use of competence enhancement and empowering approaches*
- *Use of interactive teaching methods including role play, games and group work to teach skills*
- *Well-defined goals and use of a coordinated set of activities to achieve objectives*
- *Provision of explicit teacher guidelines through teacher training and programme materials.*[30]

Building character through non-formal education

The development of character does not just take place in the classroom or at home. There are a range of experiences and programmes that young people can take part in outside school that can be vital to developing character. Past Demos research into the impact of Scouting on young people suggested that these types of non-formal learning activities can be particularly effective at building character because the Scouts have a strong ethos, they emphasise taking responsibility, and they present young people with challenging experiences that they have to navigate on their own or in teams of peers.[31] Phil Denning, assistant director of Lifelong Learning at Education Scotland, said that within the *Curriculum for Excellence* they were observing 'an organic move towards non-formal education

as a way to teach certain skills', which 'also chimes a lot with how teachers want to work. A lot of teachers want to give their students a broad education, including outside the classroom.'[32]

In addition to their analysis of school-based programmes, the Galway review found good evidence that out-of-school programmes led to improvements in young people's self-esteem, confidence, emotional regulation, organisation and leadership skills as well as academic performance. According to their analysis, characteristics of effective out-of-school programmes included:

- 'Having specific and well-defined goals
- Direction and explicit focus on desired outcomes
- Provision of structured activities
- Training of facilitators and use of a structured manual
- Implementation over longer periods of time'[33]

Evaluations of National Citizen Service (NCS) found 'promising evidence in terms of its significant impact on young people's confidence, happiness, sense of worth, anxiety levels, interest in education and attitude towards mixing in the local area'.[34] More recently, the Behavioural Insights Team released their research into the impact of three social action programmes using randomised control trials. They found that 'the [Citizenship Foundation] programme was very effective in increasing empathy levels, problem-solving, grit and community skills relative to control students'.[35]

Similarly, young people who took part in the Envision programme experienced positive results when compared against a control group across every measure, including empathy, problem-solving ability, cooperation, grit, community skills and attitudes to education: 'Students who had participated in [Envision's programme] displayed a sense of community that was 16 per cent higher than that of their

counterparts in the control group, whilst empathy and cooperation were boosted by 11 per cent each.'[36]

The Jubilee Centre report *Building Character Through Youth Social Action* also provides insight into the development of character through youth social action. In a sample of approximately two-dozen social action providers, the majority viewed the development of young people's character as fundamental to the aims and activities of their organisation. Moreover, the report states that 'when asked which virtues are especially well developed through social action, moral (and civic) virtues were cited more frequently than performance or intellectual ones'.[37]

When evaluating how character was developed, the majority (61 per cent) said they believed that they 'facilitated' character development (in other words, they intended to develop certain character virtues); just under half felt that character was 'caught' as an unintended by-product of their activities; while only 13 per cent felt that character was taught directly.

Conclusion

Evidence suggests that character matters hugely for a variety of later life outcomes. It can help boost educational attainment and motivation to learn among young people, as well as facilitating positive later life outcomes, such as good mental well-being, positive health behaviours, and more success in the labour market. While the majority of this research has focused on the impact and development of 'performance virtues', more recent research from the Jubilee Centre is shedding light on the moral and civic virtues – crucial components to an accurate and desirable conception of character.

We also know through research that core elements of character can be shaped and influenced by parents, peers, schools and organisations providing social action experiences outside the classroom. And we are starting to build a clearer view and appreciation for what ingredients are critical to the development of character.

Although many schools and youth sector organisations are already working to develop character, there is a compelling need to capitalise on the increasing policy focus on character to enact system-wide changes. But before making our recommendations, we first need to better understand previous efforts to develop character through policy, and the current state of the education landscape, which are explored in the next chapter.

2 Character education policy in England

As the reforms are made effective – and made effective they must be – we shall develop our most abiding assets and richest resources – the character and competence of a great people and I believe in passing this measure we shall do this in a manner not unworthy of our people's greatness.

Rab Butler, presenting the 1944 Education Bill to the House[38]

Character and related concepts are by no means new to the education system. The quote from Rab Butler above, the Conservative architect of universal education, demonstrates how the language of character has been a core aim of education policy.

Since then, there have been numerous advocates for the importance of character in education. As the then Prime Minister James Callaghan put it in his Ruskin speech:

The goals of our education… are to equip children to the best of their ability for a lively, constructive, place in society, and also to fit them to do a job of work. Not one or the other but both… There is now widespread recognition of the need to cater for a child's personality to let it flower in its fullest possible way.[39]

Anthony Seldon, Master of Wellington College, has consistently argued that education at its essence involves the development of character:

The work of education, as the linguistic root suggests, is to 'lead out'. Schools need to lead or draw out of young people all their talents and aptitudes. We cannot and must not define this task purely in terms of academic success.[40]

In this chapter, we provide a brief history of the efforts to educate and develop character through the education system – and in particular those attributes that fall within our definition of character. Understanding this history is vital to understanding where the new government needs to focus its efforts.

Recent policy history: from the national curriculum to free schools

While not explicitly referred to as 'character education' at the time, the intention to develop character was at the heart of the national curriculum from the beginning.[41] The 1988 Education Reform Act established a framework for the development of the national curriculum, underpinned by two core aims: to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.[42]

However, it was not until 1997 when explicit attempts were made to use the national curriculum as a vehicle for the development of the 'whole student'. Labour's first white paper on education, *Excellence in Schools*, laid out the need for pupils to 'develop the strength of character and attitudes to life and work'.[43] In their revised national curriculum, implemented in 2000, 'a broad set of common values and purposes that underpin the school curriculum' was acknowledged. The 'Statement of values, aims and purposes of the national curriculum for England' cited the development of social responsibility, knowledge, understanding of and participation in society, and commitment to truth, justice, honesty, trust and a sense of duty.[44]

In 2003, the Labour Government announced the Every Child Matters strategy, which aimed to reduce the number of children dropping out of school, reduce anti-social behaviour and safeguard mental health in schools. From 2005 onwards, Ofsted assessed schools not just academically, but against the five key outcomes for young people laid out in *Every Child Matters*: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being.[45]

It is in this context that the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme, which aimed to assist the development of social and emotional skills in schools, was launched.

The SEAL programme provided schools with resources that could help develop pro-social behaviours, through a whole school approach. It laid out specific social and emotional skills that students should be expected to achieve: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. It also provided resources for schools and for classroom activities across a range of ages, designed to incrementally develop these skills between the ages of 3 and 14.

