

A SCHOOL OF GREAT CHARACTER

Our purpose and virtues





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Exeter School.
A school of
great character.

INTRODUCTION

For almost four centuries Exeter School has proudly provided an excellent education for its pupils.

In this time the classroom has been a challenging and exciting environment, but that has only ever been a part of what makes our education excellent. Our pupils have always had many opportunities to develop their character: on the sports field, on the moors and on the water; in the work of our chapel and community service schemes; through the CCF and the expressive and performing arts, for example.

We have been developing the character of excellent Exonians through this holistic approach for centuries.

In Ancient Greece, Aristotle said “We are what we repeatedly do; Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit”. This virtue-ethics approach is very much the philosophy that sits at the heart of our character education. Our intentional programme to develop the civic, intellectual, performance and moral virtues in our pupils gives them the traits needed to thrive in life, both at school and beyond. We want them to aspire to contribute in a positive way to the community in which they live, and to flourish in life, both at school and in adult life beyond.

Our purpose and virtues are crucial in supporting the character development of our pupils, and making them exceptional young people, ready for whatever challenges they encounter in life. In addition, they sit at the heart of all that the school does. In being a school of character, we want our whole community to embrace this approach. This means considering others and the world around us when making decisions, ensuring that we nurture and develop our staff team, work in a sustainable way, work collaboratively with others, including our partner organisations, and ensure that we remain accountable for our choices.

Such strong foundations have made us an exceptional school for many centuries, and we look forward to the future with excitement, just as our young people do.

Louise Simpson
Head





WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EXONIAN

An Exeter School education encourages every child to develop their potential and discover the world around them. Exploring the many opportunities offered. Embracing their difference. Seizing every moment.

Standing on the shoulders of our past, we help today's pupils look to the future; focusing on a fully rounded education so they set off down life's path well-grounded. We prepare our pupils to lead fulfilling, happy and productive lives. Lives which make a positive contribution to the lives of others. Lives that make a positive impact on the world around them.

All members of the Exonian community are challenged to excel beyond their expectations, within a supportive culture of excellence, pastoral care, academic challenge and character development. That's how we aspire. That's how we flourish. That's what makes us Exonians.

DEVELOPING CHARACTER; A BALANCED EDUCATION

More than anything, we believe in the importance of good character. Our approach is based on the established principles of character education, grounded in the development of virtues, the character traits that sustain a well-rounded life and a thriving society.

Throughout their time as an Exonian, pupils develop a range of skills based on the four key areas of virtue development: intellectual, moral, civic and performance. As a result, pupils are well-prepared for all that they encounter, both at school and beyond. This is what enables them to aspire and flourish, both personally and academically.





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, *for 400 years*

It has been the vision of those who have come before us, and their willingness to adapt and seize opportunities, that has given us such a strong foundation today.

Exeter School has a proud and strong reputation, established over almost four centuries, as a centre for educational excellence in the South West. Throughout that time our school has evolved into a vibrant, forward-thinking, contemporary independent school of the highest quality; always seeking to move ahead and prepare its pupils for an ever-changing future.



OUR PURPOSE AND VIRTUES

OUR PURPOSE; TO ASPIRE AND FLOURISH

We strive to build a flourishing community of individuals with each valued for their own unique contribution.

We challenge all members of the Exonian community to excel beyond expectations within a supportive culture of excellence, pastoral care, academic challenge and character development.





**ACT WITH KINDNESS
AND INTEGRITY**



**WELCOME
AND SERVE**

**ASPIRE
AND
FLOURISH**



**ENDEAVOUR
AND COLLABORATE**



**INSPIRE AND CHALLENGE
CURIOUS MINDS**



INSPIRE AND CHALLENGE CURIOUS MINDS

We are curious, independent thinkers,
achieving beyond our expectations.

