Character and Resilience: A Call for Evidence

Launch date 27 May 2019
Respond by   05 July 2019

Contents

Introduction

Ian Bauckham CBE, Chair of the Character Advisory Group is seeking views on the development of character and resilience, the nature of different character-building activities provided to children and young people and what works best to improve outcomes.

Who this is for

- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- 6th Form Colleges and FE Colleges
- School and college staff, including governors
- Other educational professionals including academics and researchers
- National and local voluntary and community organisations providing activities for children and young people
- Faith groups
- Businesses
- Parents and carers
- Young people

Issue date

The call for evidence was issued on 27 May 2019.

Enquiries

If you have an enquiry about the policy content of the call for evidence you can contact the secretariat to the character advisory group

- by email: Character.CONSULTATION@education.gov.uk

If your enquiry is related to the call for evidence process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email on consultation.unit@education.gov.uk, by telephone on 0370 000 2288, or via the DfE contact us page.

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: Consultations.Coordinator@education.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the DfE Contact us page.

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from GOV.UK DfE consultations.

The response

This call for evidence closes at 11.59pm on 5 July 2019. The results of the call for evidence and the response from Ian Bauckham will be published on GOV.UK in autumn 2019.

Confidentiality of your responses

Information provided in response to this call for evidence, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department for Education will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and, your personal information will only be used for the purposes of this call for evidence. Your information will not be shared with third parties unless the law allows it.

You can read more about what the DfE does when we ask for and hold your personal information in our personal information charter.

About this call for evidence

Ian Bauckham CBE writes:

The Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds MP, has asked me to chair an advisory group which will make recommendations in the autumn of 2019 on character education and development for children and young people.

In recent years a priority for schools and colleges has been the improvement of academic outcomes, especially for disadvantaged young people, as we know that this can enable them to access a wider range of opportunities in education and employment. The government is committed through its education reforms to ensuring that all children, regardless of background, are prepared to thrive and succeed in adult life.

An excellent academic education and good qualifications sit alongside other important outcomes for young people. Developing aspects of character and resilience can also help young people to achieve their goals, overcome challenges, develop their readiness for adulthood, and help the most disadvantaged to compete more equally with their advantaged peers in the labour market.

The Secretary of State has defined character as:

- believing that you can achieve
- being able to stick with the task in hand
- seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future, and
- being able to bounce back from the knocks that life inevitably brings to all of us.

Young people also benefit from developing personal character attributes such as kindness, generosity, a sense of justice, respect, integrity and humility. These attributes can be developed and promoted through a wide range of activities, including, for example, sport, performance, creative activities, opportunities to be of service to others or to the community and experience of the workplace.

The Secretary of State has made clear that developing the work that schools are already doing to build character and resilience among young people is a high priority for him.

When the advisory group I am chairing makes its recommendations to the Secretary of State, I would like those recommendations to be informed by as wide a range of views, evidence and examples of good practice as possible. I am therefore launching this call for evidence. I would like to hear from heads and teachers in all kinds of schools, colleges and other educational settings, employers, and people running or working in local or national organisations that provide character-building activities. I would also like to hear from young people, parents and carers as well as representative bodies and academics with an interest in this issue and other groups and individuals.

If in your response to this call for evidence you mention any evidence of change or improvement in outcomes for young people that you have observed, please provide a source reference or other links to this.

I look forward to having your evidence on how we can help all children and young people fulfil their potential.

Ian Bauckham CBE
Chair, Character Advisory Group

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses, wherever possible please use the online system at www.education.gov.uk/consultations.

The call for evidence is being issued by the Department for Education on behalf of Ian Bauckham and the character advisory group that he chairs.

Other ways to respond

If for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a word document version of the form and email it or post it.

By email

- Character.CONSULTATION@education.gov.uk

By post

- Character team, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, 2nd Floor, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

Deadline

The call for evidence closes at 11.59pm on 5 July 2019.