By 2010, SEAL was being implemented in 90 per cent of English primary schools and 70 per cent of secondary schools. Yet despite its widespread use and success at the pilot stage, a 2008 small group work evaluation of Primary SEAL by the University of Manchester showed that it had mixed results, while an evaluation of Secondary SEAL suggested that it had no effect on student outcomes.[46]

The evaluation of SEAL in secondary schools provided three useful reflections on the problems in the programme's delivery:

- the importance of having a strong evidence base before implementing a programme on a national scale
- more training for staff and involvement of parents
- the importance of having a national framework, as the evaluation concluded that SEAL implementation was too 'bottom-up', leading to variability in approaches and quality[47]

The formation of the Coalition Government in 2010 changed the tone of the education debate, with the focus shifting back towards improving core knowledge and attainment. This came with a renewed focus on standards: under the revised Ofsted framework implemented in January 2012, the number of points that schools are graded on was reduced from 27 to

4 key areas: pupil achievement, quality of teaching, leadership and management, and pupil behaviour and safety.[48] The Government also ruled out making PSHE a statutory subject, ceased the public funding of SEAL, and reduced funding for the PSHE Association.

This change in direction was accompanied by a significant increase in the number of academies, which are free from local authority control. This has provided greater independence to many schools, producing what some in the sector call a 'school-led self-improving system'.[49] Far more so than in the recent past, schools can define their own values and pursue their own agendas.

Similarly, while new networks, particularly multi-academy trusts, are helping to facilitate cooperation and sharing of best practice between schools, reduced local authority influence in education has according to some made coordination more difficult and reduced the incentives for schools to cooperate. The need for a 'middle tier' between schools and central government has been recognised with the introduction of RSCs.

The Academies Act also led to the introduction of free schools, which are not required to teach the national curriculum, and therefore are another step freer from central oversight. The free school structure gives some schools – like School 21 or Floreat Education – the opportunity to innovate developing a character-building approach.

The current policy landscape

More recently the Coalition Government has demonstrated a renewed appetite to pursue character education in schools. Nicky Morgan, the most recent secretary of state, highlighted the importance of character education, arguing,

Just as important to the next generation's future as getting a sound academic grounding, is ensuring they have the resilience and grit to deal with the challenges that life will throw at them. To support schools we're investing in character education, supporting projects

like the cadets, debating in schools and team building activities, and providing support to help the best of these projects expand.[50]

In 2014 the Government and the Education Endowment Foundation instituted the Character Education grant fund, designed to support and expand character education.[51] The Government also launched the Character Awards, designed to highlight the most effective ways that schools can deliver character education and incentivise a character education focus.[52] Additionally, the Government recently granted £5 million to eight projects run by former Armed Forces personnel seeking to work with schools in order to deliver character education by building on the ethos and values of the military.[53]

Yet how does the current policy landscape encourage or discourage the development of character? There are a number of ways in which character education can be delivered through the education system. It can be included in the curriculum and qualifications; Ofsted can assess schools' approaches to character; teachers can be trained to adopt pedagogies that support character development; and schools can provide extracurricular activities that build character. The following sections look, in turn, at each of these and the extent to which character development is currently built into the education system.

Character in the curriculum

One home for character education in the curriculum since its establishment has been PSHE. However, as Professor Chris Bonnell of the Institute for Education notes, PSHE's enduring non-statutory status, combined with an increase in pressure to focus on academic subjects, means that 'schools spend less and less time teaching it'.[54]

The most recent Ofsted report into the quality of PSHE – published in 2013 and entitled *Not Yet Good Enough* – found that PSHE education required improvement or was inadequate in 40 per cent of the 50 schools that comprised their sample.

The report found that pupils did not develop the skills to 'effectively apply their understanding', staff had received little or no training to teach PSHE education in 20 per cent of schools, and teaching required improvement in 42 per cent of primary and 38 per cent of secondary schools.[55]

According to Katherine Weare, professor of education at the University of Southampton, 'the teaching of skills, e.g. in PSHE, is too often optional, uncoordinated and badly taught'.[56] Assessing those schools that deliver PSHE effectively, Ofsted noted the value of outside speakers 'bringing a wide range of expertise and life experiences' as well as 'PSHE education-related activities such as school and sports council leadership, residential trips and retreats'. However, they concluded that 'few schools monitor and analyse the take-up of extra-curricular activities'.[57]

Citizenship education is another example of an aspect of the curriculum that is often identified for character education, in particular the civic virtues outlined by the Jubilee Centre.

The most comprehensive investigation of the impact of citizenship was the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), which ran from 2001 to 2010. It concluded that even by 2010 provision was still patchy, due in part to failures in teacher training and teachers' consequent lack of confidence dealing with complex political and social issues.[58]

A 2007 Department for Education and Skills report called *Diversity and Citizenship* found 'huge variation in the amount and quality of Citizenship provision in schools'. It also highlighted the problem of having citizenship taught by non-specialists.[59] More recently, *Citizenship Consolidated*, an Ofsted survey of citizenship in primary and secondary schools between 2009 and 2012, found that while the teaching of citizenship had improved since 2010, teaching was not good enough in a quarter of secondary schools.[60]

These reports also outline the factors underpinning the best citizenship education practice, including support and promotion for the subject at the highest level in schools (from heads and other members of SLT); a dedicated

'citizenship champion' practitioner in each school to support their colleagues' practice; and encouragement of active involvement and participation of young people in the classroom.[61]

Clearly then, it appears that character education is not currently prioritised in the curriculum and its implementation is patchy because of lack of specialised teacher training and non-statutory status.

Feedback from our interviews and workshops suggests that the best approach to character education is to view its application more broadly across the curriculum and in how a school operates, rather than to limit it to explicit 'character' lessons either in addition to or as part of PSHE. This question is explored by the Jubilee Centre in its report *Teaching Character through the Curriculum,* for which the researchers invited practitioner experts to explore how character could be developed across 14 different subjects within the curriculum, including core subjects such as English and maths, as well as PSHE and citizenship.

It investigates how character virtues might be developed through the pedagogical practices and content of each subject, looking for linkages and providing practical suggestions for possible teaching and learning activities in the classroom, across the whole school and in the community. To provide an example, through mathematics, students could develop curiosity and empathy through choice of the subject content (learning about data by looking at international inequality), open-mindedness and tolerance if encouraged to work in groups, and performance and intellectual virtues (such as resourcefulness) in struggling and eventually solving a problem.[62]

School 21 in Newham and Kings Langley School in Hertfordshire have taken a whole school approach to character development through embedding it across the curriculum. Case studies 4 and 5 in the appendix give details of these approaches.

