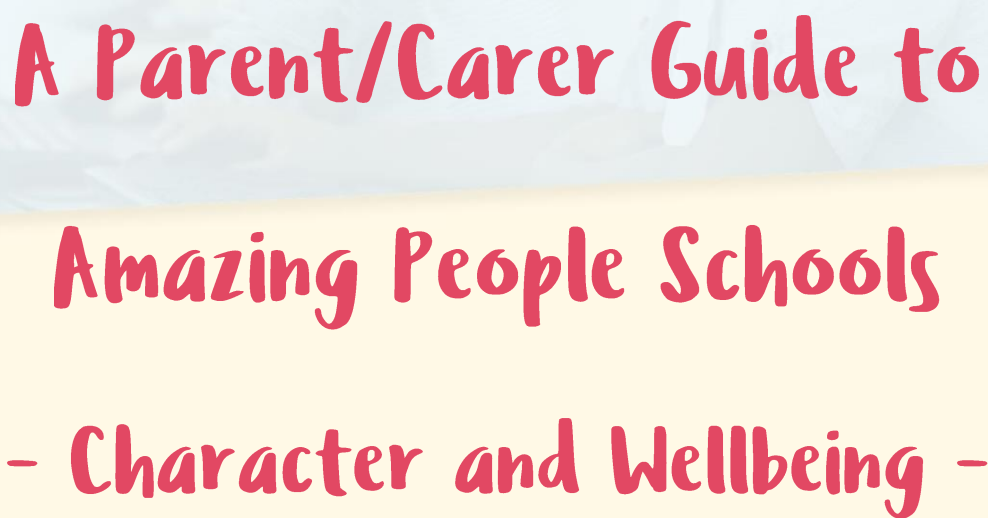




Who Do You Think Is Amazing?

This simple question is a great opener for conversations with our children. Finding out about who inspires our young people and most importantly why, is key. Gaining the answers to this question can lead to important conversations about character – what it is, how it can be developed, and how doing so supports mental health and wellbeing.

Your children are currently learning about character strengths at school using Amazing People from history as exemplars. This guide is to help you, as a parent or carer, to continue this dialog in the home environment. It will serve to help you better understand our approach to equipping our young people with the strength of character they need to thrive at school and beyond.

Historical role models can be an interesting way to discuss character – when famous people in history crop up in homework or on a film, consider the strengths they needed to demonstrate in order to overcome challenges and difficulties. Marie Curie for example, needed courage to continue studying in Poland, even though it was forbidden for girls to do so. Her courage and curiosity took her to a foreign country, France, where she developed her scientific endeavours. Despite hardship and difficulties, she persevered. After her husband died and she was rejected by the powers that be, she showed resilience and kept on fighting for her work and place in the science world. During World War I, she showed wisdom, fairness and integrity in using her x-ray machines for the good of the troops and by not claiming personal financial wealth for her role in scientific discoveries.



As you will notice in the above short paragraph, there are a wealth of character strengths mentioned that were key to Marie Curie achieving what she did and being nominated for Nobel Prizes. Her contributions have truly changed our world. Her strength of character can inspire young people to be the best that they can be, and this is what they are learning in the classroom as part of the Amazing People Schools approach.

You Can't Be It If You Can't See It!

Encouraging young people to seek out role models of different backgrounds, gender and race helps to promote inclusion and representation. Contemporary role models such as Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg are brilliant ways to encourage discussion on diversity and character.

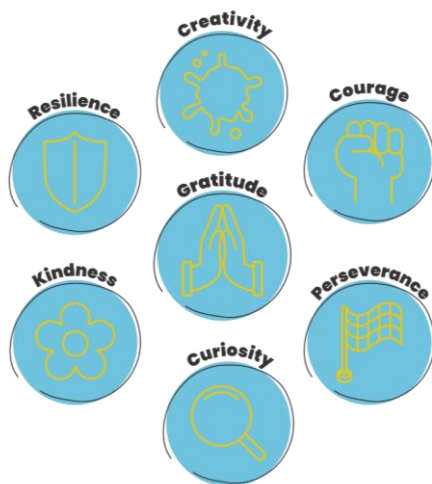


Everyday Amazing

The more the conversation around character and role models develops, the easier it is to recognise character strengths in the people that you know personally. Mentioning strengths in each other and positively noticing strengths shown in those around us helps to bring strengths to life. It embeds the vocabulary of character so that it runs through conversations in a natural way.

Character Strengths And Wellbeing

Research has shown us and continues to show us that higher levels of character strengths result in higher levels of life satisfaction, less stress, more self-confidence, and greater flourishing at school and in life. For example, having hope and being optimistic contributes to better physical and mental health. Finding reasons to be grateful creates a positive shift in attitude and helps us to see things from a new perspective. Developing imagination and being creative release feel-good dopamine and endorphins, helping us to feel happy. There are many examples of how developing character supports wellbeing and using these to encourage such development is essential to embedding character into life.



How Can I Help?

Parents and carers play a vital role in the personal development of young people. By embedding the language of character at home, they can support and enhance school-based work in this area. In addition, discussing role models past and present is an ideal way to explore the character strengths demonstrated.

Three Ways To Support Learning

1. Familiarise yourself with the language of character. Amazing People Schools has a handy Definition Chart you could print out to use at home – just ask your teacher for a copy.
2. Draw on character strengths when thinking about behaviour at home. If your child has done something well, try and avoid saying 'aren't you clever'. Instead, try mentioning their strengths such as 'you showed great perseverance – well done'. Alternatively, if your child needs correcting on misbehaviour, try to use character strengths as your starting place: 'Did you show kindness to your brother?'
3. Remind your child of the links between developing character strengths and supporting mental health and wellbeing. If a child is struggling to do something, reminding them of the need for courage, or perseverance (and the benefits of doing so) can be a supportive way to help.



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