Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum

Evaluation Report

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1. Introduction

In recent years there has been a groundswell in both interest and demand for research-based character education teaching interventions. As previously outlined in the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues *Knightly Virtues Research Report[1]*:

> there is a growing consensus in Britain on the importance of character, and on the belief that the virtues that contribute to good character are part of the solution to many of the challenges facing modern society. Parents, teachers and schools understand the need to teach basic moral virtues to pupils such as honesty, self-control, fairness, and respect, while fostering behaviour associated with such virtues today. However, until recently, the materials required to help deliver this ambition have been missing in Britain (Arthur *et al*, 2014a p5).

As a result of this increased interest, a new programme entitled *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* was designed, developed and piloted in schools in Birmingham. The programme aimed to produce resources to develop the virtue literacy of primary pupils and to accompany existing Jubilee Centre character education provision, (e.g. *My Character, Knightly Virtues, Primary and Secondary Programmes of Study and Teaching Character Through Subjects)*. Designed for Year 6 pupils (aged 10-11 years), the programme draws on a selection of narratives focussing on well-known exemplars to help encourage discussion and reflection on a series of virtues, which will in turn contribute to a successful transition from primary school (Year 6) to secondary school (Year 7).

Based at the University of Birmingham, the Jubilee Centre houses leading academics dedicated to researching the various ways in which good character, which underpins the building blocks of society, can be developed. The Jubilee Centre *Teaching Character Through the Curriculum[2]* resource has shown that qualities that make up character can be learnt and taught, and suggests that we need a new emphasis on their importance in schools and in professional education (Arthur *et al*, 2015).

This report will demonstrate, through a detailed description of the programme's design, development and pilot, how a cross-curricula approach was utilised to develop the virtue literacy of pupils for pre-selected virtues and reflect on how these virtues affect the everyday lives of pupils, particularly during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7. Virtue literacy, for this project, is defined as the knowledge, understanding and ability to apply, through writing, virtue terms and concepts. Whilst it is not a pre-requisite to be virtue literate to be, or become, a virtuous person, a knowledge and understanding of the language of character supports rational reflection on one's behaviour. The programme aims to ensure pupils have a smoother transition into secondary school by making them aware of these character virtues and by developing phronesis (practical wisdom). Discussion and reflection is encouraged when virtues complement and clash with each other and when too much of a specific virtue can have negative consequences. It is important that pupils understand that the practice of virtues is at times difficult and they may sometimes have to make a wise choice between alternatives.

The programme was evaluated and tested through the use of internal and external reviews and was piloted in four primary schools.

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[1] www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1576/projects/previous-work/knightly-virtues
[2] http://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/TeachingCharacterThroughtheCurriculum.pdf

2. Background

In this section previous research conducted by the Jubilee Centre into character education is examined. The principles of a cross-curricula approach to character, the application of virtue concepts and reflective practice are explained in relation to the *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme.

2.1 Research

Research conducted by the Jubilee Centre during the *My Character* (Arthur *et al*, 2014b) study and discussion with teacher educators suggests that the majority of character education teaching resources are 'drop in' or stand-alone resources; therefore this programme of study aims to provide practical guidance on how character education might be successfully embedded into the primary curriculum (Arthur *et al*, 2014b). The work of the Jubilee Centre in this area leads the field for character-focussed teaching resources, such as *My Character, Knightly Virtues, Character Education Programmes of Study, Teaching Character Through the Curriculum* and *Teaching Character Through Subjects*. It is on the same principles and philosophy that underpin those successful projects that this project is based.

Previous research on the transition between primary and secondary schools, and the benefit of a consistency in values, is reflected in the Learning for Life report *Character in Transition*. The report advises that:

> the experience of transition from the familiar, nurturing and supportive ethos of what is very often a small primary school to the more impersonal, larger, and quite possibly intimidating secondary school can be a challenging phase in pupils' lives. Essentially, the period of transition is a time when pupils will be removed from one secure environment: the values, rules, routines and structures of which they are entirely familiar, to a new environment with its own (and often very different) values, rules, routines and structures (Arthur *et al*, 2010 p9).

The *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme endeavours to provide resources to assist with this important period in the character development of young people.