Yet another way of developing character through the curriculum is by including character-building activities, such as volunteering, in qualifications, as found in the International Baccalaureate, the proposed National Baccalaureate and Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence.

As part of the Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) element of the International Baccalaureate, students are required to participate in volunteering and other activities that develop their creativity and contribute to a physically healthy lifestyle. They are also required to demonstrate through self-evaluation the influence of the CAS programme on their personal development.

A baccalaureate approach to education, as a holistic framework containing both character education and academic qualifications, has gained ground in recent years. In 2014 the third report of Labour's Independent Skills Taskforce, headed by Chris Husbands, proposed a new 'National Baccalaureate' for 14–19 education that would include four key elements: core learning, including GCSEs, A-levels and vocational qualifications; maths and English; personal skills development and an extended study or project.

The personal skills development aspect of this framework would see 'all young people developing their character, personal development and employability skills', with all learners entitled to 'an appropriately planned and designed personal skills development programme'.[63] A similar approach has been taken in Scotland as part of its Curriculum for Excellence, presented below.

Box 1 **The Curriculum for Excellence**

Character education sits at the heart of the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland, which developed out of a broad and ambitious 'national debate on education' in 2002, which included teachers and pupils, academics, people from trade unions, churches, local authorities and charities, and the general public.[64] *This national debate resulted in the 2004 publication of* A Curriculum for Excellence,[65] *and the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence in 2010/11.*

The curriculum itself focuses on four main capacities. It seeks to create successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

The specific attributes and capabilities associated with each of these capacities – which have significant overlap with the traits identified as critical to character development – are

laid out within them. For example, the attributes of 'confident individuals' include self-respect and secure values and beliefs, while those of 'effective contributors' include self-reliance and resilience.[66] *Gary Walsh of Character Scotland has suggested that while there is much to be done, 'character education is already recognised by many practitioners as central to the aims and purposes of Curriculum for Excellence'.*[67]

This focus on character is reinforced by the inspection framework that has been used by Education Scotland since 2008. When a school is being inspected, a parallel inspection is undertaken in the local community. This inspection identifies and critiques the learning opportunities for young people, adults and the local community. The information gathered as part of this second inspection is shared with the school inspectors, creating a holistic picture of the learning opportunities for young people. The community report lists recommendations for local community groups – Scouts, Cadets, local charitable organisations and so on – and the community and the school report are published at the same time.[68]

The combination of a character-focused curriculum and a community-focused inspection programme has led to an increasing level of cooperation between schools and non-formal learning providers, such as Scouts, Cadets or character-related awarding bodies like Duke of Edinburgh and the John Muir Award.[69] *In an interview, Phil Denning of Education Scotland argued that 'what we are starting to see happen at the moment is that organisations – like the cadets – are presenting "learning offers", which link the cadet syllabus much more explicitly with the Curriculum for Excellence'. This cooperation, as well as granting new character-building opportunities to young people, reduces pressure on teachers: 'They're saying, we don't have the time or resources to do this on our own. We are saying, you're not expected to do this on your own, partnerships are built into the Curriculum for Excellence from the outset. It's about saying education policy does not end with the school day.'*

Inspecting for character

The Education Act of 2002 requires all maintained schools 'to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils'. This is now summarised under the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) requirement in the Ofsted inspection framework and as of November 2014 is now considered in alignment with requirements that schools promote 'fundamental British values'.[70]

According to Ofsted's guidance to schools,

Meeting requirements for collective worship, establishing a strong school ethos supported by effective relationships throughout the school, and providing relevant activities beyond the classroom are all ways of ensuring pupils' SMSC development.[71]

Ofsted currently considers a school's approach to SMSC as a second tier requirement. According to the teachers and heads that we engaged with during our workshops, the SMSC requirement has very little bearing on a school's headline Ofsted rating, which is very much driven by the school's attainment data.

Researchers at the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) have recently explored the provision of SMSC in the UK, concluding that the pressure schools face to produce results has pushed wider concerns about character development to the margins:

In past years, it has been increasingly difficult for schools to think about anything other than short-term gains in relation to short-term attainment outcomes. Deeper thinking about purpose, aims and ethos of schools, and the development of those values and skills which are anything but soft is not impossible. However, such thinking has been rendered far more difficult by the constantly changing terrain of policy priorities and the attendant focus on narrow priorities, policed by Ofsted through the inspection framework. It is hard in the current climate in schools to justify giving time to reflect on SMSC issues in the face of what feel like more pressing priorities.[72]

Thus, while the architecture exists for Ofsted inspectors to assess schools on their approach to character education, it remains a priority that is currently significantly overshadowed by attainment measures.

Teachers of character: the profession and teacher training

The importance of teacher training to deliver character education effectively is mentioned frequently in a variety of research reports, as highlighted in the previous chapter. Moreover, according to many of these reports, initial teacher training (ITT) and continuing professional development (CPD) are not adequately instructing teachers on character education.

The Jubilee Centre's report *The Good Teacher* found that while teachers recognised the important role they play in developing character, they felt under-equipped and unsupported in some aspects of this role, leading the report to call for character education to form part of ITT.[73] This was also suggested by the 2014 All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Mobility – co-chaired by Baroness Claire Tyler and Damian Hinds MP – in their 'Character and resilience manifesto', which called for character and resilience to be incorporated into ITT and CPD.[74]

The recent government-commissioned Carter Review of ITT provided an overview of the issues faced by the current approach. It found considerable variations in course content as well as 'what appear to be potentially significant gaps in a range of courses'. As a result, the review called for the Department of Education to commission the Teaching Schools Council or a similar body to develop a framework of core content for ITT. While explicitly not determining what should be included in the framework, the review did identify certain areas that could offer a strong starting point, including 'child and adolescent development', such as training in 'emotional and social development' and 'strategies for character education'.[75]

Extracurricular activities and non-formal education

The value that extracurricular activities can bring to character education is well recognised by policy-makers in the UK and internationally. When in late 2014 Education Secretary Nicky Morgan announced a £5 million fund to help state schools pursue character education, this money was mainly ear-marked to fund character-building extracurricular activities.[76] In Singapore, which is often held up for its approach to character, participation in extracurricular activities is compulsory for all students in secondary school.[77]

Non-formal learning is increasingly recognised as an important means through which young people can develop important competencies, a fact reflected in the 2014 Jubilee Centre report *Building Character Through Youth Social Action*.[78] Yet, while the provision of extracurricular activities by a school is often taken into account within Ofsted inspections, schools are not assessed specifically on their provision of extracurricular activities, and they are not obliged to provide extracurricular activities.

