Companies of Character Kitemark

Pilot Framework

Introduction

The *Companies of Character* Framework outlines a robust standard and criteria. It has been built around a 'whole-organisation' approach to character provision, in the same way as the Schools of Character kitemark.

To meet the Kitemark standard, organisations are required to provide 'adequate' evidence areas for all 4 sections. The assessment process recognises that each organisation is different and this will be reflected in the evidence base they provide. For this reason the examples of evidence in the framework are a guide, and are and not an absolute specification for what a *Companies of Character* needs to demonstrate.

The next steps to become a *Companies of Character* Pilot Partner are;

1. Email me tom.haigh@character-education.org.uk to register your interest.

2. Submit an application, using the correct template and this framework to guide your answers.

3. ACE will provide feedback on your application

4. Once social distancing measures permit, ACE will organise an assessment visit

5. ACE will send the Kitemark logo for use on websites and other marketing material, plaque and assessment evaluation.

6. The Company of Character takes part in a post assessment review which will take place remotely. This will help shape any final amendments to the framework and kitemark process before it is fully launched post-pilot.

Pilot Phase partners will receive over a 50% discount with the understanding that they will feed into the review process. The cost for pilot phase partners will be £400, which will be charged at the point when the assessment visit is organised, and social distancing restrictions permit.

"There are companies serving schools and colleges, who are driven by a social purpose to develop character in children so they can flourish in life. This Kitemark has been developed to recognise this contribution and establish a standard of provision for the delivery of character education by organisations in this sector. We would like to express our appreciation in advance to those taking part in the pilot, which will play a critical role in rolling out this Kitemark." **Tom Haigh, CEO, Association for Character Education.**

Companies of Character Framework

Section 1 Ethos, Culture and Vision		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
Organisational virtues and values	Does the organisation have a set of values/virtues that align to its mission and inform the character provision that it delivers? Why were your values/virtues chosen? Who was involved in the process? What do you have in place to ensure that these values are constantly re-visited so they become lived within the organisation? Does your organisation have a clearly defined mission statement and how do its chosen values support it? Do you have time marked out on a regular basis where values/virtues can be explored by staff in relation to the work you do? Is character and values explored in training days, away days, team meetings?	Organisational values on the website Does the website link its provision clearly to character? Is character explicitly referenced in strategies and organisational plans? Internal training sessions which feature character Session plans from away days Minutes from meetings
Embedded virtues and values	Is the organisation's narrative around it's organisational values and character provision well defined? Are all staff aware of the organisation's values?	Organisational presentations which clearly articulate its values for new starters or stakeholders?

Section 1 Ethos, Culture and Vision		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
	Do staff feel comfortable articulating them to others?	Staff feedback survey results which temperature check their views on how well the organisation is living its values?
Decision making	Are decisions made within the organisation directly informed by its values? Is character provision explicitly referred to in the organisation's future growth plans/strategies? When the organisation takes on a new contract or piece of work how are its values used as part of the decision-making process? When planning or developing a character education-based programme or activity, how do the organisation's values inform the design process?	Minutes from meetings which show how the values of the organisation have informed decisions Bid applications for funds secured to deliver the provision that develops character Strategy documents Organisational Plans 'Signing off processes' for projects or programmes that require alignment to the organisation's values
Language	Do you hear staff using values/character-based language in their interactions? Do your chosen virtues and values inform policies relating to staff code of conduct? Does the language of your organisation's values feature in HR documents such as PDR templates, performance management processes, training documents?	Staff code of code of conduct HR documents; PDR templates, , performance management processes, training documents
Environment	Are the organisation's values visible around the office(s) and spaces where its CE is delivered? Does it feel inviting and welcoming for the range of young people you aim to attract? Are your values obvious to visitors to your office? Do the office communal spaces reflect the values that the organisation promotes?	Displays, posters, case studies, awards relating to the development of character in children and young people, pictures/artwork that relates to values and character

Section 2 Curriculum		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
Delivery	Character education runs throughout at least one programme/strand of provision delivered by the organisation and accounts for a minimum of 30% of all its provision (in terms of numbers of participants). Is character education integrated throughout your provision or delivered separately? For the young people/children that your provision has been delivered to has their confidence and responses - demonstrated knowledge and competence when both demonstrating and discussing character? For the young people/children that your provision has been delivered to, in terms of their language- are they using the character terms as a matter of course? Does the organisation have resources which it used in its delivery of its programmes that refer directly to character education, specific curriculum, worksheets, presentations? Does the organisation deliver workshops, lessons, events, residentials, courses?	Bid applications that reference character development an objective of the provision that is to be funded Resources, curriculum plans or activity sheets which outline how the activities are linked to character development Research that the organisation has drawn on, to inform the character provision that you deliver Children/young people surveys that show how their experiences have helped develop their character Teacher or parent survey results Photographs of activities the children/young people are doing which develop character
Attendance	Is attendance monitored and reflected on to ensure a range of pupils are accessing the provision? Are strategies in place to ensure a broad demographic of children/young people can access the opportunity (any age or gender restrictions aside)?	Demographic data Marketing plans Engagement plans