Questions

Before you start answering the questions in this call for evidence, please note that:

- It would be helpful if you would first give some information about yourself as context to your other responses. This information is confidential and we will not publish any information that could identify you without your permission.
- You may want to answer all or just some of the questions, but please note that some questions may not be particularly relevant to you:
    - Questions 1 – 16 and question 27 are for everyone responding to the call for evidence except young people aged 13 to 18 who should answer questions 28 - 36
    - Questions 17 – 18 are for parents and carers
    - Questions 19 – 22 are for activity providers and schools/colleges
    - Questions 23 – 26 are for schools and colleges
    - Questions 28 – 36 are for young people aged 13 – 18

1. Name

First Name …………………………………………………………………………………..

Last Name …………………………………………………………………………………..

Please note: It is helpful to have your name if we want to contact you about your answers to the questions in this call for evidence. You do not have to give your name, and your views will be considered whether or not you give your name.

2. What is your email address?

If you enter your email address then you will automatically receive an acknowledgement email when you submit your response.

Email address: …………………………………………………………………………………

Please note: It is helpful to have your email address if we want to contact you about your answers to the questions in this call for evidence. You do not have to give your email address, and your views will be considered whether or not you give your email address.

3. Are you happy to be contacted directly about your response?

(Required) ○ Yes ○ No

We may wish to speak to you directly about your responses to help our understanding of the issues. If we do, we will use the email address you have given above.

4. Are you responding as an individual or as part of an organisation? (Required)

Choose an item.

5. If you are responding as an individual, how would you describe yourself?

Choose an item.

6. If you are responding for an organisation, what type of organisation is this?

Choose an item.

7. What is the name of your organisation?

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8. What is your role?

Choose an item.

9. In which local authority are you located? We are interested in knowing what the picture is in different parts of the country. Knowing the local authority in which your school, college or activity is situated will help us to understand the context of your responses. If you are a national provider, or if you are not based in any particular local authority (for example a national charity), then please show this.

Local Authority (Required)   [▼]

For the open questions below, we will only be able to read the first 250 words of your answer – please be concise.

10. We are defining character as:

- believing that you can achieve
- being able to stick with the task in hand
- seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future, and
- being able to bounce back from the knocks that life inevitably brings to all of us.

To what extent do you agree that character and resilience are important in enabling young people to be successful and to thrive in later life?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

11. Thinking about the aspects of character and resilience that you think are most important in order for people to be successful in life, are there any that you feel are **not** covered in the list below? If so, please list these and tell us why you feel they are important.

    a. Believing that you can achieve (e.g. being self-confident, believing in your own abilities)
    b. Being able to stick with the task in hand
    c. Seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future (e.g. deferred gratification, being aspirational and ambitious)
    d. Being able to bounce back from the knocks that life inevitably brings to all of us (resilience)
    e. Having strong personal qualities and values like kindness, generosity, a sense of justice, respect, integrity and humility.
    f. Social skills, such as being articulate and able to mix and work easily with others, forming and maintaining long term relationships and commitments

(Please list any missing aspects of character here and say why they are important)

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12. Which aspects of character do you think are most important in the workplace, or most valued by employers?

    a. Believing you can achieve
    b. Being able to stick with the task in hand
    c. Seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future
    d. Being able to bounce back from knocks
    e. Having strong personal qualities and values like kindness, generosity, a sense of justice, respect, integrity and humility.
    f. Social skills, such as being articulate and able to mix and work easily with others, forming and maintaining long term relationships and commitments
    g. Others (please list)

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13. What activities and approaches do you think are most effective in supporting the development of character and resilience? What evidence do you have to support this (for example, any published evaluation studies, or data collection done within your organisation)?

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14. We are keen to understand how access to character building activities can help make the greatest positive difference to groups of children and young people vulnerable to poorer life outcomes, such as those living in poverty/with economic disadvantage, having a disability or SEN, being a young carer, living in care and others.

What examples of good practice do you have that demonstrate how barriers to participation in activities can be overcome for these groups?

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15. What evidence do you have of specific activities or approaches that can be particularly helpful for these groups of children? Please be specific about which groups and provide details of the evidence you have e.g. references, links.