We inspire everyone in the school community to be curious, independent thinkers, enabling each individual to achieve beyond their expectations. Academic excellence is central to the school's ethos, and we continuously explore creative ways to provide academic challenge and to support each child to thrive. Technology for learning is embedded in the curriculum, so you will see all pupils using technology to enhance their learning. Expanding horizons outside of the curriculum, you'll see pupils exploring everything from classics to chess, Marvel™ to mindfulness. You'll also see our staff running trips that inspire curiosity, such as a geography expedition to Iceland or a classics trip to Rome. What you won't see, but you'll definitely hear are the stories inspired by experiences. Stories of journeys made, skills discovered and friendships forged.



ACT WITH KINDNESS AND INTEGRITY

We act with integrity, respect and kindness for others and ourselves.

We understand ourselves, show care for those around us and do the right thing even when no one is looking. Our pastoral programme, including PSHE education, promotes a culture of mutual respect between pupils, their peers and teachers. We care for the environment around us too, always making sure that we explore the most sustainable option. You'll see junior school pupils supporting new joiners as part of our buddy programme. You'll see senior pupils collaborating with younger pupils in house meetings. You'll see trees planted by pupils, our bus network that take pupils away from cars, and you'll see EcoSoc (our environmental society) installing recycling boxes throughout the school, organising Christmas jumper swaps and writing articles on environmentalism. What are less visible, but very much there, are those everyday acts of kindness shared by the whole Exonian community.





WELCOME AND SERVE

We are an inclusive Exonian community, valuing diversity and equality, and giving back to others.

We welcome all into our Exonian community, valuing diversity and celebrating inclusion and equality in our classrooms, friendships and decision-making. We serve others within our school, local and global communities, giving back and acting for the common good. We appreciate that we have wonderful facilities, and we gladly share these with other local schools. You will see our pupils running music and drama workshops and local primary schools using our swimming pool. You will see the pupil-led charity committee raising thousands for humanitarian appeals. You might also catch a glimpse of our Lower Sixth pupils delivering PSHE lessons to our junior school pupils.