In Scotland, extracurricular activities are not compulsory, but the Curriculum for Excellence is designed to encourage partnerships between schools and non-formal education providers like Scouts or the Boys Brigade, as highlighted in the case study box above. Schools are provided with resources to encourage student engagement in extracurricular activities and non-formal learning activities, such as Education Scotland's guide to non-formal education awards *Amazing Things*, and the report *Curriculum for Excellence Through Outdoor Learning*.[79]

Conclusion: where we are now?

While policy-makers have often considered character development as a core aim of education, it has never been fully embedded into education policy. Efforts by the Labour Government in the early 2000s – through *Every Child Matters* and SEAL – were laudable but ultimately failed attempts to deliver holistic character education. The delivery of character development through PSHE and citizenship components of the

curriculum has not been prioritised and has subsequently been deemed as inadequate. Ofsted's assessment of SMSC is overshadowed by attainment metrics, which are more easily measured and compared. However, recent changes in the education system, with increasing autonomy given to academies and free schools, have allowed many schools to experiment with different approaches to character development. In the next chapter, we present recommendations for ways that policy-makers can take from the best current examples of character development in schools and encourage, incentivise and support every school to prioritise character development.

3 Recommendations: building a character nation

In December 2014, Education Secretary Nicky Morgan announced that she wants England to be a 'global leader' in teaching character. In this report, we argue that to build a character nation, the new government needs to embed the development of character throughout the institutions of formal and non-formal education across England. The growing body of evidence highlighting the importance of character education in recent years, and the strengthening of the evidence-based teaching movement – demonstrated for example by the establishment of the Education Endowment Foundation – now coincides with significant cross-party support for more focus on character education. Through this convergence we are presented with a unique opportunity to make character development an explicit and important part of the education of our young people. In this final chapter, we offer policy recommendations for how the new government can accomplish this.

Create a character framework for education providers

In an era of school autonomy, a centrally mandated policy on character education will likely be met with resistance from head teachers, teachers and parents. Many individual schools are already leading the way in emphasising character development, and the new government should encourage this experimentation and devolution of power. However, there is still a role for national government to encourage, incentivise and support the development of character.

We recommend that:

The DfE should create a statement of intent for education that strongly emphasises character development and produce a national character framework of outcomes based on moral, intellectual, civic and performance skills and virtues.

The education system in England lacks a clear statement of what abilities and attributes we expect a young person to have on leaving compulsory education. We recommend that a national statement of the purpose of education, which places due emphasis on character education, should be developed and implemented by the DfE.

Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence provides an example of a vision of student outcomes, including values, social and emotional competencies and skills, which directs education professionals in developing a student's character education in a holistic manner.[80] Other examples include Singapore's 'Framework for 21st century competencies and student outcomes'[81] and, in England, 'Framework of outcomes for young people', developed by the Young Foundation in 2012 for youth sector organisations.[82]

This would include expectations of academic attainment, with minimum requirements perhaps modelled on the floor standard within the incoming Progress 8 measure.[83] On 'character', the Young Foundation framework identified seven clusters of 'social and emotional capabilities': communication, confidence and agency, planning and problem-solving, relationships and leadership, creativity and resilience and determination. These are all valuable constituent parts of a conception of character. However, character must also include moral virtues such as honesty and integrity, as well as civic virtues such as notions of volunteering and service. The Jubilee Centre's framework for character education in schools could also provide a starting point for a national framework.[84]

The framework would thus start with these desirable outcomes and then present the constituent attributes. For example, an outcome of young people becoming effective

'planners and problem solvers' would include both intellectual virtues such as critical thinking, as well as performance virtues such as application and ability to delay gratification. The framework would provide details of the evidence of correlation between these attributes and positive outcomes, the extent to which these attributes are educable, and examples of effective interventions.

Schools and non-formal education providers could use the framework to identify those aspects of character education that they are currently developing, and areas they need to improve. Schools would be held to account on this through the SMSC requirement in the Ofsted inspection framework, described in more detail below. The framework would thus provide a common language and understanding of outcomes across education providers, while at the same time not being too prescriptive or top-down; indeed schools could pick and choose which attributes they want to place at the heart of their school ethos and approach to character development.

This new character framework should be based on the existing evidence base and the outcome of a genuine and structured national conversation about what the character of a young person in contemporary Britain should be.

The national debate on education in Scotland in 2002, which led to the development of the Curriculum for Excellence, shows how radical reforms can be underpinned and strengthened by a broad consensus formed across society. One of the criticisms of Michael Gove's tenure as education secretary was that in his haste to undertake widespread reforms, he failed to consult teachers and heads adequately, threatening the longevity of the changes he has overseen.[85] Modelling an English national conversation on that successfully employed in Scotland about education, the Government could ensure broad support for and longevity of its character education reforms.

Moreover, while the final framework should be the product of this consultation, it should also draw on the substantial evidence base – much of which is presented

in earlier chapters of this report – regarding the correlation between various character attributes and positive impacts, as well as the extent to which such character attributes are malleable, or 'educable'. This should include 'performance' virtues (or social and emotional capabilities) as well as intellectual, moral and civic virtues. The list of attributes produced by the DfE and presented in the first chapter of this report is a good start. It covers attributes across these four categories of virtues, but the DfE should work in conjunction with 'what works' centres like the Education Endowment Foundation and university research centres, like the Jubilee Centre, to produce a more rigorous and formalised list.

Assess character development: reform Ofsted

One of the most frequent messages we received in our workshops and interviews was that the current approach to Ofsted assessment – based heavily on attainment data – meant that many schools and school heads were unable to provide adequate focus on character development activities. Research from the Jubilee Centre based on interviews with over 250 teachers found that 80 per cent of secondary school teachers and 75 per cent of primary school teachers considered the 'assessment system to hinder the development of the whole child'.[86]

Therefore, to reform assessment and measure character development, we recommend that:

The requirement of a school to develop students socially, morally, spiritually and culturally should be renamed as 'character development' and placed on an equal par with attainment measures. It should also replace the current requirement to encourage 'British values'.

Without an inspection framework that acknowledges its importance, character education will not be prioritised in many schools. Therefore, we recommend raising the importance of SMSC to be equal to that of the four main areas

– pupil achievement, quality of teaching, leadership and management, and pupil behaviour and safety – to highlight the importance of character education.

As part of this requirement, Ofsted should draw on insights from research into the best approaches to character education. For example, the Jubilee Centre's report *Character Education in UK Schools* found that schools that scored highly in providing character education displayed the following:

- There was at least one teacher (possibly in the SLT) whose focus, passion and expertise was on character and the development of the 'whole child'.

