



# Handy guide to Character Education...

SERVICE  
COURAGE  
INTEGRITY  
CREATIVITY  
PERSISTENCE  
TEAMWORK & EMPATHY

## WHAT IS CHARACTER EDUCATION?

WHAT IT IS...	WHAT IT IS NOT...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All educational activities that help young people to develop a moral compass</li><li>• The culture and ethos of a school or classroom</li><li>• Ethical and 'right' action, common morality</li><li>• Something that happens in our classrooms whether we acknowledge it or not</li><li>• The Gosforth Academy Charter; 6 core virtues</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Moral indoctrination</li><li>▪ Promotion of moral ideas of a particular belief system</li><li>▪ Based on the values of an individual or small group</li><li>▪ Mindless conditioning</li><li>▪ Exclusively religious</li><li>▪ Individualistic or conservative</li></ul>

At Gosforth Academy we strive to cultivate good character. Character is about helping young people to become thinking and caring people who can flourish throughout their lives. A concerted effort to help the members of our school community live by the values outlined in our character virtues will not only strengthen the Gosforth Community, by placing a focus on how we treat others, but will also contribute to the overall success of the students.

Students at Gosforth Academy are encouraged to consider who they are and how they treat each other; this supports high expectations of behavior and high standards of achievement, both academically and personally.

## THE GOSFORTH VIRTUES

Character at Gosforth Academy includes all explicit and implicit educational activities that help students to develop positive moral attributes, sometimes known as 'virtues'. As staff and students we endeavour for our work to be characterised by the following:

SERVICE  
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CREATIVITY  
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***What is service?*** Helping others. Being civic minded by giving up your time to help others in need. Volunteering, both during lessons and outside of them too. Acting with kindness and compassion. Contributing to the school community and to wider society.

***What is courage?*** Being brave and strong, and not fearing failure. Understanding that making mistakes are an important part of the learning process. As we rise to challenges and push ourselves out of our comfort zones; we learn to overcome our fears, develop growth mind-sets and become resilient

***What is integrity?*** Being strong enough to do what you think is right, even when it is difficult. Living with moral authenticity. Pursuing justice and fairness. Making amends and being accountable for your actions. Staying true to yourself.

***What is creativity?*** Thinking about a situation, task or idea in a new and innovative way. Producing wonderful work which you are proud of. Exploring different ways of thinking to solve problems, and not being afraid to do so.

***What is persistence?*** Continuing in spite of setbacks, in order to achieve our longer term goals. Demonstrating humility, resilience and a keenness to learn from our mistakes. Demonstrating an outstanding commitment to self-improvement.

***What is teamwork & empathy?*** Appreciating others. Listening to others' ideas and working together to produce the best outcomes. Cooperating consistently well with others, at times taking on a leadership role and treating others with respect and fairness. Standing in somebody else's shoes and seeing the world from different points of view.

## CHARACTER STAMPS

The way that you talk with students, praise and give feedback can all have an impact on how students understand and get to know the Gosforth traits. There are times when the use of the traits can be recognised by awarding **character stamps** using your usual PRAISE code stamp. The effect of which will not only open up a positive dialogue between yourself and students, but also inform selection for character recognition awards in end of year assemblies.

The following table gives several examples of how as staff you can reward stamps, by recognising behaviour so that the Gosforth Character virtues are highlighted.

VIRTUE	EXAMPLES
<b>Service</b>	<i>Frequently helps other students in lessons to develop, consistently makes lessons lively and industrious, is proactive in offering to help you as a teacher, has assisted with options evenings or extra-curricular, has volunteered in some way, assisted with organisation in lessons or outside of lessons.</i>
<b>Courage</b>	<i>Works well with others, produces excellent group work/works exceptionally well in a group, demonstrates effective leadership qualities, understands others, listens carefully to the ideas of others and take on board their feedback, is a friendly positive presence in lessons.</i>
<b>Integrity</b>	<i>Always honest and on task, works extremely well independently, doesn't take shortcuts, puts in high effort levels. Is proactive in catching up with missed work, shows excellent self-control and discipline. Shows fairness and respect for others, doesn't 'cheat' is highly trustworthy and reliable.</i>
<b>Creativity</b>	<i>Produces outstanding work, frequently explores different ways of thinking to solve problems, and does not give up easily. Think about ideas, tasks and situations in in new, innovative and original ways.</i>
<b>Persistence</b>	<i>Keeps going in spite of set-backs, responds exceptionally well to marking and feedback/completes excellent purple pen corrections, is determined in spite of setbacks/low tests scores, frequently demonstrates resilience, shows commitment to extra-curricular responsibilities/self-improvement.</i>
<b>Teamwork &amp; Empathy</b>	<i>Works well with others, produces excellent group work/works exceptionally well in a group, demonstrates effective leadership qualities, understands others, listens carefully to the ideas of others and take on board their feedback, is a friendly positive presence in lessons.</i>

The core feature of this model is to embed the character traits within the PRAISE code, and within curriculums. Becoming familiar and comfortable with using the vocabulary of the character virtues is an important part of modelling, teaching

and embedding Gosforth Character through awarding character stamps. Our interactions in and out of the classroom should be based on these virtues. There are many others that we can talk to students about, of course. But the six Gosforth Character traits are the ones that we have chosen to focus on as a community.

## HOW TO PROMOTE THE CHARACTER TRAITS

1. Use the vocabulary of character
2. Give character stamps
3. Select a Gosforth virtue when nominating students for PRAISE postcards
4. Reference the Gosforth Virtues in report writing
5. Consider the way you give praise
6. Model the traits
7. Make use of 'teachable moments'

## GOSFORTH CHARACTER EDUCATION - AN OVERVIEW

See below for a brief overview of all explicit educational activities that allow students to develop their character at Gosforth Academy.

WHOLE SCHOOL			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Character stamps in the school planner</li><li>• Character postcard nominations</li><li>• The Thursday Thought</li><li>• Instagram @gosforthcharactereducation</li><li>• Volunteering opportunities i.e. West End Food Bank Christmas appeal</li><li>• Character weeks at the end of each half term</li></ul>			
YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11	SIXTH FORM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Booklet in PRAISE lessons to learn the virtues of the Gosforth Charter</li> <li>• Character assemblies</li> <li>• Character Day in March</li> <li>• Peer mentoring with Year 13</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Booklet in PRAISE – scenarios students are likely to face</li> <li>• Deliver Year 9 assemblies introducing the virtues</li> <li>• Character Day in March</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flying start</li> <li>• Assembly programme</li> <li>• 6th form peer mentoring</li> <li>• Final countdown booklet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Enrichment</li> <li>• Awards</li> <li>• Student Union</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Assembly programme</li> </ul>
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