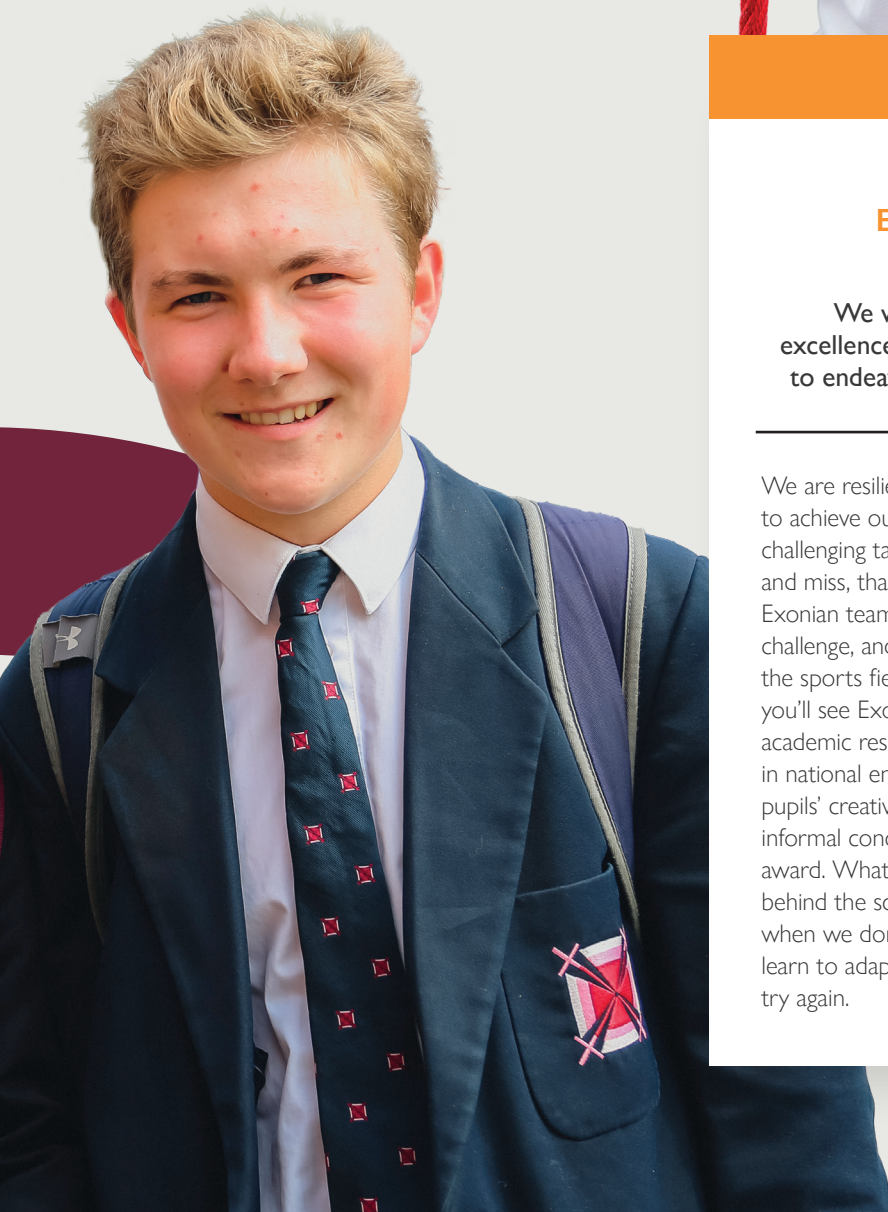




ENDEAVOUR AND COLLABORATE

We work together and strive for excellence in everything we do, continuing to endeavour when faced with challenge.

We are resilient team-players, collaborating to achieve our shared goals. We set ourselves challenging targets, preferring to aim too high and miss, than aim too low and hit. You'll see Exonian teams on Dartmoor, tackling the Ten Tors challenge, and being committed competitors on the sports field - win or lose. In the classroom, you'll see Exonians achieving some of the best academic results in the region and participating in national engineering challenges. You'll also see pupils' creative talents showcased through our informal concert series and artist of the moment award. What you might not see, as it often happens behind the scenes, is that we pick each other up when we don't quite achieve what we aimed for, learn to adapt and encourage each other to try again.





OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Over the next five years, the following six strategic threads will underpin our approach.



PUPIL DEVELOPMENT, WELFARE, AND WELLBEING



We provide excellent pastoral care for every pupil through a system which identifies and supports each child's needs and ensures that every child is valued for their contribution, and able to flourish.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Make pupils' welfare, safeguarding and wellbeing our number one priority always.
- Work closely with parents, providing support and resources including staying safe while online in order that, together, we can best support their children as they develop.
- Enhance and listen to pupil voice so that pupils have a democratic input in the school and build strong relationships with staff.
- Ensure a fully supported journey through the school for all our pupils, from our youngest children through to the sixth form, with a focus on smooth transitions.
- Provide an education which supports pupils' personal development and allows them to explore spirituality and morality.
- Provide an effective structure and system to support excellent pastoral care in a modern, day school environment.
- Review and develop the pastoral role of all staff.
- Have safeguarding procedures that go beyond best practice nationally and locally, to ensure that our procedures and practice, regularly audited, will always protect children.
- Appoint specialist and highly qualified support staff to complement the skills of the teaching staff team and support their work, particularly regarding safeguarding.
- Work closely with outside agencies where necessary to support individuals and groups of pupils.
- Have a broad and responsive pastoral curriculum to meet our pupils' needs; to include PSHE education, RSE, mental health and wellbeing strategies and emotional support that not only support pupils during their school career but also equip them with the knowledge and skills to lead happy and healthy adult lives, keeping themselves and others safe.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

