

RYBURN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Character Education Policy



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| Name of Policy Writer | RVHS |
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MISSION STATEMENT

Inspiring outstanding achievement for all our remarkable youngsters through excellent teaching and by developing meaningful relationships based on our values, warmth, humour and trust.

Introduction

At Ryburn Valley High School we believe there is a strong link between character and attainment. Ryburn doesn't limit its' definition of success solely on exam outcomes and attendance figures. We focus on Character Education and how we can help children's development of desirable qualities that contribute to their individual as well as societal flourishing.

We want Character Education to be seen throughout the school including (but not limited to) displays, assemblies, lessons and ethos. A good teacher is a good role model; someone who can encourage positive feelings of self-worth in children. We strongly believe in the role we play in shaping our students' future and through developing their character we are increasing their chances of success in life.

Ryburn Valley High School is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion. We aim to equip our learners and staff with an awareness of the diverse society in which we live and to appreciate the value of difference through our focus on Character Education.

Objectives

School should be a preparatory stage for adulthood. Schools play an important role in helping children become responsible for themselves, each other and their world. At Ryburn Valley High School we understand the value of Character Education and focus on ensuring our students are well rounded citizens when they leave and are able to:

- make sensible, informed, ethical choices
- understand the difference between right and wrong
- take account of the common good in their actions
- have high self-esteem
- have good communication skills
- be reflective, flexible and creative
- embrace the opportunities available to them
- develop a sense of belonging that allows them to have a voice and an influence in society
- work independently and use their initiative
- become positive role models for future generations
- co-operate/ adapt and work effectively as part of a team
- contribute to a multi-skilled and flexible workforce
- be enquiring, creative and independent thinkers
- value and appreciate diversity
- are aware and concerned for their environment

School Values

We also hope that our students develop a set of character traits, attributes and behaviours that underpin success in education and work. The key values we focus on as a school are:

- RESPECT
- KINDNESS
- HONESTY
- ENDEAVOUR

What is Character Education?

Character Education relates to children being given the necessary opportunities in school to learn key life skills. This includes many different areas: having good morals; being responsible for their own actions; being independent; being well mannered; and becoming active members of society.

How is Character Education included at Ryburn Valley High School?

Character Education is embedded in our ethos and values, however we also address character explicitly through our iD curriculum, reward system, assemblies and form time.

ETHOS

At Ryburn we pride ourselves on being a school where students should be kind, respectful, honest, and endeavour to succeed. These are key virtues we hold true and have become 'everyday language' within the school. They are used consistently by staff and students and are seen in and around the school building.

Our character values run throughout the whole school experience and we systematically ensure it is addressed across all areas. Some examples are:

Lessons

Our character development programme is embedded throughout the school and is taught both explicitly and implicitly within our iD curriculum (PHSE.) This consists of iGEN and iD lessons and drop down days. The programme/ activities are aimed primarily at the cultivation of character qualities.

Across the school, departments have woven in bespoke Character lessons into their schemes of work. This ensures that our learners are addressing our key values across all subject areas.

Assemblies/ Form Time

Throughout the school year assemblies focus on our key values and 'values awards' are given during this time to reinforce their importance. In addition, a thematic approach has been adopted during form time where students explore character qualities.

Student Leadership

Ryburn actively encourages students to engage, discuss and reflect on their civic and moral virtues through our student leadership programme. Ryburn offers a variety of after school opportunities, day trips and residentials where the focus on character is planned and reflective.

Staff

We recognise that staff play a vital role and have to present themselves as role models for students to learn from. CPD sessions and meetings with staff reinforce the importance of Character Education and the role that they play. Questions around Character Education form part of the interview process for potential new staff.

Parents

Parents are regularly informed and aware of the school's ethos and importance of key character qualities and we actively encourage them to reinforce these values at home.

How does Character Education support Teaching and Learning?

Character Education helps children to grow into responsible, independent, open minded members of society, but it also enhances their learning across the curriculum. Through the teaching of 'character' we are encouraging children to develop skills that are necessary in almost every lesson.

If we adopt a holistic approach to education, we are giving them the right tools to succeed in education. A student must have the emotional resilience that character education develops to ensure that they succeed and are ready for the next steps.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery and impact of Character Education is a continuous improvement process. There isn't a specific way in which to measure the impact, but we triangulate a variety of different processes/ methods including:

- Jubilee Self Evaluation Tool
- Schemes of Work
- Staff voice
- Pupil voice
- Parent voice
- Increase in students' knowledge and understanding
- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Through the ethos of the school
- Students work/ display, e.g. iGEN boards
- Electronic Health Needs Assessment (EHNA)