

Building Character and Resilience



Approved by: Governing Body

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Our philosophy

Developing young minds and enabling pupils to become respected and respectful individual citizens is a key focus of the school's philosophy regarding character education. We hold the view that character education is the wider personal development of any pupil beyond the academic education they receive through schooling. For our vulnerable young people this development of character and the building of traits of courtesy, honesty, respect, dedication, resilience and compassion do not occur by osmosis, but through explicit teaching and experiential learning, through life chances that we offer as part of PSHE and extra curriculum activities.

By developing pupils' self-belief and values we are able to evidence that we improve all round emotional wellbeing and a feature of this is seen through the improved educational attainment, engagement with school and all that is on offer which is often previously missing and positively through increased school attendance. When you feel recognised, valued, included and your individuality is celebrated through every achievement, no matter how big or small, then your resilience and commitment develop. This can influence how a pupil's future is perceived and more positive pathways and achievable outcomes set, thus by character forming you increase and target life opportunities.

We recognise that this development in a pupil's character is not achieved solely by the school and widening their educational opportunities. Integral to this development is forging a strong home/ school partnership; and where applicable wider multi agency support. and at Cornfields we see ourselves as educators as a part of this linked chain. To develop a young mind the key adult at home must be intrinsically linked within this process, so that success and character education is replicated and reinforced by the care giver at home too. Regular dialogue and shared information is essential to this process and all adults regularly speak together.

A person's Character is defined by many features including:

- Caring about other people, being courteous
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Being good citizens
- Compassion
- Being true to ourselves
- Saying no to bullies
- Resilience

Developing character is integral to everything we do at Cornfields. Photographs around our school regularly show us engaging in many activities which demonstrate our approach in building character and self-worth.

How do we do this?

Our character-building activities build both positive values and self-esteem. We model our values and work on them throughout the school day. However, our pupils also need explicit teaching, so we do this through many different activities.

Some of the activities include;

- Showing acts of kindness to others
 - Recognising strengths and positive attributes, we show others acts of kindness. We learn to compliment others and to be kind when constructive criticism is given.
- Being a good friend
 - Being taught social skills and friendship skills. We teach getting on with each other and tolerance, accepting and celebrating differences as a potential strength. Adults model this through all of their relationships in school.
- Charity events and helping others
 - We have engaged in fundraising for the cat sanctuary, the British Legion and Children in Need.
 - Fostering volunteering and Community experiences- working in a community cafe
- Show and Tell - peer and group conversations
 - Pupils share items conveying their culture, individuality, and unique interests and experience. Pupils learn both diversity and empathy as well as what is truly important to them and to their classmates.
- This Is Me
 - Pupils demonstrate their individual strengths in a positive manner. They learn about themselves and others.
 - They are recognised and celebrate achievement in academic, personal, social and emotional development.
- We take pupils out into the real world, exposing them in controlled risk taking scenarios to enable
 - Pupils learn to interact with the world around them, how to conduct themselves and how to enjoy their surroundings.
 - How to assess situations and make informed choices to keep themselves and others safe.

We tackle bullying

We recognise that despite best efforts sometimes acts of unkindness, bullying can happen. Any incidence of bullying is therefore dealt with as soon as it is identified and we routinely engage in appropriate discussions on the topic in school. As a school we also actively

engage in the anti-bullying week which reinforces our zero tolerance to bullying. Pupils know who to speak to if they feel they are being bullied and our Head boy and Head girl take a proactive peer to peer approach in identifying and reporting any issues.

We teach our pupils to make a difference

We take pride in our environment and pupils take responsibility for keeping the garden and play spaces tidy. We expect pupils to be respectful of their own property, that of others and the School's. Pupils openly speak about this being 'their school'. They recognise that even a small act of kindness, an unexpected gesture is part of that making a difference for someone else. We expect that help given will be reciprocated at some point as part of being mutually considerate to each other.

To do the right thing

We teach pupils how to keep safe and help pupils learn to navigate situations using role playing in various scenarios. We also help them identify wrongs, know when to report matters and who to report to.

Character building games

We play games with the pupils where they learn to take turns and to share. Importantly, they learn to both win and lose, to understand that not winning is both character building and can make you choose differently and strive more on future occasions.

To learn about resilience and becoming resilient

We teach skills of resilience so pupils can bounce back and learn from their experiences - to know that they can turn things around.

Through jointly offering experiential learning opportunities and explicit activities at Cornfields we are able to contribute effectively to shaping the character and developing therefore a healthy young mind, which is so important as they transition into adulthood as respectful citizens.