- Teachers were more likely to report that their school took a 'whole school approach to the development of character'.

- Teachers were more likely to report that they 'had the time and flexibility to discuss moral issues when they arise'.

- Teachers were more likely to feel that they could deviate from the standard curriculum without permission.

- Teachers reported good links between the school and parents to develop young people's character.[87]

Ofsted should also look to many of the activities identified in table 2 as a way of assessing schools on character development, including the ethos of a school and the extent to which it is known and demonstrated by students, the provision of non-formal education activities through youth sector organisations, the provision of structured reflection periods, adoption of tutor models for pastoral care and student portfolios used to track personal development.

Moreover, this should be done in such a way as to replace the requirement on schools to encourage 'British values' – which participants in the workshops who were familiar with the Ofsted process described as poorly defined and liable to a tickbox approach.

Following the example of Education Scotland, Ofsted's remit should be expanded to assess the developmental activities of students outside school and in the wider community against a national character outcomes framework.

In 2008, Education Scotland expanded the focus of its inspection process to include the community and the quality of activities available to young people outside schools. A significant driver of this was the recognition that third sector non-formal learning and community organisations play an increasingly significant role in the development of young people. Understanding the opportunities available to young people outside school, and what sorts of outcomes and personal development they received in taking part in these activities, is seen as vital to determine whether young people are achieving the outcomes identified by the Curriculum for Excellence.

By developing a similar model of inspection in England, Ofsted could provide a clearer picture of the character development of young people than that gained by a purely school-based inspection process. As in Scotland, a dual community-school inspection process would encourage cooperation between schools and non-formal education providers, and provide a picture of the health of the local civil society in which so much of young people's development takes place. Character cannot be built solely within the classroom. Young people need to take part in a variety of activities and experiences that are designed for personal development. A national framework of character outcomes, which both schools and non-formal education providers work towards, can help to ensure a holistic approach to character development.

Ofsted should adopt a multi-criteria method for measuring character development rather than a single quantitative measure.

The development of a measure for character that can be published in the same manner as academic attainment may be an attractive lever for inspectors and policy-makers. But this form of high stakes accountability can increase pressure on

teachers and damage the delivery of an activity. Policy-makers should heed Goodhart's Law: as soon as you treat an outcome as a target, it creates an incentive to bias.[88] As one of our expert stakeholders put it: 'evidence should not be used as another layer of high stakes accountability [in relation to character]... as soon as you tie a measure to something that is performance-related, you run the risk of biasing that measure, and in relation to character that could be quite risky'. In other words, character development in schools should not be reduced to a box ticking exercise.

Many stakeholders in our workshops emphasised the importance of gathering evidence that related to students' character development, which could be reviewed by Ofsted. A multi-criteria approach to measuring character development would blend qualitative and quantitative measures. To measure quantity, psychometric testing such as the School Virtue Measure developed by the Jubilee Centre offers schools an effective means through which to assess the impact of their character education efforts.[89] Where appropriate, this aspect of students' development should be tracked by schools using their data management systems to give a view of students across subjects and longitudinal outcomes, not just attainment and behaviour – we heard of a number of innovative approaches along these lines, including one currently being developed by the Aldridge Foundation.

At the same time, many stakeholders stressed the importance of qualitative data gathering and evidence. The best approach to this was often seen to be student-led portfolios or passports, which they are responsible for keeping, and track their personal or character development through participation in different activities. This could be used to track their activities in the classroom and school, as well as their participation in extracurricular activities outside the classroom. It was also felt that Ofsted should spend more time interviewing students to assess the extent to which they were consciously developing character attributes and the school's ethos, and can communicate them.

Moreover, Carl Hendrick, head of learning and research at Wellington College, pointed out that while research and evidence should play a greater role in teaching, when fostering moral and civic virtue in our young people, 'we don't actually need to show measurable, demonstrable values for success or failure. If we have a common set of values that we agree on and we believe in, in a school or community, then perhaps that should be enough.'

Ofsted should assess the health and well-being of the school environment, to safeguard the character development of students and staff.

The evidence indicates that having the time and freedom to experiment beyond the curriculum is a feature of the best character-building schools – therefore it should be a priority for schools to ensure that the school environment is one in which character can be properly developed. Measures of school well-being, such as staff and student mental health and staff retention, could provide an illustration of the quality of the character education on offer.

Embed character into school practice

While PSHE and citizenship may provide natural homes for teaching character education in the curriculum, schools with the best approaches weave character development across the curriculum and its delivery. Moreover, Jubilee Centre researchers found that teachers and youth sector social action providers felt that character developed primarily through being 'caught' – as a result of a school ethos and taking part in different activities and experiences – rather than being 'taught' explicitly in the classroom.

Indeed, many best practice examples highlight the importance of project-based learning, group and interactive work, role play and taking part in non-formal learning activities outside the classroom. Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, as well as the International Baccalaureate, demonstrates how the curriculum and qualifications could be used to encourage character development.

Drawing on these examples, we therefore recommend the following for whole school approaches to character development:

The DfE should introduce a new National Baccalaureate for 14–19 education that would include character education and volunteering components.

Through our workshops we heard about how the International Baccalaureate encourages academic study alongside participation in character-building activities such as volunteering, as does Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence. There is also grassroots momentum behind the idea of a National Baccalaureate, which as described by the Husbands Review includes a personal skills development component comprising character education.[90] This would ensure that character development is recognised in any future school-leaving certificate, placing incentives on schools and individuals to deliver it well.

Schools should adopt a strong and clear ethos that underpins their approach to character education, and this should be developed through a 'school community' annual general meeting that includes parents, governors, pupils, teachers and non-formal education providers.

The workshops conducted as part of this project, the schools identified through the Character Awards and the Jubilee Centre's report *Character Education in UK Schools* all highlight the importance of an explicit school ethos and a whole school approach.[91] Through use of the national framework suggested above, schools should outline the character virtues students should aspire to demonstrate, including in moral terms, which would provide the overarching approach and rationale for the development of character education within the school.

The evidence suggests that the best way to reflect the wishes of a school community and thereby achieve buy-in to the process of defining that school's values is through involving students, teachers and parents and providing time

for the school to reflect on its core purpose, so we recommend schools should consider following the example of schools such as Kings Langley School (case study 5) or Park House School (case study 2).

