Eastbrook Primary Curriculum

Intent: Character Education

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At Eastbrook Primary we are deeply committed to providing a high-quality character education curriculum to all our pupils. We align our principles with those of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues taking an Aristotelian approach.

Key Principles for Character Education

The key principles for character education at Eastbrook are:

o *Good education is good character education*
  Character education is part of what our staff do naturally throughout their working practices.

o *Character is largely caught through role-modelling and emotional contagion*
  Our culture and ethos are therefore central to achieving this.

o *A positive school culture facilitates the acquisition of good character*
  Our culture matches our ethos as our vision is lived and upheld by all. Without this, our pupils would never be able to truly flourish.

o *Character should also be taught*
  By making character education explicit, pupils are provided with the rationale, language, and tools to develop their character.

o *Character education should be developed in partnership with parents and the wider school community*
  Character education shouldn't happen in isolation. Pupils need to be given varied experiences and the opportunity to put in to practice what they've learned within different contexts.

The Building Blocks of Character

The ways individuals respond to challenges they face in everyday life varies and the virtues are those character traits that enable people to respond appropriately to a range of situations. These character traits enable people to live, cooperate and learn with others in a way that is peaceful, neighbourly, and morally justifiable.

Character education teaches the acquisition and strengthening of virtues: those traits that sustain a well-rounded life and a thriving society. Human flourishing requires the acquisition and development of intellectual, moral and civic virtues, as well as performance virtues. No definitive list of virtues can be given, as the virtues will be relative to individual disposition,

developmental stage and social circumstance. Although virtues can be divided up in to different categories, collectively they form a coherent, mutually supportive whole in a well-rounded life. Character education is all about their integration, guided by the overarching intellectual virtue of practical wisdom, or 'good sense', also known as phronesis.
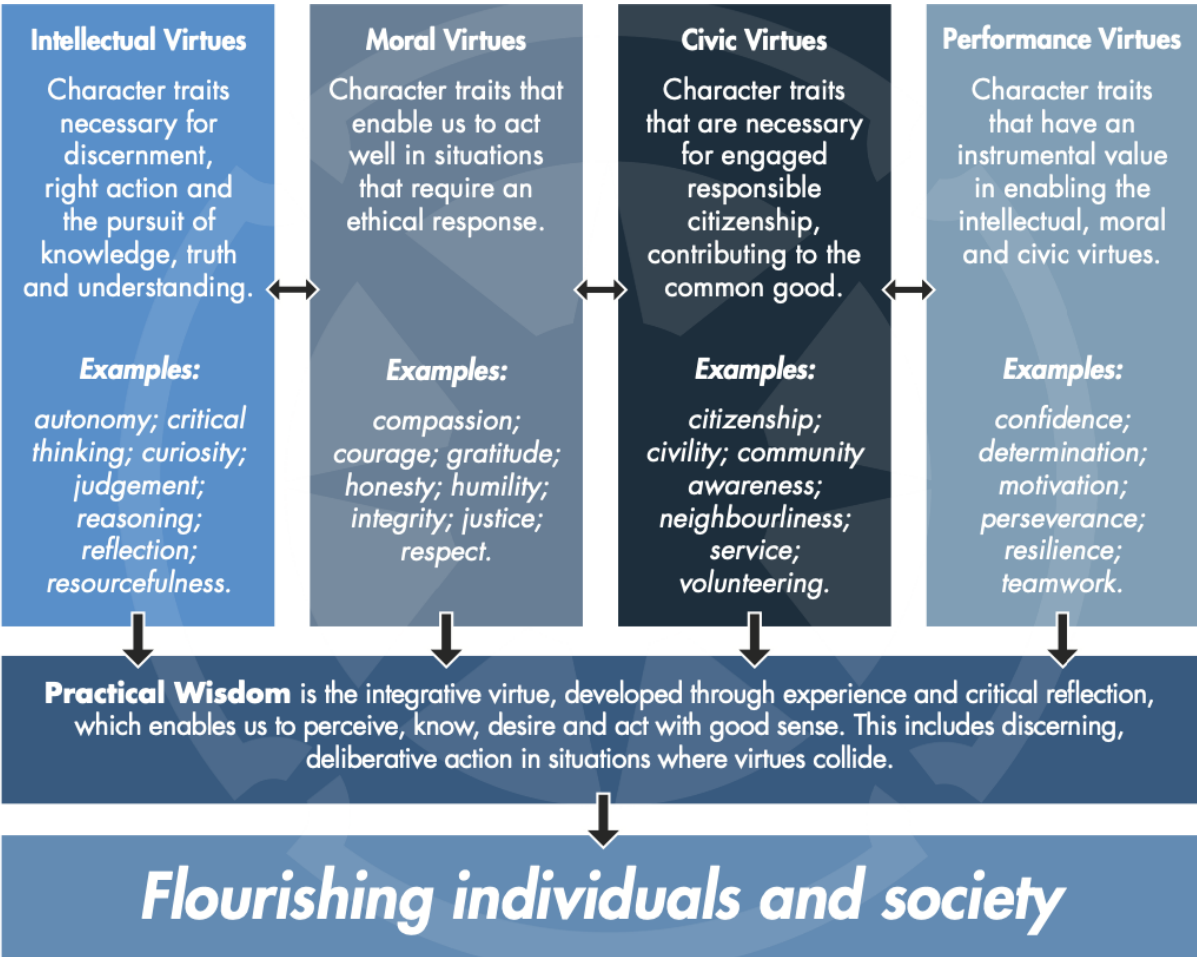
This is shown in the table on Page Two.