Many schools, primary and secondary, do conduct transition days where pupils visit their new secondary school, or secondary school teachers visit the corresponding primary schools. These provisions help to ease the challenge of the transition from primary to secondary school for pupils, but it seems more can still be done, particularly with regards to the development of underpinning virtues and character strengths required by pupils to negotiate this transitional period. It is clear that pupils spending time in their new secondary schools is one way of helping this transition become successful, but developing the character of pupils is also important. It is important that pupils are aware of the character strengths and virtues they may need or may already possess to assist with this transitional period. Understanding how these virtues can be developed, but also how they can at times combine or compete, is vital in the development of a child's character and their ability to develop phronesis.

2.2 Cross-Curricula Approach to Character

The Jubilee Centre's *Teaching Character Through the Curriculum* clearly outlines that 'character education, both implicit and explicit, permeates all subjects as well as the general school ethos; it cultivates the virtues of character associated with common morality. It is a widely held view that character can be taught and caught in schools (Arthur *et al* 2015). A cross-curricula approach has proved successful in the Jubilee Centre's *Teaching Character Through Subjects* (Harrison *et al*, 2016a) secondary publication. Therefore, the aim of this programme is to teach character at a primary level through lessons and activities that take a cross-curricula approach. Character education may not necessarily always be confined to designated curriculum subjects, such as Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) or Religious Education, but can be applied across the whole school curriculum. Specific links are made in this programme to eight subjects which fall within the National Curriculum (2014), so all lessons can form part of an inclusive school curriculum. Resources have been developed so that these lessons can be placed into an active school curriculum and taught at any point during the school year, when the aforementioned links are made. Lessons focus on virtue literacy and the development of phronesis but also include objectives present within the National Curriculum.

2.3 The Application of Virtue Concepts

Research has shown that 'moral exemplars fascinate and inspire us because their behaviour is largely outside of our own lived experience' (Walker, 2016). Each narrative places a focus on a named primary virtue and several secondary virtues, through a descriptive and abridged biography of the exemplar. The aim is to use each narrative to encourage discussion about the virtues, to see the positive and sometimes negative aspects of each virtue in focus and to reflect on decisions made when virtues clash. It is important for pupils to understand that virtues can have both positive and negative consequences and that too much of a particular virtue may not always be beneficial. Whilst the resources are created in such a way that individual lessons can be taught separately or in isolation, the intention is for all of the lessons in this programme to be taught in a way that covers all of the preselected virtues across a range of subjects. The programme follows the same structure as the Jubilee Centre's *Knightly Virtues resources*[3] which have successfully been delivered to over 25,000 primary school pupils. This project presents a narrative per curriculum subject, which focuses on a well-known (in most cases) exemplar, with accompanying Teacher's Notes, Lesson Plans, Pupil Resources, Virtue Toolkit and PowerPoints.

2.4 Reflective Practice

Throughout the programme, pupils are encouraged to discuss the virtues present and reflect on their application within the narratives provided, and also within their own lives. Through the Pupil Activity resources, pupils are encouraged to translate these skills into written answers, identifying and explaining the virtues present. At the end of each lesson, pupils are encouraged to reflect on the primary virtue and make a statement of intent. Through reflective practice, pupils will make a specific and realistic 'I WILL' target based around the primary virtue. As the *My Character* project demonstrated, 'personal reflection is a key ingredient in the process of internalising values and taking ownership of them' (Arthur *et al*, 2014b). Understanding virtues in their own lives arises from a level of self-awareness and understanding stemming from teachers guiding pupils to reflect on events and stories from their lives (Harrison *et al*, 2016b). Developing phronesis requires pupils to look backward and learn from past experiences, but to also look forward to predict the best course of action (Harrison *et al*, 2016b). Establishing reflective practice is one way to help achieve this.

Throughout the programme, teachers are encouraged to guide pupils in understanding the ideas presented, and, through discussion, pupils should be encouraged to explore their understanding of virtue terms using the narrative examples provided.