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16. We are keen to understand how developing character and resilience in children and young people may contribute to reducing the likelihood of gang membership and youth violence (e.g. knife crime), and preventing anti-social attitudes. Are you aware of any character-related work focused on this area?

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17. For parents and carers: How do you find the activities that you would like your children to do?

    a. I mainly look for things that they can do by themselves or with friends without having to join a particular club or organised activity
    b. I mainly choose organised activities that have been recommended by people I trust (e.g. teachers, parents, relatives, friends)
    c. I mainly choose activities that I have found online
    d. I only choose activities offered by the school my child attends
    e. Other (please write in)

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18. Thinking about the activities which you would like your children to do, which kinds of activities are the most difficult to find?

a. Sport and physical activity
b. Creative activities (e.g. coding, writing, musical composition, design)
c. Performing arts (e.g. dancing, drama, playing music, public speaking)
d. Volunteering and membership (e.g. community action, charity work, uniformed groups, Duke of Edinburgh, National Citizen Service)
e. World of work (e.g. work experience, entrepreneurial activities, contact with employers)
f. Other (please write in)

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19. For schools, colleges and activity providers: Are you responsible for delivering activities or approaches to character education?

a. Yes [if Yes, please go on to question 20]
b. No [if No, please go on to question 23]

20. If you answered yes to question 19, please indicate what sort of activity or activities you offer (tick all that apply)?

a. Sport and physical activity
b. Creative activities (e.g. coding, writing, musical composition, design)
c. Performing arts (e.g. dancing, drama, playing music, public speaking)
d. Volunteering and membership (e.g. community action, charity work, uniformed groups, Duke of Edinburgh, National Citizen Service)
e. World of work (e.g. work experience, entrepreneurial activities, contact with employers)
f. Other (please write in)

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21. If you answered Yes to question 19, what differences have you seen in children and young people as a result of the activities and approaches to character education that you are responsible for?

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22. If you answered Yes to question 19, how do you know that these activities and approaches are having an impact and how do you evaluate this? If any of your evaluation is published, please provide links.

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23. For schools and colleges only: Thinking about how school life can contribute to character development, are there any areas which feel are **not** covered in the list below? If so, please list and tell us why you feel they are important.

  a. Sport, which includes competitive sport and activities such as running, martial arts, swimming and purposeful recreational activities, such as rock climbing, hiking, orienteering, gym programmes, yoga or learning to ride a bike
  b. Creativity, which involves all creative activities such as coding, chess, arts and crafts, writing, graphic design, film-making and music composition
  c. Performing, which involves activities such as dance, theatre and drama, musical performance, choir, debating or public speaking
  d. Volunteering and membership, including activities which bring together teams for practical action in the service of others or groups, such as volunteering, litter-picking, fundraising, and structured youth programmes or uniformed groups like Beavers, Brownies, Cubs, Guides, Scouts, Cadets and Duke of Edinburgh
  e. World of work, including practical experience of the world of work, work experience or entrepreneurship. For primary age children, this may involve opportunities to meet role models from different jobs.
  f. Teaching practices in lessons which support development of character
  g. A strong school ethos and climate including a whole school approach to character education

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24. How do you find the individuals and organisations you use to help you support children and young people to develop character and resilience?

  a. I don't use outside organisations or individuals - all activities are provided directly by my school/college
  b. I mainly use outside organisations or individuals recommended by people I trust (e.g. teachers, parents, other schools/colleges, MAT, Local Authority, professional association)
  c. I mainly use outside organisations or individuals that I have found online if I am satisfied they are of a good standard and affordable
  d. I mainly use organisations or individuals that approach me directly if I am satisfied they are of a good standard and affordable
  e. Other (please write in)

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25. Thinking about the activities which can help to build character, which kinds of activities are the most difficult to find?

    a. Sport and physical activity
    b. Creative activities (e.g. coding, writing, musical composition, design)
    c. Performing arts (e.g. dancing, drama, playing music, public speaking)
    d. Volunteering and membership (e.g. community action, charity work, uniformed groups, Duke of Edinburgh, National Citizen Service)
    e. World of work (e.g. work experience, entrepreneurial activities, contact with employers)
    f. Other (please write in)

