

ACE WEEKLY Newsletter



Dear Ace Member,

“I draw the line at devoting valuable curriculum time (to teaching character). Why? Because character traits are inherited, not taught.”

This is a quote taken from an article written by Toby Young for the Spectator.

So, can character be developed by solely teaching it? The answer is no.

If you teach a child what integrity means it does not necessarily mean they will become a person of integrity. The student will simply understand that integrity means to be trustworthy and honest with strong moral principles.

But, the experience of [ACE](#) and the research from the [Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues](#) has demonstrated that teaching character is an essential part of any school's character programme.

When character is taught well, students develop a strong theoretical understanding of what it means to have good character and why it is important for human flourishing. They understand the 'Why' and 'How.'

So, character does need to be taught, but as long as it is 'caught' and 'sought' as well.

The teaching of character needs to match the emotional and intellectual maturity of the student.

But the big question is, what does a character curriculum actually look like in practice?

How do you have a lesson focused on a single virtue?

What does a spiralled and sequenced character curriculum actually look like?

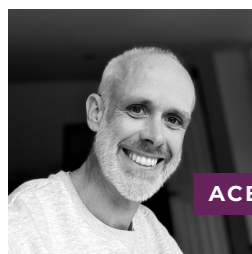
To help answer these questions please find examples of a sequenced character curriculum from both a primary and secondary school. They are taken from Morpeth First School (Quality Mark Plus) and the King John School (Quality Mark).

We have also included a character lesson from Quality Mark School; Ark St Albans.

You can also access character lessons from the [Jubilee Centre](#)

Best Wishes,

Tom



ACE CEO - TOM HAIGH

Best Practice Resource



**NADINE FIELDING, HEAD TEACHER
AND SADIE RODWAY, CHARACTER CHAMPION,
MORPETH FIRST SCHOOL**

"At Morpeth First School, Character Education is the golden thread that runs through the fabric of everything that we do. The resource we are sharing is an example of what the taught element of our character curriculum looks like, with a particular focus on how it sits alongside our PSHE units, and an insight into the progression within each of our character values from Nursery up to Year 4. Each value is taught, and then modelled, shared and celebrated every day across our school community."

RESOURCE FROM MORPETH FIRST



**DANIEL GALLANDERS,
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL,
ARK ST ALBANS ACADEMY**

"By examining different virtues in discrete lessons, we have been able to provide opportunities for pupils to unpack the golden mean in a range of age-appropriate contexts. This, alongside exposure to a range of scaffolded dilemmas, has meant that pupils are increasingly better equipped to make wise decisions both inside and outside of the classroom."

RESOURCE FROM ARK ST ALBANS

Best Practice Resource



**TOBY GRIMMET,
CHARACTER EDUCATION LEAD,
THE KING JOHN SCHOOL**

"If you are at the start of your character journey, I would strongly recommend thinking about how you will sequence learning. I don't believe there is one right answer, but there is likely a specific solution for your particular students, school and context. Given that we had 5 core values (PRIDE) and 5 sub skills for each one, we trialled having tutor sessions once a week that went through a value each half term, e.g. Positivity in Autumn Term, Resilience in Autumn Term 2 etc. – we later decided that we would break the values up and have sub skills visited at appropriate times in the year, e.g. "Dignity and Respecting Others" near Remembrance Day. This interleaving helped promote recall and make learning applicable and relevant for students.

Another effective strategy was to think about how each year group would engage with character education in a different way and we decided that having year 7s explore the values within the class room, year 8s in the wider school such as corridors and the playground, year 9s learning about phronesis to grapple with more morally ambiguous situations in the wider community, year 10 exploring them in the workplace to coincide with work experience and year 11 in later life and around the world, felt like a justifiable and logical approach; essentially the area in which they are exploring character gets wider every year.

Best Practice Resource



Although this is a sound strategy, it might not be for you. However, from experience we have learnt that the way you decide to structure and sequence the character education of your students will be the base on which all future resources will be built, so it should be robust and stand up to scrutiny. By getting as much feedback and input as possible from your school community and the character support network, your chances of building a strong and reliable foundation become greater. Get that right, and the route to character development and flourishing should become clearer for everyone."

RESOURCE FROM THE KING JOHN SCHOOL