Section 2 Curriculum		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
		Referral processes
Volunteering	How are students encouraged to volunteer or give service? How are they made aware of the different possibilities? Do the children/young people get the opportunity to reflect on the moral and civic virtues that flow from the experience of volunteering/acts of service?	Feedback from institutions where service or volunteering has taken place, flyers/ photos of noticeboard where children/young people are given possible information, tracking information. Resources used to aid reflection
Leadership	What are the opportunities available for the children and young people you work with to develop or demonstrate leadership? Do all the children/young people have access to these? How is the take up of these leadership opportunities recorded and tracked? How does the organisation encourage all children/young people to get involved to get involved?	Can older children coach or lead younger children in any activities? Do your activities allow for some children/young people to take a lead in any of the facilitation? Do you award specific roles such as 'Project Manager,' or 'Group Leader,' with a clear brief and instruction to the young people?
Behaviour and attitudes	What are your rewards and sanctions routines and policies - do they link to character and values? Does the organisation encourage children/young people to reflect on possible options and make the right choices? Are staff using the right language and giving students choices, where appropriate, when faced with inappropriate behaviour?	Reward and sanction policies, young people and staff feedback.
Supporting Transition	Does the organisation reflect on the transition(s) that its young people are experiencing in relation to their age and background? This could be in relation to transitions into; • work and employment • new schools/further education/University	Funding bids/website/programme plans which outline that the aims of and objectives of the provision delivered supports children and young people through times of transition

Section 2 Curriculum		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
	- apprenticeships - adulthood/independent living - developing new networks of friends and contacts - new ways of living (such as away from gang activity or anti-social behaviour) - becoming active and participating citizens in their local community and wider society - working through mental health challenges - challenges that they have faced due to the Coronavirus pandemic Does the organisation shape its character provision to meet the needs relating to these transitions? If so how? How effective is the organisation's character provision in supporting young people in their transition?	Surveys or case studies which demonstrate that the character provision delivered has supported the children/young people through a time of change or transition Curriculum/session plans that link character and times of change/transition in young person's life

Section 3 Leaders and Staff		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
Leaders	Is the CEO a strong advocate of character education and champions the development of character in the children/young people that the organisation is responsible for? If so how do they do this? Do leaders talk about the development of character being a significant objective of the provision you deliver?	Annual Impact reports Templates used for professional development that reference character and values Professional development training that increases levels of understanding and awareness around character development

Section 3 Leaders and Staff		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
	How does the character provision link to the development of leadership within the organisation? Is it part of meetings, middle or senior leadership training, continuous professional development programmes?	Staff feedback
New Staff	Do the organisation's values feature in staff induction programmes? Is the development of character in the young people the organisation works with explicitly covered in staff induction programmes? Does the process for personal development reviews allow the capturing of employee's performance against the organisation's values? Does character and values feature strongly in recruitment processes of new staff?	Questions from interviews Staff Induction programme and associated resources? (presentations, organisation handbooks etc) PDR templates Role profiles and job adverts
Existing Staff	Do staff use the language of character development to encourage positive behaviour in the children/young people the organisation works with? Do staff embrace character education when delivering it to the young people they work with? Do staff take on extra responsibilities and development in terms of character education? How does character feature in the continuous professional development programme? How are staff encouraged to read/research more about character? What training is in place to support staff with the development of their own behaviours linked to character and values and how effective is it?	Staff feedback, personal development reviews, continuous professional development programmes training provision examples of how feedback is given which includes character as well as technical competences

Section 3 Leaders and Staff		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
	Are staff encouraged to be self-reflective and consider how to adapt their own practice to develop their own character through feedback from line managers and colleagues? What training provision does the organisation have that develops employees' ability to understand and deliver character education?	

Section 4 Stakeholders		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
Trustee Board Members	Do board members support the organisation's provision of character education and hold it accountable on its delivery?	Meeting minutes, Board members feedback,
Parents	Are parents kept informed about how the organisation develops their children's character? Are parents aware of the importance of character? Do you inform parents if their child wins an award based on them displaying virtuous behaviour?	Letters and information provided to parents What are your messages to parents on your website?
Community links	Does the organisation have links with local individuals and charities that benefit the community? Does the organisation undertake activities with its children/young people that benefit the local community or wider society (volunteering, social action, campaigning)?	Feedback from community partner young person feedback tracking

Section 4 Stakeholders		
Section	**Evaluation Questions**	**Possible Evidence**
	Does the organisation reflect with the children/young people on how these activities develop character and citizenship?	programme or project information calendar of events news articles
Business links	Does the organisation have links with business/business leaders to support the children with understanding the link between virtues and employability? How do these feed into the provision you provide? How is it linked to the development of character?	Emails arranging visits from employers Young person feedback Programmes and calendar of events