



2023 Character Education Teacher Poll

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham

Summary of Results

May 2023

Yonder received 605 responses from teachers to its online poll in April and May 2023. Yonder is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. For more details, please go to www.yonderconsulting.com.

Q1 and Q2 Gender and Age

- We opened this survey by asking respondents their gender and age. 73% of respondents were female, with 26% male and <1% either preferred not to say or answered other.
- The largest percentage of respondents were in the age brackets 25-34 (30%), with those aged 35-44 the second largest (29%).

Q3, Q4 and Q5 Teaching Attributes

- Respondents were asked about which key stages (KS) they teach in, with some participants teaching across key stages and selecting multiple options. 35% teach in KS3; 29% teach in KS4; 28% teach in KS2; 24% teach in KS1; 20% teach in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 19% teach in KS5.
- Those with less than a year's experience were significantly more likely to work EYFS (42%), whilst contrastingly those with 10+ years' experience were significantly more likely to teach KS4 and KS5 (36% and 27%).
- Teachers were then asked what kind of school they teach in. The majority of respondents teach in state schools (41%). After this, academy schools (18%) and free schools (14%) were the second and third largest percentages.
- Over a quarter (26%) of teachers who answered the survey have 10+ years' experience, with this being the largest group of respondents. After this, was those with 2-5 years' experience (23%), and 5-8 years' experience (18%).

Q6, Q7 and Q8 Character Education and Influences



- The respondents were then asked if they were familiar with the term 'character education'. **76% of respondents said that they were familiar with the term 'character education'**. 4 in 10 (40%) said that they had heard of the term, but did not really know what it means. This was more significant amongst female teachers as opposed to male (45% vs 28%*).
- 36% of teachers said that they were familiar with the term and knew what it meant, with this more significant amongst male respondents in comparison to female respondents (57%* vs 28%).
- 24% of teachers were not familiar with the term, with this significantly more likely amongst those with 10+ years of experience (36%*).
- The teachers were then provided with a definition of 'character' and 'character education'.
- The teachers surveyed were asked who they thought could influence young people's character development. 85% of respondents highlighted parents/carers as an influence, with this opinion significantly more likely amongst those in the age group 45-54, in comparison to the total as well as the younger age groups of 25-34 and 35-44 (95% vs 83% and 86%, respectively).
- **83% of respondents selected teachers as an influence. This was significantly more likely to be selected by those working in primary education in comparison to those in secondary (88% vs 79%)**. This was also significantly more likely to be selected by those who worked in state schools (90%) and those with 10+ years of experience (91%).
- 3 out of 4 respondents (75%) thought that peers/friends could influence the character development of a young person. Female respondents thought this was more likely than their male counterparts (79% vs 65%).
- **The teachers were then asked to what extent they agreed that teachers play a role in developing the character of their pupils. Over 9 in 10 (91%) agreed that teachers play a role**. 4% of respondents disagreed, with another 4% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Q9, Q10, Q10b and Q11 Character Education Policies and Training

- **64% of respondents said that their school currently places an emphasis, or has a plan or policy on character education. This was significantly more likely amongst those who work in secondary schools in comparison to primary schools (71% vs 64%)**.
- Half of the respondents (50%) have attended training related to educating the character of their pupils, with this significantly higher in private schools (65%*) and free schools (64%*).
- 42% of respondents had not undertaken such training, and 7% either were unsure or could not remember.
- Out of those who had not attended any character training, over 7 in 10 (72%) conveyed that there was no training of this sort available. This was significantly more likely amongst female respondents in comparison to males (77% vs 54%*).
- 27% of those who had not attended training said that they had to prioritise training in other areas for professional development, and 5% said that they were not interested in character education.
- **85% of respondents agreed that opportunities to attend/receive training related to character education would be beneficial, with this significantly more likely amongst those whose school had a policy or plan for character education, in comparison to those who did not, or were not sure if their school did (89% vs 80%* and 72%*, respectively)**.

Q12, Q13 and Q14 Teaching Character Education

- Respondents were then asked through which means they thought character education should be taught in schools. 97% selected at least one of the teaching options included in the question; 1% said that they did not think character education should be taught in schools, and 2% said that they did not know.
- 48% of respondents thought it should be taught through PSHE or equivalent, with this more likely to be thought amongst those teaching in primary education in comparison to secondary education (56% vs 46%).
- 48% also thought that it should be taught within assemblies, with this significantly more likely to be selected by those who work in state schools (53%), as well as those with 10+ years of experience (63%).
- 42% of respondents thought that it should be taught within existing curriculum subjects (excluding PSHE, Citizenship and RE), with this more likely to be thought by those working in KS4 (53%) and KS5 (53%).
- Respondents were then asked through which methods they currently teach character education in school. 36% of respondents said that it is taught in PSHE already, and 34% said that they teach it in assemblies too.
- 32% of respondents said that it is already taught within existing curriculum subjects (excluding PSHE, Citizenship and RE), and a quarter conveyed that it is taught in form/registration time (25%). This was more likely to be taught in KS3 and KS4 form/ registration times (35%* and 36%).
- 47% of respondents said that they teach character education through stories/ literature, with this method significantly more likely to be used by female teachers surveyed, in comparison to males (51% vs 37%*). This was also significantly more likely amongst those working in EYFS (65%*).
- 45% of respondents teach character education through drama/role play, with this significantly more likely amongst those in primary education in comparison to secondary (54% vs 35%*).

Q15, Q16 and Q17 Focus and Impact of Character Education

- 83% of respondents believed that a greater focus on character education in school would positively impact pupils' academic attainment.
- 87% of respondents believed that a greater focus on character education in school would positively impact pupils' personal development.
- Over 2 in 3 respondents (67%) agreed that school inspections should place a greater emphasis on pupils' personal and character development, with this more likely to be thought by male respondents, as opposed to female (75% vs 65%). 7% disagreed, whilst 22% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

***Low base size, please use with caution**