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[3] www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/knightlyvirtuesresources

3. Developing the Programme

In this section the development of the programme is explained, including the virtues and moral exemplars chosen, and its core content is displayed.
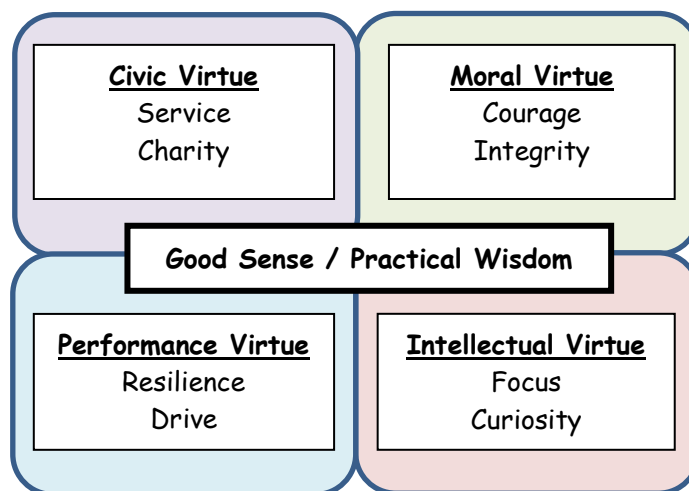
The *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme was developed in consultation with head teachers and teachers. The eight subjects and narrative exemplars were selected – following external and internal reviews along with piloting of the programme in four primary schools – from a much wider list of proposed possibilities.

3.1 The Virtues

The programme focuses on virtues drawn from across the four classifications of virtue described in the Jubilee Centre *A Framework for Character Education in Schools*[4], as described below:

Civic Character Virtues	Moral Character Virtues	Performance Character Virtues	Intellectual Character Virtues
Character virtues and skills that are necessary for engaged and responsible citizenship. Examples: Service, Citizenship, Volunteering.	Character habits that enable us to respond well to situations in any area of experience. Examples: Courage, Self-discipline, Compassion, Gratitude, Justice, Humility, Honesty.	Behavioural skills and psychological capacities that – while they can be used for both good and bad ends – enable us to put our character habits into practice. Examples: Resilience, Determination, Creativity.	Virtues that support learning, as well as to critically reflect on our own as well as other people's character. Examples: Curiosity, Critical Thinking, Resourcefulness.
Good Sense / Practical Wisdom Knowing what to want and what not to want when the demands of two or more virtues collide. Good sense presupposes the possession of other intellectual virtues such as curiosity and critical thinking.			
Flourishing Individuals and Society			

Internal reviews led to the selection of eight primary virtues:

Civic Virtue
Service
Charity

Moral Virtue
Courage
Integrity

Good Sense / Practical Wisdom

Performance Virtue
Resilience
Drive

Intellectual Virtue
Focus
Curiosity

A further five secondary virtues were chosen to supplement the primary virtues and to aid discussion and reflection within lessons; those being honesty, gratitude, motivation, ambition, confidence.

3.2 Moral Exemplars

Research and discussion informed the selection of the seven moral exemplars that would provide the basis for each subject narrative. The table below shows how each subject is linked to an area of the National Curriculum, whilst introducing the narrative exemplars and their primary and secondary virtues. The primary virtue definitions are taken from existing Jubilee Centre resources including the *Knightly Virtues* and *My Character* projects.

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[4] Jubilee Centre (2014), Framework for Character Education. Birmingham. University of Birmingham. Available: *http://jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/character-education/Framework%20for%20Character%20Education.pdf*

Subject/ Curriculum Link	Narratives	Primary Virtue (Virtue narrative focuses upon)	Definition	Secondary Virtues (Other virtues displayed during narrative)
English Journalistic Writing	Courage Under Fire John Simpson (BBC Foreign Correspondent – Reported during Tiananmen Square massacre, 1991 Gulf War, Kosovo conflict)	Courage (Moral)	Courage is having the strength and will to know what you should do even though you may be afraid.	Resilience, Ambition, Curiosity, Honesty, Integrity
PE - Athletics	Olympic Spirit Luz Long (1936 Olympics German long jumper his main rival was Jesse Owens. Owens won gold, with Long taking silver)	Integrity (Moral)	Integrity is when you adhere to the moral principles of honesty.	Honesty, Courage, Service
Science Animals Including Humans (Medicine and Drugs)	An Ambition to Cure Gertrude Elion (Biochemist and pharmacologist, who won 1988 Nobel Prize)	Curiosity (Intellectual)	Curiosity is when you are eager to know or learn something new.	Resilience, Ambition, Confidence, Focus
Maths Algebra	Numbers in Focus Emmy Noether (German Jewish mathematician known for her landmark contributions to algebra)	Focus (Intellectual)	Focus is when you pay close attention to something and block out possible distractions.	Resilience, Drive, Curiosity
History A study of a theme in British history.	Inspiring a Nation Winston Churchill (British Prime Minister during WW2)	Resilience (Performance)	Resilience is bouncing back from adversity when attempting a difficult task.	Motivation, Drive, Confidence, Integrity, Focus, Service
Geography Describe and understand key aspects of physical/ human geography	Driven to Make a Change Wangari Maathai (Kenyan environmental activist)	Drive (Performance)	Drive is to move or push forward despite obstacles in your path.	Resilience, Motivation, Service
Computing Coding	Codebreaker Alan Turing (Mathematician and computer coder who broke Enigma code during WW2)	Service (Civic)	Service is working hard for a person, organisation or country. It is helping other people.	Resilience, Drive, Curiosity
PSHE / Citizenship – (Volunteer/ Charity)	Local Hero – examples from the #iwill campaign (freedom for school to pick a local hero appropriate to them)	Charity (Civic)	Charity is the voluntary giving of help to those in need.	