Intellectual Virtues

All developing humans will need to possess a host of intellectual virtues, such as curiosity and critical thinking, which guide their quest for knowledge and information.

Moral Virtues

Moral virtues hold a specific role within character, whereby they have a bearing on other types of virtues, ensuring they serve morally respectable ends.

Intellectual Virtues	Moral Virtues	Civic Virtues	Performance Virtues
Character traits necessary for discernment, right action and the pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding.	Character traits that enable us to act well in situations that require an ethical response.	Character traits that are necessary for engaged responsible citizenship, contributing to the common good.	Character traits that have an instrumental value in enabling the intellectual, moral and civic virtues.
Examples: autonomy; critical thinking; curiosity; judgement; reasoning; reflection; resourcefulness.	**Examples:** compassion; courage; gratitude; honesty; humility; integrity; justice; respect.	**Examples:** citizenship; civility; community awareness; neighbourliness; service; volunteering.	**Examples:** confidence; determination; motivation; perseverance; resilience; teamwork.

Practical Wisdom is the integrative virtue, developed through experience and critical reflection, which enables us to perceive, know, desire and act with good sense. This includes discerning, deliberative action in situations where virtues collide.

Flourishing individuals and society

Civic Virtues

At Eastbrook, we promote specific civic virtues, such as civility, service, citizenship and volunteering which help pupils understand their ties to society and their responsibility within it.

Performance Virtues

All people need personal traits that enable them to manage their lives effectively. These traits are sometimes called performance virtues to distinguish them from specifically moral ones. Our character education curriculum includes the cultivation of performance virtues and we explain that these virtues derive their ultimate value from serving morally acceptable ends, in particular from being enablers of the intellectual, moral and civic virtues i.e. performance virtues are only 'good' if employed in a way that is morally 'right'.

Phronesis is an intellectual virtue that can also be called practical wisdom, or 'good sense'. It is often explained to pupils as doing the 'right' thing for the 'right' reasons in the 'right' amount at the 'right' time. Aristotle refers to phronesis as enabling us to find the 'golden mean' between excess and deficiency of the virtues. It requires careful deliberation and judgement. The ability to learn from experience and to make mistakes is at the centre of phronesis.

The Components of Virtue

Each virtue does not constitute a single discrete trait that one either has or has not. Rather, each virtue comprises various components that may not all develop in tandem. Rarely will these components align in harmony in a person. However, the more they have been cultivated successfully, the more likely it is a pupil will master the virtue. Therefore, as a school we do not expect to see progress in all components of virtue at any given time.

- **Virtue Perception –** Noticing situations involving or standing in need of the virtues.
- **Virtue knowledge & Understanding –** Understanding the meaning of the virtue term and why the virtue is important, individually and as part of a well-rounded flourishing life and being able to apply it to one's own and others' lives.
- **Virtue Emotion –** Feeling the right virtue-relevant emotion in the right situation in the right way.
- **Virtue Identity –** Understanding oneself as strongly committed to the virtues.
- **Virtue Motivation –** Having a strong desire to act on the virtues.
- **Virtue Reasoning –** Discernment and deliberative action about virtues, including in situations where virtues conflict or collide.
- **Virtue Action & Practice –** Doing the right thing in the right way.

Character 'Caught'

At Eastbrook this notion encompasses the whole school community. We believe that character can be 'caught' through our deliberate and planned approach to cultivating the character development of pupils via our ethos and particularly our culture- how we conduct ourselves as a staff body. It is also recognised that peer to peer interactions can heavily influence caught character. As a result we help to foster positive behaviours within and between all our pupils.

Character 'Taught'

In order to develop knowledge and understanding of character and virtues, we take a deliberate and planned approach that is taught through lessons. This curriculum approach supports, and is supported by, caught character education.

By teaching character and virtues explicitly we help our pupils to understand the terms, what they mean and what they 'look like' in real life.