We also recommend that schools host an annual general meeting with participants from across the school community, including governors, the SLT, teachers, support staff, parents, pupils and external organisations, to review the values embodied in the school's ethos and evaluate progress. Schools already have a responsibility to communicate with parents, often executed through parents' evenings – however, these are generally individualised, time-limited and, particularly in secondary schools, have a tendency to focus on academic attainment. An AGM would enable a regular in-depth discussion to take place about the whole school and its character-building approach, and thereby introduce another form of accountability, but more direct, internal and supportive than that of the inspectorate.

Character education should be the explicit responsibility of a senior member of staff at the school, and should be supported by the head and senior leadership team.

Our research for this project found that the schools that were most successful at embedding a whole school approach to character education were those with an individual responsible, who in turn had the backing of the head and the SLT. Many of the workshop participants mentioned that unless the head was supportive then initiatives would inevitably fail – citing the examples of PSHE and citizenship. Echoing the Jubilee Centre report *Character Education in UK Schools*, we recommend that character education be a specific responsibility of a senior member of staff who receives expert training and is responsible for monitoring progress and ensuring best practice across the school. Schools will be incentivised to do so by both the renewed focus of Ofsted on this area and the involvement of parents.

Secondary schools should adopt structured reflection periods and a tutor model of pastoral care, where a specific member of staff is responsible for the character development of particular students.

During the workshops it became clear that with a focus on academic attainment came a tendency to view pupils solely through the lens of their results, often only on a single subject basis, obscuring the view of the whole child. This was particularly the case in secondary schools, where the pressure on results and subject-specific teaching rendered it difficult for an individual professional to have a view on a child's overall development. Instead, there should be more emphasis on this aspect of character, by providing more time for reflection during the school day, and, ideally, making the pastoral care of particular students the responsibility of a dedicated professional. *The Good Teacher* emphasised the importance of having time for reflection and a positive, stable teacher-pupil relationship to character development.[92] One example from the independent sector of how this might work came up during our research – the tutor model of the Laurels School (case study 3).

Support and incentivise character education

Rather than dictating and forcing schools to focus on character development, the DfE should instead seek to provide a supporting and encouraging role to schools. For example, as we recommend above, the DfE should develop a national framework for character that outlines the range of values and skills across the four categories identified above. But rather than requiring schools to adopt all of the potential approaches in such a framework, schools should be free to decide the values that they want to sit at the heart of their school ethos.

In a similar vein, we recommend:

School performance tables should place more of a focus on good quality destination data, so that schools are judged on their real-world impact.

Destination data – introduced by the Coalition Government in 2013 – currently show the proportion of students in every state-funded school that progressed to further or higher education, or went into employment or training. While providing a broad picture, these data are not yet detailed enough to evaluate school quality. However, through the linking of government datasets – connecting the National Pupil Database to records of HM Revenue & Customs – these data could be enriched to include detailed career outcomes and other longitudinal measures to develop a more rounded picture of the outcomes of pupils. This should be done with a view to contextual factors, to ensure that those schools in areas with high unemployment are not unduly punished. If this is undertaken properly, this should reward character-building schools, which provide the strengths necessary for later life success – and thereby incentivise character education.

The DfE should provide support for schools that wish to develop character education programmes, and give guidance on how to provide evidence of outcomes, through making permanent the Character Education Unit.

Our research suggests that there is an appetite among school leaders to advance character education, and a desire to develop means through which to evaluate its impact internally. Having this guided from the centre is important to ensure that approaches are broadly consistent and that any learning is captured and disseminated across the school system. The Character Education Unit in the DfE should develop the capacity to support schools to provide character education, and guide them towards best practice.

This facilitating role will help raise the quantity and quality of character education schemes in schools without adopting a prescriptive approach.

The Character Awards should be continued and awarded every two years as a way of incentivising schools to develop character education programmes.

The Coalition Government's Character Awards programme has proved a popular and effective way of incentivising schools to develop character education programmes without the overt pressure of other policy levers, such as performance tables or new Ofsted inspection requirements. The Government should continue the Character Awards and similar positive incentive schemes in order to encourage schools to pursue character education and inform the sector about best practice.

The DfE should clearly lay out the respective responsibilities of regional schools commissioners and local authorities in supporting and monitoring schools in their area, and charge them with encouraging collaboration on character education.

The proliferation of academies has thrown up the question of the 'middle tier' – between central government and schools themselves – in the education system. This middle tier, previously comprising local authorities, has historically provided a monitoring function that is more regular and supportive than possible through the national inspectorate. The Government has sought to address this through the introduction of RSCs, however, their role is still evolving and their impact is unclear. This report echoes the recommendations of the Education Select Committee that the role of RSCs should be clarified, particularly in reference to local authorities, and that the Government should consider again the scale of the regions RSCs are to be responsible for.[93] It further recommends that the actors in this middle tier be given explicit responsibility for fostering

collaboration between schools on approaches to character education: sharing resources, giving evidence on what works, and providing opportunities for peer-led CPD.

Employers should provide match funding to government investment in certified non-formal education providers that want to form partnerships with schools for the delivery of character education.

Partnerships with third sector organisations that provide non-formal education – like the Scouts or the Cadets – can be an effective way of bringing expertise and new opportunities for learning outside the classroom. Many schools already have partnerships with youth sector organisations, including youth social action organisations like those in the Generation Change partnership and working with the Step Up To Serve #iwill campaign. However, funding can often be an obstacle to third sector organisations, particularly with schools budgets per pupil set to decline in real terms over this Parliament.[94]

One possible way of providing sustainable funding is to encourage a matched funding source of income, involving government and employers through their corporate social responsibility strategies. Employers and organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) have frequently mentioned the importance of character development in education. Many employers already support youth sector organisations, but more would be encouraged to do so if they knew that government would provide match funding. Employers could also look to match schools' Pupil Premium funding towards partnerships with organisations providing opportunities for character building outside the classroom.

A matched 'character' fund could follow on from the DfE and Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Character and Education programme and be used to encourage programmes that have evidence of impact. 'What works' centres like the EEF and the EIF provide toolkits of programmes that have evidence of having a positive impact on the character attributes. With their assistance, the DfE should establish

a list of non-formal education providers – similar to Education Scotland's guide to youth awards for schools, *Amazing Things* – with strong evidence, who would then be recommended for match funding. This would help government and employers ensure that their investment would have an impact on building the skills that employers and the CBI often highlight are lacking within the labour force. It could also encourage youth sector organisations to undertake evaluations of their work.