4. Evaluative Stages in the Development

The intention of those developing the new programme was not to simply create it but to pilot it to gain evidence as to its suitability for use in primary schools. The programme was subjected to a number of evaluation stages and these are described below alongside a description of the evidence drawn from each of them. Evidence regarding the effectiveness of the programme to meet its desired outcomes are dealt with in the next section.

4.1 Peer Review

4.1.1 Internal – Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham

An initial internal staff review was conducted in order to clarify the purpose and goals of the programme. Staff at the Jubilee Centre assessed introductory and draft materials. A series of evaluative questions, which could assist with ongoing progress reviews, were established.

4.1.1.1 How will the desired outcomes of this programme be achieved?

Preliminary ideas for the programme outlined using exemplars to highlight a particular virtue or virtues considered as important for the transitional period from primary school to secondary school. A biographical narrative would describe the exemplar, with particular focus on the virtue, and teacher and pupil resources would be developed to aid learning.

Through internal reviews members of the Jubilee Centre suggested that the narratives chosen should focus on an individual, but should highlight both the positive and sometimes negative consequences of the character virtues in question, as opposed to establishing individuals as role-models or 'moral ideals'. This is in line with Croce and Vaccarezza's (2016) assessment of the use of exemplars as an educational tool. They say that 'what is most interesting with using exemplars is their capacity of motivating us becoming good; encountering a moral exemplar, in person or through narrative, elicits our admiration and can be one of the most significant moral experiences of our whole life, capable of changing its course.' The programme was therefore based on the use of semi-biographical moral exemplars, who demonstrate a strong primary virtue, a number of secondary virtues and the relationship between competing virtues. Given the success of the *Knightly Virtues* programme, the same structure was adopted, using Teacher's Notes, Lesson Plans, Pupil Resources, Virtue Toolkits and PowerPoints for each subject to supplement a narrative.

Further internal reviews highlighted that the exemplars selected for the narratives were often extraordinary exemplars of character virtues. Social psychology research shows 'attainable exemplars that seemed more imitable and closer to participants' selfhood more effectively motivated moral engagement compared to extraordinary exemplars' (Han, 2016). Therefore a Virtue Toolkit was produced to accompany the teaching pack. The Virtue Toolkit provided definitions of each primary virtue and a short, fictional narrative featuring an 'attainable' exemplar to whom the pupils could relate, with a suggested activity to complete before engaging with the exemplar narratives. These activities provided opportunities for pupils to discuss virtues in their own lives and to develop phronesis.

4.1.1.2 What character virtues should be chosen?

The project team used the DfE Character Education: 2015 grant funding proposal[5], the Learning for Life report *Character in Transition* and the Jubilee Centre's, *Primary Programme of Study*[6] and *Framework for Character Education in Schools* to support the selection of the virtues. Virtues from across all four of the categories in the Centre's typology of virtue were selected, as described in the *Framework for Character Education in Schools* (civic, moral, performance, intellectual). The Framework highlights that 'human flourishing requires moral, intellectual and civic virtues, excellence specific to diverse domains of practice or human endeavour, and generic virtues of self-management (known as performance virtues)' and that virtues 'form a coherent, mutually supportive whole in a well-rounded life, and character education is all about their integration, guided by the overarching intellectual virtue of good sense' (Jubilee Centre, 2013). These core principles were addressed through the *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme.