Character 'Sought'

One of the aims of character education is that pupils actively and autonomously seek to develop their character and virtues. Our ethos and culture promote this, and we provide several opportunities throughout each year for pupils to participate in character building activities and exercises.

End Point (Key Stage 4)

The Eastbrook character education curriculum offers not only breadth, depth and coherence, but, above all, a pedagogy that illustrates the role taught sessions in character education can play in shaping character. The range and variety of resources and approaches enable teachers to guide pupils into entering imaginatively, both real and reconstructed situations of moral decision, cultivating a 'good moral sense'. It also furnishes children with the conceptual and practical tools necessary to manage their own growth in virtue, encouraging them to build virtue into their lives. The character education is a spiral curriculum model that moves pupils through phases of personal experience and practice, information gathering and documentation, reflection, analysis and internalisation and informed action, and round again, as if moving up a spiral. This enables students to look at previous learning and experience in a new light and look at new learning from the perspective of previous experience. Growth in knowledge, judgement and practice is the purpose of such an approach. It is an experiential curriculum model, with its accents on personal engagement, ideas, reflection, refinement, and internalisation, or habituation. As a school, we realise that such a taught course will provide a solid grounding in the tools and qualities required by students to make their own good, ethical decisions and to act well.

Way Points

There are five stages of virtue development across virtue knowledge, reasoning and practice that aid understanding of virtue development over the life course. We **do not** use these descriptors to assess learners, but as a guide to identify how pupils are developing as moral learners.

We have adapted these five stages within the tables on pages 5 and 6.

Through Early Years and by the end of Key Stage 1

Virtue Knowledge	Virtue Reasoning	Virtue Practice
• I am beginning to identify some virtues. • I am beginning to identify which virtues are needed in particular situations. • I am beginning to notice how others use virtues to handle situations.	• I am beginning to understand the benefits of virtues. • I am beginning to understand the middle way. • I am beginning to give and take reasons for my actions. • I am beginning to become aware of how I usually act in certain situations.	• I am beginning to put virtues into action. • I am beginning to learn from others who use virtues. • I am beginning to learn from what I say and do and think about improvements. • I am becoming aware of forming habits and of the person I would like to become.

By the end of Lower Key Stage 2

Virtue Knowledge	Virtue Reasoning	Virtue Practice
• I can identify some virtues. • I can identify which virtues are needed in some situations. • I can identify how I feel in situations, but my feelings get the better of me sometimes.	• I understand the benefits that some virtues bring, but don't always use the virtues. • I know the middle way but find it difficult to follow it. • I can give and take reasons for my actions, but they are not always the right ones. • I know how I typically act in some situations.	• I can put some virtues into action, but still find it difficult to do the right thing, rather than what I feel like doing. • I can learn from the example of others on some occasions. • I am learning from what I say and do so that I can improve, but still make some of the same old mistakes. • I am trying to form virtuous habits which fit in with the person I would like to become.

By the end of Upper Key Stage 2, moving to Key Stage 3.

Virtue Knowledge	Virtue Reasoning	Virtue Practice
• I can identify a number of virtues quite easily. • I can easily identify which virtues are required in a number of situations. • I know how I feel in certain situations and I can, with effort, usually overcome my feelings to use the virtue. • I can easily identify how others use virtues to handle situations.	• I understand the benefits of using the virtues. • I know the middle way and can follow it most of the time. • I can give and take reasons for my actions, although this doesn't always result in virtue. • I know how I typically act in lots of situations.	• I can put a number of virtues in to action and can mostly do the right thing, rather than what I feel like doing. • I often learn from others' use of virtues. • I learn from what I say and do and make fewer of the same old mistakes. • I know what kind of person I would like to become and am having some success in forming virtuous habits.

Sequencing

The character curriculum we have developed is planned and sequenced in a way which is best represented by an ascending spiral. At each point of incline pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of a range of virtues as they progress through our school. All of this is with our planned end points in mind.

The character education curriculum is sequenced in a manner that allows for the gradual understanding of more complex themes, for instance kindness, caring and helpfulness will be essential to an understanding of compassion and a child's understanding of fairness and forgiveness will lay the foundation for understanding justice in late Key Stage Two.

We deliver our taught character education curriculum through three stand-alone Virtue Days- one in each term. An example of planning for a Virtues Day is in Appendix B.

Each year group, from Reception to Year Six covers the following virtue themes:

Term	Virtue Themes
Autumn	Caring Helpfulness Cooperation Courage
Spring	Cleanliness Fairness Friendliness Service Patience
Summer	Courtesy Forgiveness Determination Self-discipline Gratitude Honesty

Adaptation

Our curriculum reflects the school's local context by addressing typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. The most significant factors impacting on pupils' knowledge and skills with regard to our local context are:
- The number of pupils in school with English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- The number of pupils in school with Speech, Language and Communication needs (SLC).
- The number of pupils in school with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).
- The high level of economic deprivation amongst pupils.
- The variation in cultural experience amongst pupils.

