



17/07/2022

Dear Mr Custance

Following an evaluative assessment of your school's character education provision on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the Association for Character Education can confirm that your school has met the exacting standards required to be awarded the ***"School of Character Kitemark Award"***. Please pass on our congratulations to colleagues in your school who have all contributed enormously to this outstanding achievement. Similarly, our sincere congratulations are extended to you, your students and governors, as this award clearly recognises the high quality of learning, mutually respectful relationships and values-driven personal development programme which are prevalent in your school's provision. Please find feedback from the assessment below, which we hope recognises and celebrates your excellent character-based provision whilst also supporting your next steps.

Floreat Wandsworth Primary School has been built around character since the school's inception with Aristotelian theories of flourishing and virtue ethics being its underpinning philosophy. Having character as one of its 3 faculties ensures that it is a central component in the school's ethos and isn't a bolted on extra. The character education at the school benefits from a clear structure comprised of the 3 zones of Culture & Training, Virtue Literacy and Service Learning. These three zones mirror character taught, caught and sought, ensuring the school not only teaches character and virtue but also provides those vital experiences for pupils to develop it as well. This framework is reflected in the structure of the school's website and sub site *Floreatprogramme.org.uk*, both of which are exceptional in terms of communicating the embedded whole-school approach to character education.

Focusing the lower school on developing virtue knowledge whilst enabling older pupils to reflect on their own character and how it is applied to everyday life in order to flourish, provides further structure to the school's character programme. Assessors were also impressed by the measures put in place by the Character Faculty to ensure high standards and consistency in the implementation of the school's character provision. The use of large Floor Books to facilitate collaborative learning through the school's character taught programme was a good example of how best practice is facilitated across classes.

The culture at Floreat Wandsworth is purposefully cultivated to ensure character is 'caught,' as well as 'taught.' A well embedded rewards system that directly links character and behaviour celebrates virtuous behaviour. The House token system contributes well to children working together for the good of all – choosing success for all over a personal reward. During the assessment children regularly discussed the House point system and reported positively about how it motivated them. Assessors were also highly impressed by how pupils are supported when there are transgressions in their behaviour. Pupils were able to articulately explain how the Regulation Zones worked and the rationale behind them. Their descriptions of the various coloured zones and their related emotions was impressive and had provided them with an understanding that aids their ability to self-regulate. Pupils are also provided with a strong extra-curricular offer with students being able to effectively articulate the link between these activities and the development of their character. Such activities, with explicit links to character, fosters positive habits that drive pupils to seek out opportunities that continue to develop them as virtuous people. Though, it was felt there is the opportunity to continue to expand the number of pupil leadership responsibilities.

Good character is developed through emotional contagion and so role modelling is an essential component of any school's approach to character. An exceptionally positive and engaged staff team demonstrated a full commitment to the school's character-based ethos, including the importance of role modelling and habituating good character traits themselves. Staff reported how this had been a part of the CPD that they had received. Strong leadership also extends to the Governing team who are committed to deepening their own understanding of character as well as providing the strategic guidance required to push the school's character provision forward. Their commitment to further developing the faculties, ensuring consistency and sustaining a culture based on leading by example was apparent. Stakeholder engagement with parents is also a strong feature of Floreat Wandsworth's character provision. Termly Family learning sessions, launching the regulation programme with parents, reporting on character strengths through parents' evenings & pupil reports and embedding virtues within newsletters is all evidence of an effective parent engagement strategy. The impact of this was clear when speaking with pupils who shared how their parents knew about the virtues and discussed them with their children. Now Covid restrictions have been lifted the school is focused on re-establishing parent interactions within the school building, such as during award-based assemblies. These activities connect parents with character and virtue helping to extend the school's approach to moral development within the home.

As the school continues to grow and evolve its character programme ACE would make the following recommendations;

- There are opportunities for the 3 faculties to work more closely to support the embedding of character into subject areas more consistently.
- There was a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the staff we met, there is now the chance to better harness some of their ideas and expertise to help mould and shape the school's character provision. Increasing levels of autonomy and ownership can only continue to boost the quality and innovation of the character education at Floreat Wandsworth.
- Character and virtue-based signage and displays around the school was good, but there is the opportunity to further develop this.
- The school's approach to character is grounded in Aristotelian philosophy, it would be beneficial to connect staff with this to a greater extent so as to support their understanding of the 'Why' character is important as well as the 'How.' It would be especially useful to use this to distil a consistent understanding of the purpose of good character in terms of the development of phronesis; doing the right thing, at the right time and for the right reason. Some staff reported having accessed training resources from the Jubilee Centre in order to deepen their understanding which is to be applauded. There is an opportunity to now make this more consistent.
- The school has taken a bold approach to the virtues it has selected and the number it has chosen to focus on. This has the benefit of providing pupils with the chance to develop a rich and broad vocabulary of character. Pupils did understand why the school was teaching character and the older children did talk about service to others and how it helped to make them better people. Though, many of the pupils spoken to did struggle to articulate the meaning of virtues such as awe, humility and prudence. This may be reflective in staff's own level of confidence in the reinforcing some of the 'less common' virtues.
- Positive role modelling of the virtues was evident and good recruitment practices are in place to ensure hired staff will 'live' the school's values as well as teach them. There is now the opportunity to put more in place to support staff with reflecting on their own character & virtue on a regular basis. Incorporating character into appraisal processes, having 360-degree feedback and staff character-based awards are all potential practices which could support this objective.

Congratulations once again on being awarded the School of Character Kitemark. Wishing you all the best as you move forward into the new academic year.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'T Haigh', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Tom Haigh, ACE CEO & Carole Jones, Kitemark Assessor.