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[5] www.gov.uk/government/news/character-education-apply-for-2015-grant-funding
[6] www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/1635/character-education/resources/primary-programme-of-study

An initial sixteen virtues were chosen, before a final list of eight primary virtues and five secondary virtues was agreed. The character virtues chosen are seen as fundamental to aid a smooth transition between primary school and secondary school.

Primary Virtues	Secondary Virtues
Courage	Honesty
Focus	Gratitude
Curiosity	Motivation
Integrity	Ambition
Resilience	Confidence
Drive	
Service	
Charity	

4.1.1.3 Which moral exemplars should be chosen?
Initially, the project team began by closely examining the eleven component subjects of the National Curriculum. Other published schemes for Year 6, such as Hamilton Trust, Chris Quigley Curriculum Planner and the International Primary Curriculum were also reviewed, specifically considering individual learning objectives. Of the eleven component subjects, eight were selected; (English, Maths, Science, Physical Education, History, Geography, Computing and PSHE). By examining the Year 6 curriculum, and using the Jubilee Centre's *My Character* programme and Character Scotland's *Inspire>Aspire*[7] programme, a longlist of thirty potential exemplars was proposed, each of whom had direct links to the Year 6 curriculum.

Following closer examination of the longlist of thirty exemplars, an initial shortlist of seven was produced. Reasons for selection included significant links to the National Curriculum, the availability of information on them, their ability to display a selection of virtues in complimentary and competing situations, and their appeal to pupils at KS2. After some further consideration and changes, a final shortlist of seven exemplars was agreed upon.

A group of external practitioners were consulted and the final list of exemplars was agreed. Comments from the external review supported the use of narrative exemplars to raise awareness of virtue terms, encourage discussion and reflection amongst pupils and sustain the interest of pupils.

4.1.1.4 How will the project be tested?
An external review of the project structure and resource content was conducted, once the resources had been drafted. External consultants included primary school head teachers and practitioners. The teacher and pupil resources were piloted in a number of local schools, with evaluative comments collated from teachers. Three methods of piloting the materials were employed. Teachers were asked to give their expert feedback after each lesson.

4.1.2 External
After initial internal reviews, draft resources were sent to thirteen primary school teachers, including head teachers, deputy heads, phase leaders and experienced Year 6 teachers. Teachers were specifically asked to give expert practitioner advice on course structure, virtues selected, and narratives chosen. Based on the external feedback, initial amendments were made to the resources, before they were externally reviewed by a consortium of head teachers from Birmingham, in addition to more in-depth discussions with three members of Senior Leadership Teams at three different primary schools.

4.1.2.1 Teacher feedback
The tables below provide examples of initial teachers' comments with some areas for development identified.

Teachers' Comments
'I like the lesson plan structure and resources. I feel as though I could deliver that lesson tomorrow with everything provided. The resources that are used to help the independent work are at an expectation for Year 6 and I would expect them to use this information to fulfil the purpose of the learning.'

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[7] www.inspire-aspire.org.uk

'In order to be able to teach - all of the material is there for the teacher. They do seem to tie in very well with the curriculum requirements too.'

'With regards to the virtues chosen, the fact that all the primary virtues are underpinned by secondary virtues that overlap and feed into each other, will help them further apply their knowledge to other lessons beyond the initial lessons.'

'Another positive is the structure of the sessions. I think this will work well as it allows children to build their skills and apply them as the session moves on.'

'This project offers an opportunity to look at some well-known characters and the qualities that make them significant to us. I really like the range of subject narratives, and they give plenty of scope to link to whatever may be being explored in English, Topic etc.'

'I thought the lesson plan was very comprehensive and was clear, precise and teacher friendly. Likewise the notes were very useful with appropriate links.'

'The plan that you have provided, in my opinion, gives sufficient detail for any teacher to follow and successfully implement this lesson. The resources attached are also thorough, as well as being, what would appear to be, carefully selected/created for the age range specified.'

'Really think you're onto a winner with this lesson: ticks so many boxes!'