We are addressing these needs in the following ways:
- By ensuring, wherever practicably possible, we link character education across all subjects in addition to taught lessons in Virtue Days.
- By providing a commitment to character building activities through Forest School, Physical Education (particularly Outdoor and Adventurous Activities), planned events (e.g. camping), our "50 things to do before 11 ¾" poster (See Appendix A).
- By involving our community in character education events throughout the year.
- By enriching our curriculum with educational visits.
- By developing a virtue literacy within our pupils.

Children will also experience the following:
- Several opportunities for sought character through our after-school club offer and our Try Something New day.

Appendix B – Example of Virtues Day planning (Year 4, Autumn)

Main Objective	Brief outline of lesson and differentiation	Resources	Outcome
Understand that we can care for the environment by reducing the amount of waste we produce.	**Caring - Caring for the Environment** 9:00 am – 10:20 am Mind map the things that we waste or throw in the bin, as a whole class onto flipchart. What happens to the waste? Is that a caring thing to do? What do we throw away at school? Could some of this be recycled? Identify areas in the school where we can improve recycling, e.g. use the composters for left-over food or install paper recycling in classes. Also identify when and who is responsible for this. Follow up activity at a later date Possibly children could be 'waste warriors' as a lunchtime duty, assembly/school film made /led by the children	Scales Flip chart Recycling bins/composter	Children more responsible and considerate of their environment. Less paper/food etc. wasted, weigh and compare food/rubbish weight at start and end of project.
Understand the importance at being a helpful member of the class.	**Helping – In a classroom** 10:40 am – 11:30 am Discuss that sometimes we may need some help to achieve a task or to learn a new skill, to become more independent. In 3 areas of the classroom have sugar paper with the 3 title: Help the teacher Help each other Help ourselves	Sugar paper Post it notes	Chd. to know what to do if they need assistance in school. Chd. to be more aware of how they can cooperate with others. Chd. to be more independent learners.

Appendix B – Example of Virtues Day planning (Year 4, Autumn)			
Main Objective	**Brief outline of lesson and differentiation**	**Resources**	**Outcome**
	Chd. have 10 minutes to write and discuss their ideas on post it notes under the headings. Chd. read out the responses and as a class, chd. decide if that is relevant, if so the adult will type the action up on to a poster to be displayed around the classroom.		
Describe the important features of cooperation in a team building challenge.	**Team Building – The Human Knot** 11:30 am – 12:00 pm Ask chd. to stand in 2 circles facing each other (in the hall or outside) the chd. reach out and hold hands, thus creating a human knot. They now need to untangle themselves without breaking hands. Repeat in smaller groups of 6 then in silence. Discuss with pupils, how did they manage to untangle themselves or what led to success? Was everyone's strategy the same? What was the most challenging aspect of the task? What would they do differently if they were to do it again?	Camera to take photographs	Chd. to learn/enhance strategies to cooperate in a challenging task.
To be able to improve ourselves when we think we are not good at something.	**Courage – (changed from lesson in scheme)** 1:00 pm – 1:30 pm Discuss what chd. think courage looks like. How does it feel inside? Show YouTube clip of 'The King's Speech'. Discuss events. Chd. to write on a piece of paper something that they find challenging but want to overcome in the next 6 months, with the help of the school community. Chd. can keep this personal to them, discuss that some people could be embarrassed about what they can't do at the moment.	Paper YouTube clip	Chd. to set themselves targets to achieve. Understand that courage takes determination and will power.

Appendix B – Example of Virtues Day planning (Year 4, Autumn)

Main Objective	Brief outline of lesson and differentiation	Resources	Outcome
	Adult to collect the papers and keep in a special envelope/box and aid the chd. to achieve their targets. Follow up activity During the Virtues Day in the summer term revisit and discuss how chd. have overcome their targets and what courage they showed.		
To develop the language of kindness.	**Kindness – Acrostics** (13th November Kindness Day) 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm Ask the children what kindness is, what words are associated with it, generate a word bank on the board/flip chart. Explain that we are going to use those words to create acrostic poems, show an example of the IWB. Write a class generated poem, asking chd. to think about gestures, their friends and personal experiences of kindness. Chd. to write their own kindness poems, possibly display for kindness day.	Flip chart paper	Choose words to make others feel good about themselves. Understand how to be considerate through words and actions.
	Reflection – **Aristotle's bottles** 2:30 pm – 2:50 pm Personal time to reflect on virtues studied today then circle time, discussing which was most difficult, which could be the hardest to practise and why etc. Complete colouring sheet of Aristotle's bottles.	Photocopied sheets	