Encourage character role models

Character in education is not just about students developing and demonstrating good character. In a whole school environment where character is emphasised, the character of teachers and staff is also vital. Teachers must demonstrate moral virtues, like honesty, respect and gratitude, and be comfortable discussing moral issues. The training that teachers receive should include these subjects, as well pedagogies and approaches focused on developing the aspects of character like empathy and self-regulation. It is also extremely important that schools that intend to focus on character development ensure that they have the buy-in of teachers. This theme came out strongly in our workshops with teachers and head teachers. Many of those who worked in schools that adopted an explicit focus on character development spoke about consultation periods with teachers, ensuring that the ethos and language used to describe their approach to character-building was shaped by teachers' input.

To ensure that teachers are trained and supported to consider the development of character, we recommend:

Government should ensure that initial teacher training covers the delivery of character education and moral reflection.

The strength of an initiative often depends on its implementation, so development of student character should be regarded as a core skill for teachers. This point was made clear by the Jubilee Centre reports from earlier this year, the

Character and Resilience Manifesto and the Carter Review on Initial Teacher Training, which all recommend that ITT should include a renewed focus on child and adolescent development, including supporting well-being, emotional and social development and character education.[95]

An evidence-based approach to character education needs to form part of continuing professional development.

To ensure that character education is taking place throughout the education system, there should be a proliferation of high quality CPD courses dedicated to the discipline and based on the evidence. Teachers should also share best practice locally and nationally, through forums coordinated by local authorities, RSCs and the DfE's Character Education Unit. Centres of academic excellence such as the Jubilee Centre should continue to provide teacher training on these subjects, reflecting the needs of teachers.

When recruiting members of staff, schools should consider candidates on the basis of their compatibility with the school's ethos and values.

A whole school approach requires not just the leadership of a school to be in favour of an initiative but every teacher to embody the approach. Equally, the importance of role-modelling in character development means that having good character is as important for teachers as it is for students. In the workshops, we heard of schools recruiting teachers partially on the basis of their values and the extent to which those matched with those of the school. We suggest that schools should consider all prospective candidates against their school's values to ensure that tomorrow's teachers are good character role models.

Appendix 1
Case studies of schools

Case study 1: King's Leadership Academy – a whole school approach to character

King's Leadership Academy is an 11–18 free school in Cheshire, and was the winner of the 2015 National Character Awards as a result of its innovative whole school approach to character education.[96] King's Leadership Academy explains its character values through the acronym ASPIRE: aspiration and achievement, self-awareness, integrity, respect and endeavour. The Academy's approach to character education is truly holistic, influencing almost every significant school process.

The importance of parental buy-in at King's Leadership Academy is recognised. The Academy's character focus is explained extensively at open days, and once a pupil gains a place at an academy, all parents attend a personal interview where the school's character education approach is explained. They also attend the ASPIRE ceremony where their child is formally inducted into the Academy, to explicitly reinforce the importance of this character education aspect. Additionally, new students sign an ASPIRE contract, and each school year begins with a values reorientation and personal goal setting for all students.

King's Leadership Academy selects its staff through an interview process based heavily on the values of the school. In the summer, all staff visit the Brathay Trust outdoor activity centre in Ambleside to be inducted into or further explore the school's Character Education Programme. The school's values even inform the content of its CPD strategies.[97]

This character agenda is carried forward in almost every aspect of the school's offer and curriculum. For example, students set personal 'aspirational flight paths', maintain a 'character passport' and undertake weekly personal mentoring oriented towards their personal and academic progress,

and carry out annual leadership development through non-formal education at the Brathay Outdoor Pursuit Centre. An extensive programme of extracurricular activities, two of which students are expected to participate in annually, present further opportunities for non-formal learning and character development.

King's Leadership Academy's values and character education mission play a key role in almost every aspect of its operation, presenting numerous examples of how character development can be pursued in a truly holistic manner.

Case study 2: Park House School – defining a school's values approach

Park House School is an 11–18 academy in Berkshire that has been recognised by Ofsted for its 'values-centered ambition for students inspired by the head teacher and the governing body'.[98] Derek Peaple, the headteacher at Park House School, explained that the school's interest in character had developed organically:

As a sports college going back to 1998, we've often looked at how a sporting context will test and develop character skills, though we would have talked about them amorphously rather than distilling down what those particular values and traits might be.

This organic interest in character was further stimulated by the school's extensive participation in the British Olympic Association and British Paralympic Association's youth engagement programme, Get Set, which seeks to help young people develop friendship, excellence, respect, determination, courage and equality:[99]

What helped about London 2012 and the Get Set programme was that it made those character skills a little bit more specific. We then began to develop our cross-curricular offer and our praise and reward system, whereby students will identify others for acts of character, to be rewarded for them.

Currently, character development and the desire to foster good values sits at the heart of the school's offer and its curriculum. Building on the foundations of the Get Set programme, the school established – through an involving dialogue between students and staff – how best to develop these values by means of a character-based whole school approach:

We got staff and students to think around how we could further develop opportunities to build character around those values that have been identified. That also gave some structure to attitudes, because staff and students were thinking together about how these values could be developed.

Peaple argues that this innovative character-based approach was developed through a combination of external guidance and stimulation – the Get Set programme – and a school autonomy that allowed Park House to develop its own character offer:

I don't think prescription in terms of a top-down 'character curriculum' is the appropriate approach… but a stimulus material that can then lead to interpretation and internalisation within a school's context should be welcomed.

Case study 3: The Laurels School – tutor-led pastoral care and character education

The Laurels School is an 11–18 Catholic girls independent school in London, with a strong character focus built around four key virtues: justice, manifested in personal responsibility; good judgement; resilience; and self-control. A recent Ofsted report stated that the school's 'character development, which is planned thoughtfully as a strand running through all areas of the curriculum… successfully supports student's outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development'. The report further remarked that 'student's excellent character development is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and mature thinking'.[100]

A particularly valuable aspect of the Laurels' character development programme is the involvement of parents in the character development of their children. The school operates a tutorial system based on the core idea of parents, children and teachers in partnership, or PACT: parents are the first educators of their children. Each pupil's personal tutor is concerned with the character development of a pupil, from which in the school's consideration 'everything else, including academic results, flow'.[101] Tutors discuss academic performance, character development and SMSC development with their tutees, and help them set personal goals. This student-teacher tuition is complemented with parent-tutor meetings, where the tutors share their observations, guidance and advice with parents.[102] Through a PACT approach that explicitly centres on students' character, the Laurels School fully involves parents in the character development of their children.

Case study 4: School 21 – pupil's reflection on character development

School 21 is a free school for students aged 4–18 based in East London, with a strong focus on character development, and which at its first inspection was judged to be 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.[103] The personal development programme for students at School 21 is based on six main attributes – expertise, professionalism, eloquence, grit, spark and craftsmanship – and places significant responsibility in the hands of students for their character development.[104] For example, extensive project-based learning, a focus on student independent work and student's accountability for that work are all academic vehicles for students' personal development.