Areas for development
Ensure technical terms are explained for teachers. More details needed in introduction to describe how to differentiate the resources. More detail needed to emphasis the principle of comparing and contrasting virtues. More explanation of the fluid nature of the resources and the fact teachers are given the opportunity to adapt the plans/resources to suit them.

4.1.2.2. Developments made due to external review
- Technical terms given greater definition.
- Simple examples of possible differentiation techniques added.
- A description of comparing and contrasting virtues added with links to the development of phronesis.

4.2 Lesson Pilots
4.2.1 How were schools chosen?
The four schools involved in piloting the resources had previously been involved in Jubilee Centre programmes, for example *Knightly Virtues*, or were schools that had shown an interest in the *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* during the early external review stages. The four schools represented different demographics across Birmingham. Meetings took place between head teachers, teachers involved in delivering the lessons and the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow.

4.2.2 How were lessons piloted?
Subject lessons were piloted in five different Year 6 classes using three different methods:
  a) Lessons taught by teachers from the chosen primary schools whilst being observed by the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow;
  b) Lessons taught by teachers from the chosen primary schools with no observation from Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow;
  c) Lessons taught by the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow whilst being observed by teachers from the chosen primary schools.

4.2.3 How was feedback given?
After all lessons, teachers involved were given an evaluation form to complete (appendix 1). Teachers were asked six questions to share their opinion and experience of the lesson and resources provided. These questions were:
> Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?

Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?

Were the children engaged during the lesson?

Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?

What did children find difficult?

[The resources would be] Even better if...

Where possible, teachers discussed the lessons and resources with the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow immediately after lesson observations.

4.2.4 Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow evaluations

The tables below show the Teaching Fellow's evaluations of the teacher led element of the programme.

Areas of strength
Lesson Plans and PowerPoints enabled constructive pupil discussion and reflection on a series of different virtues. Pupils' engaged throughout lessons and displayed an eagerness to develop their understanding. Virtue Toolkit resources provided a good introduction to the primary virtues and gave pupils an opportunity to reflect on the primary virtue and how it affects their everyday life. Lessons Plans were adaptable, where needed. Virtue Glossary provided pupils with the information needed to help facilitate critical thinking in regards to different virtues.

Areas for development
PowerPoints to be made classroom friendly. Timings of lessons need adjusting to take into account increased discussion and reflection time. Lesson Plans to be made clearer in its explanation of the Virtue Glossary and how to use it during the lesson. Must be made clearer that Lesson Plans are adaptable.

The tables below show the Teaching Fellow's evaluations of the pupil led element of the programme.

Areas of strength
Pupils were able to pick out several examples of the primary virtue from the moral exemplar narratives provided. Pupils were quickly using the correct character virtue language needed to aid discussion, reflection and written answers. When used, the Virtue Glossary provided pupils with a tool to aid their progress. The moral exemplar narratives were engaging and aided discussion about a series of primary and secondary virtues. The moral exemplar narratives enabled critical thinking from pupils.

Areas for development
Some moral exemplar narratives need shortening. Glossary vocabulary from the moral exemplar narratives needs to be in bold. Vocabulary used during Pupil Activity needs to be made more pupil friendly. Timings of lessons need adjusting to take into account the last question on the Pupil Activity sheet which requires a longer written answer. Lesson Plans to be made clearer in its explanation of the Virtue Glossary and how to use it during the lesson.

4.2.5 Teacher Feedback

The table below shows teacher responses from lesson evaluation forms (examples available in Appendix 2).

Areas of strength
A comprehensive set of resources which are easy to follow.
All parts of the lesson encourage discussion about virtues.
Pupils are motivated and engaged especially during the teacher led activities.
The PowerPoint enables discussion and reflection about the primary virtue.
The Lesson Plan was easy to follow and could be adapted if necessary.
The Virtue Toolkit resources linked to pupils' own experiences and was very good at introducing new character virtues.
Successful links are made to National Curriculum subjects and objectives.
The Virtue Glossary provided the support needed for children to engage in critical thinking activities.

Areas for development
Timings of lessons need adjusting.
Vocabulary used during Pupil Activity needs to be made more pupil friendly.
Some moral exemplar narratives need shortening.
Introduction or recommendation of further resources, possibly interactive.