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26. We are interested in your views on the best ways to support schools/colleges in character development work. Which of the following could be helpful:

    a. Information and guidance
    b. Practical examples from other schools in similar contexts
    c. Strong messaging at national level about the value and importance of developing character
    d. More support or involvement from voluntary and youth organisations
    e. Identifying and sharing outstanding practice
    f. A practical framework to assist in planning and development of character work
    g. More support from employers and the workplace
    h. Other (please make suggestions)

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27. For all respondents: Finally, please share any views or specific examples of character development which have not been captured elsewhere which you think will assist us to support schools and other organisations in character development.

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28. For young people: When we talk about character we mean:

- believing that you can achieve
- being able to stick with the task in hand
- seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future, and
- being able to bounce back from the knocks that life inevitably brings to all of us.

How much do you agree that character and resilience can help you to be successful and to thrive in later life?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

29. Thinking about the aspects of character and resilience that you think are most important in order for people to be successful in life, are there any that you feel are **not** covered in the list below? If so, please list these and tell us why you feel they are important.

a. Believing that you can achieve (e.g. being self-confident, believing in your own abilities)
b. Being able to stick with the task in hand
c. Seeing a link between effort today and payback or success in the future (e.g. being willing to wait for a larger reward in the future rather than accepting a small reward today, being aspirational and ambitious)
d. Being able to bounce back from the knocks that life inevitably brings to all of us (sometimes called resilience)
e. Having strong personal qualities and values like kindness, generosity, a sense of justice, respect, integrity and humility.
f. Social skills, such as being able to express yourself clearly, being able to mix and work easily with other people, being able to make and stick with relationships and commitments over a long period of time.

Please write here any aspects of character you think are missing from the list above and say why they are important

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30. What aspects of character do you think are most important at work, or most valued by employers?

a. Believing you can achieve
b. Being able to stick with the task in hand
c. Seeing a link between effort today and payback in the future
d. Being able to bounce back from knocks
e. Having strong personal qualities and values like kindness, generosity, a sense of justice, respect, integrity and humility.
f. Social skills, such as being able to express yourself clearly, being able to mix and work easily with other people, being able to make and stick with relationships and commitments over a long period of time.
g. Others (please write them here)

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31. How do you find the activities that you would like to do?

    a. I mainly look for things that I can do by myself or with friends without having to join a particular club or organised activity

    b. I mainly choose organised activities that have been recommended by people I trust (e.g. teachers, parents, relatives, friends)

    c. I mainly choose activities that I have found online

    d. I only choose activities that are offered by the school or college I go to

    e. Other (please write them here)

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32. Thinking about the activities which you would like to do, which kinds of activities are the **most difficult** to find?

    a. Sport and physical activity

    b. Creative activities (e.g. coding, writing, musical composition, design)

    c. Performing arts (e.g. dancing, drama, playing music, public speaking)

    d. Volunteering and membership (e.g. community action, charity work, uniformed groups, Duke of Edinburgh, National Citizen Service)

    e. World of work (e.g. work experience, entrepreneurial activities, contact with employers)

    f. Other (please write them here)

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33. Which of the activities that you have taken part in as you have grown up do you think have been most useful to you in developing character? (Please write them here and briefly explain why)

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34. We want to make sure all children can take part in character-building activities, regardless of their background. Based on your own experience or of other young people you know, what obstacles stop young people from taking part (e.g. not enough money, having to care for others, a disability or special educational need), and how can these obstacles be overcome?

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35. How much do you agree that developing the character traits listed in questions 19 and 20, are useful in helping children and young people avoid getting into gangs and violence (e.g. knife crime) and stop them from developing antisocial attitudes?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

36. Finally, please let us know if there is anything else which you think will help us to help children and young people develop character.

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Thank you very much for completing the call for evidence. The results will be used to help us better understand what good character education looks like.

Please let us know any further comments or thoughts that you would like to share with us by emailing us at: Character.CONSULTATION@education.gov.uk

About this publication:

enquiries	www.education.gov.uk/contactus
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