Student self-evaluation and reflection play a significant role in this process. Joe Pardoe, history teacher and head of project-based learning at School 21, described how there is

a whole reflection day, at the end of every project, where we talk one to one – or often more than one to one, with outside experts coming in to assess the students' work with teachers – about not only the academic aspects of the work, but how they resolved problems, and demonstrated certain characteristics.

Projects finish with whole school exhibitions, where School 21 invites 'local experts and the local community to come and see the work students have produced; the students are expected to stand by their work and talk about it'.

As well as this character-focused academic curriculum, School 21 dedicates time to coaching students, and students are expected to evaluate their progress across the six attributes through a personal portfolio. This personal evaluation culminates in a termly 'portfolio presentation evening':

Instead of a parents' evening, all students are expected to document their work according to the six attributes and present on it to their parents, as well as a school governor. They might be asked to demonstrate a time when they have demonstrated 'professionalism', for example, and they would have to talk about that.

The time and resources dedicated to student reflection and evaluation creates space in the timetable for the character development of students, and ensures that character education is pursued through a whole school approach. As Pardoe put it, 'It's not that we have a character curriculum; it's that our curriculum is designed to build character.'

Case study 5: Kings Langley – investing in character education for academic success

Kings Langley School is an 11–18 academy in Hertfordshire, and a Character Award-winning school. Kings Langley has a strong commitment to character education, and in the development of its character education approach, Kings Langley drew on Demos research, specifically the three character capabilities outlined in the 2009 report *Building Character*: application, self-regulation and empathy.[105] The prospectus explicitly states that the school considers 'the development of strong character traits such as "stickability", self-regulation and empathy as having equivalent worth to the achievement of academic success'.[106]

Kings Langley School's commitment to character is apparent across the school curriculum, from its focus on non-formal education opportunities to its strong commitment

to volunteering. Of particular interest is the teaching of resilience in PSHE, based on the methods of the Penn Resilience Programme, which all teachers learn to deliver through resilience training sessions. The Jubilee Centre's 2014 report 'Schools of character' highlights the fact that 'the amount of time given to the PSHE lessons has been recently doubled as a demonstration of the school's commitment to the subject', despite a general trend for PSHE to be 'squeezed out' by the prioritisation of more academic subjects.[107]

This commitment appears to have fed back into student grades. A recent Ofsted report remarked:

In 2014 the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A to C, including English and mathematics, was above the national average… This is largely because of the school's success in promoting excellent attitudes to learning. Work on the development of character means that students persevere. As a result, their achievement is good.*

Appendix 2 Methodology

As the foundation for the research laid out in this report, Demos conducted a detailed review of policy documents, think-tank reports and academic literature concerning character education and related subjects, such as non-formal education and citizenship. In order to draw from a wide range of perspectives and insights on character education in schools, Demos also ran a series of three workshops, each focusing on a different aspect of character education: the application of character education in the classroom, character education on a school-wide level, and character education within education policy. These workshops were attended by 63 key stakeholders, including teachers and school heads, policy-makers, academics and representatives of third sector organisations.

Organisations represented at the workshops were: ARK, Barnardo's, Cambridge Assessment, Chance UK, Character Scotland, Citizenship Foundation, Early Intervention Foundation, Envision, Future Foundations, Generation Change, IB Schools and Colleges Association, Impetus PEF, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Mentor UK, Mindfulness in Schools, Newham Council, Positive Action, PSHE Association, Pyramid Programme, ReachOut, School Home Support, SSAT (The Schools Network), Step up to Serve, Studio Schools Trust, Teach First, The Aldridge Foundation, The Diana Awards, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, the Education Endowment Foundation, The Girl's Network, Tougher Minds, University of Oxford, University of West London and Waltham Forest Council.

There were also representatives at the workshops from a range of schools and colleges committed to character education: All Saints Church of England, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Brighton Aldridge Community Academy,

Chislehurst (St Nicholas) Church of England Primary School, Chryston High School, Colfes School, Cornelius Vermuyden School, Gloucester House Day Unit, Guildford Grove Primary School, Isle of Sheppey Academy, Kings Langley School, New Vic, Oliver House Preparatory School, Rathfern Primary School, School 21, Surrey Square Primary School, The Laurels, Therfield School, West Drayton Primary School, Westminster Academy.

In a further effort to undertake a detailed examination of the key issues, themes, requirements and concerns brought up in the workshops, Demos conducted depth interviews with 11 key stakeholders in character education, including policy-makers, school leaders and academics. Specifically, Demos interviewed:

- Phil Denning, assistant director at Education Scotland
- Leon Feinstein, director of evidence at the Early Intervention Foundation
- Jean Gross, education expert and Early Intervention Foundation trustee
- Carl Hendrick, head of learning and research at Wellington College
- Tim Leunig, chief analyst and chief scientific adviser at the Department for Education
- Alan Lockey, senior adviser to Tristram Hunt MP, shadow secretary of state for education
- James O'Shaughnessy, managing director of Floreat Education
- Joe Pardoe, humanities and project based learning lead at School 21

- Derek Peaple, headteacher of Park House School in Newbury
- Andy Robinson, chief executive of the Institute for Outdoor Learning
- Honor Wilson-Fletcher, chief executive of the Aldridge Foundation

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This project was supported by

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The Conservative MP Rab Butler described the purpose of the 1944 Education Act as developing 'our most abiding assets and richest resources – the character and competence of a great people'. With the election of a new Conservative Government, and the reappointment of Nicky Morgan MP as Education Secretary, developing character will be a key priority in the Department for Education over the next parliament.

This report provides recommendations for policy-makers and educators to ensure that character development is embedded across the education system. It draws on recent research produced by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, as well as recent studies into 'social and emotional skills' and 'non-cognitive skills', plus an original review of best practice and workshops and interviews with education practitioners and experts in this field.

Character matters for education: it correlates with educational attainment, school attendance and positive attitudes towards school. Character also matters for various later life outcomes, including mental health and life satisfaction. The schools that do it best are those that adopt a whole-school approach, are supported by parents and give teachers space to deviate from the curriculum in pursuit of character development.

The report recommends a range of measures across the inspectorate, curriculum, qualifications and initial teacher training. But it also recognises the limits of a top-down approach within a school-led system, and includes a series of recommendations to school leaders and teachers themselves. Taken together, these proposals would mean an education system fit for the *Character Nation.*

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ISBN 978-1-909037-85-4 £10