4.2.6 Developments made due to Lesson Pilots
- PowerPoints were simplified to ensure they are teacher and classroom accessible.
- Recommended timings of lessons adjusted.
- An introduction added to each Lesson Plan explaining the role of the Virtue Toolkit and Virtue Glossary.
- Moral exemplar narratives shortened and glossaries updated.
- Vocabulary in Pupil Activity sheets amended.
- A further resources section added to Teacher's Notes.

5. Evaluating the Influence of the Programme

This section will explain how the methods described above contributed to the evaluation of the influence of the programme in regards to the effectiveness of: the development of virtue literacy, development of phronesis, transitional support and embedding *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* into an inclusive school curriculum. Given the short period of time the evaluation was conducted over, only a limited influence could be determined. A substantive trial of the programme would be required to gain a more complete picture of its impact on 10 and 11 year olds.

5.1 Methods
A collection of different methods were utilised to evaluate the impact of the programme.
- The lessons were taught by experienced Year 6 teachers and the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow
- Lesson observations
- Teachers' opinions - feedback forms
- Discussions with head teachers and class teachers
- Discussions with pupils taking part

5.2 Limitations
Though this programme has been piloted and evaluated there are limitations. These were primarily that it was a small, limited study (consisting of four primary schools) which was conducted by the Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow who developed the resources. However, these methods of evaluation were formative and enabled improvements to be made to the existing programme, resources and lessons.

5.3 Development of virtue literacy
The Jubilee Centre Teaching Fellow and participating teachers indicated that pupils had appeared to demonstrate an increased knowledge and understanding of virtue terms due to involvement in the pilot with one teacher stating, *'children were already beginning to have a deeper understanding of the virtue terms in question.'* The Virtue Toolkit and moral exemplar narratives enabled pupils to recognise and identify a series of different character virtues. Teachers commented that the lessons, especially in the Virtue Toolkit, encouraged pupils to reflect on the virtues and begin to relate them to their own lives. A teacher who took part in the pilot said it was a, *'very accessible virtue toolkit story that children could relate to.'* Head teachers were appreciative of the introduction of virtue language with one head teacher stating, *'it is great that children are able to discuss these terms and begin to reflect on their own character.'* Some schools were already beginning to envisage how the programme could be embedded alongside their own school ethos.

5.4 Development of phronesis (practical wisdom)
The development of phronesis is much more difficult to assess in a short pilot. What can be concluded from the findings above is that the teachers believed the resources provided in the programme encouraged and enabled discussion and reflection from the pupils. A teacher said, *'the resources are a very useful prompt for discussion and exploration.'* Over a sustain period this discussion and reflection will contribute to the development of phronesis. Teachers commented that resources, such as the Virtue Glossary, were essential at the beginning of the programme to provide the necessary support needed for pupils to engage in practical wisdom activities. One teacher in the pilot said it was, *'extremely good to have a glossary and pre-tutor activity.'* Teachers believe that as the programme of lessons progresses, pupils' reliance on support resources should diminish and in turn their ability to independently use phronesis will increase.

5.5 Transitional support
The character virtues chosen for this programme went through a rigorous selection process and external reviews have highlighted that teachers believe that the virtues chosen are all fundamental for pupils if they wish to have a smooth transition between primary and secondary school. Piloting shows that the resources clearly outline and describe the primary virtues and subsequently make pupils more aware of these virtues in their everyday lives.

5.6 Embedding Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum into an inclusive school curriculum
It became clear from external reviews that one of the strengths of this programme is its explicit links to the National Curriculum. Teachers commented that all resources are able to be fitted into a school curriculum and do not need to

be taught as a separate character education lesson. Schools also commented on the ability to use the Virtue Toolkit resources in whole school situations, with one school already using them for whole school assemblies which focus on specific character virtues.

6. Recommendations

This report summarises that the *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme of work has been researched, produced, evaluated and piloted to enable it to serve as a significant educational tool in a primary school setting. This report concludes with some recommendations for practitioners and schools:

- Primary schools would benefit from an evaluation of their curriculum in order to identify opportunities to include the *Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum* programme into existing subjects.
- Opportunities could be explored so that character education is included in a cross-curricula approach and not left to be taught in designated subject areas.
- There is a need for practitioners to be aware of the development of phronesis within their pupils. Discussion and reflection can be guided by the teacher to aid pupils' understanding of when virtues complement and clash with each other and when too much of a specific virtue can have negative consequences. It is important that pupils understand that the practice of virtues is at times difficult and they may sometimes have to make a wise choice between alternatives.
- At the end of each lesson it would be beneficial for pupils to make a statement of intent. This can be in the form of a specific and realistic 'I WILL' target based around the primary virtue. Targets should be achievable and meaningful to the child. This can be recorded and followed up at a later date.
- It is important that schools are aware that this programme alone will not guarantee virtuous behaviour from their pupils. This programme should fit within a school ethos which, in some form or description, has a focus on the development of a person's character.
- These character-education resources and lessons will be more effective if they are evaluated from within schools. Necessary changes should be made to the programme to guarantee it is having a positive impact upon pupils.
- To fully evaluate the influence of this programme, a more substantive trial of the programme would be required to gain a more complete picture of its impact on 10 and 11 year olds.

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Appendix 1 – Teacher Lesson Evaluation Template

THE JUBILEE CENTRE FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

<u>Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum</u>
Lesson Evaluation

Date	School	Teacher	Class
Number of pupils	**SEN**	**Subject**	

Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?	Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?
Were the children engaged during the lesson?	Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?
What did children find difficult?	Even better if…

Appendix 2 – Completed Examples of Teacher Lesson Evaluations

THE JUBILEE CENTRE
FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum
Lesson Evaluation
History – Inspiring a Nation

Date	School	Teacher	Class
2.2.16			Year 6
Number of pupils	**SEN**	**Subject**	
32	2	History	

Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?	Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?
Yes. A comprehensive set of resources and teacher notes.	The lesson naturally lends itself to discussion. The children were enthusiastic and would discuss this topic continuously.
Were the children engaged during the lesson?	**Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?**
During the introduction and teacher led activity the children were motivated and engaged. Less during independent activity.	Yes.
What did children find difficult?	**Even better if…**
The wording of question three proved tricky for the less able children.	Possible video resources. On reflection a rewording of question three on Pupil Activity sheet.

Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum
Lesson Evaluation
P.E – Olympic Spirit

Date	School	Teacher	Class
10.2.16			Year 6
Number of pupils	**SEN**	**Subject**	
32	2	P.E.	

Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?	Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?
Yes. The pre-lesson activity was very useful in 'setting the scene' and enabling discussion.	The PowerPoint is very effective at encouraging discussion, especially the moral dilemmas.
Were the children engaged during the lesson?	**Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?**
Yes they were very interested in the narrative.	Yes, although the written activity took longer than anticipated. Children already beginning to have a deeper understanding of the virtue terms in the question.
What did children find difficult?	**Even better if…**
Nothing	Possible video resources or newspaper reports.

THE JUBILEE CENTRE FOR CHARACTER & VIRTUES

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum
Lesson Evaluation

English – Courage Under Fire

Date	School	Teacher	Class
26.2.16			Year 6
Number of pupils	**SEN**	**Subject**	
30	5	English	

Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?	Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?
Yes. Very accessible virtue toolkit story that children could relate to.	Questions on PowerPoints encouraged good discussions. Reference to virtues glossary throughout worked well.
Were the children engaged during the lesson?	**Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?**
Journalism fitted in well with current Literacy topic.	Yes although the narrative was a little difficult for lower ability children to follow (terminology).
What did children find difficult?	**Even better if…**
Question four.	If the text was a little shorter for LA to follow. Maybe question four could be used as a literacy lesson instead of task at end of lesson.

Teaching Character Through the Primary Curriculum
Lesson Evaluation

History – Inspiring a Nation

Date	School	Teacher	Class
17.3.16			Year 6GR/CP
Number of pupils	**SEN**	**Subject**	
30	2	History	

Were the teacher resources useful in pre-lesson preparation?	Did the lesson/resources encourage discussion/reflection about the virtues presented?
Yes very much so – the story was directly linked to pupil experience so the children were able to relate to it.	Yes – I thought the use of the glossary was particularly useful for the pupils to refer to during the lesson.
Were the children engaged during the lesson?	**Did the majority of the children meet the outcomes?**
Yes particularly during the preliminary discussions and during the shared work.	Yes, some children did find the written work challenging.
What did children find difficult?	**Even better if…**
Some of the lower ability children found the written work challenging but this could be easily differentiated to alleviate this.	Could use 'thinking skills' activities such as zone of relevance whereby children sort virtues according to their importance.

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