We provide intellectual challenge and academic rigour for all in our community, whatever their age and stage, supported by the highest quality teaching and learning practices, and the most innovative approaches in the classroom. This requires the very best teachers and support staff, with excellent pedagogic and subject knowledge to ensure that every child has access to the curriculum at their level and beyond. All of this is set against a backdrop of a broad, stimulating and relevant curriculum which prepares our pupils for the challenges and rewards of life beyond school.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Create and embed an integrated journey through the school for all our pupils, from the early years to our sixth form ensuring consistency and continuity. Empower all staff together to generate and act on innovative ideas in learning and teaching in pursuit of excellence and, similarly, facilitate pupils in collaborating to reach their goals.
- Review and implement curriculum development to ensure an inspiring experience in the classroom; offer courses and qualifications which best suit our pupils to provide the right academic challenge and excitement, and opportunities for creative and physical expression.
- Encourage pupils to be curious, independent and confident in their thinking, enabling them to take risks in their learning.
- Drive the development of sophisticated and effective technical and digital skills to support teaching and learning.
- Approach all learning and teaching with a growth mindset, adopting best practice from contemporary research.
- Review and develop ways to share progress and attainment data with parents which provides robust and helpful feedback from teaching and pastoral staff, in a timely fashion.
- Strengthen and develop the transition phases, from the early years through to the sixth form.
- Embed creativity throughout the curriculum to ensure that pupils are problem solvers and innovators in their learning.
- Recognise and embrace opportunities for learning beyond the classroom through our enhanced academic enrichment programme.
- Create opportunities for academic competition, extension, stretch and challenge.





DEVELOPING CHARACTER

Our approach is based on a philosophy of the development of flourishing individuals through our character education programme. We are committed to developing character and virtue within all aspects of school life. We provide the very highest standard of enrichment activities, across a broad range of areas, to appeal to all pupils and allow them to enhance a range of attributes under our four virtues, which are aligned to each pillar of character education.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Focus our co-curricular programme through the lens of character education.
- Develop character throughout the learning journey – from early years to sixth form – using consistent approaches and language to encourage pupils to aspire and flourish.
- Ensure strong and effective leadership to take our character education programme forward.
- Continue to develop the breadth and depth of opportunities open to pupils, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Appoint and develop staff with a commitment to the character education programme and support their development to lead the many activities with confidence and skill.
- Invest in facilities and resources to support the delivery of an excellent character education programme on site.
- Embed a spirit of service for the common good.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT, WELFARE, AND WELLBEING



We recognise the importance and value of our staff team, and are committed to their professional development, welfare and wellbeing. Using a strategic overview of staff development needs, and shared resources, we support staff to meet their personal goals within the context of the school's overarching strategic development.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Employ the very best staff and continue to provide the very best continuing professional development for them to enhance their skills in post.
- Support the development for our staff – always considering their welfare and wellbeing – and ensuring that their voices are heard in the decision-making process of the school.
- Develop and empower all staff to innovate and embrace new ideas.
- Embed a distributed leadership model where middle leaders are empowered to make operational decisions and senior leaders have more time to deliver strategically important projects.
- Provide opportunities for stepping-stone leadership positions.
- Provide opportunities for staff to benefit from the full 3-18 journey of our pupils.



WORKING WITH PARTNERS

We work closely with the members of our local and wider communities for the common good; to establish strong and positive working relationships and, in so doing, allow our pupils to develop in their civic contributions.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Continue to develop and enhance our relationships with parents.
- Work in partnership with local organisations and groups, both within and beyond education.
- Have effective leadership and oversight to manage the partnership programme and ensure full engagement and commitment from those involved, both staff and pupils.
- Reach out proactively to those in the local community to engage them in the life of the Exonian community, and be inclusive and welcoming in our approach.
- Foster an ethos of charitable service for the benefit of others.
- Develop our marketing and admissions strategies and entry points to ensure that we are accessible to all who will benefit from our educational offer, reaching out to individuals and groups who might not otherwise know about the school, or consider the school as an option for them.
- Develop and enhance our means-tested bursary programme and extend our reach to prospective pupils who would benefit from an Exeter School education, regardless of their means to pay – to be inclusive and accessible.

SUSTAINABLE FOUNDATIONS

We deliver our purpose in a sustainable way through strong governance and leadership. We ensure that we are caring for the environment, socially aware, supportive of our people and the community, and promote ethical practice in all we do.

To achieve this, the school will:

- Always ensure that we have explored the most sustainable option, employing best practice to monitor and work towards this goal.
- Have the highest standards of governance, with a diverse and inclusive board.
- Employ prudent, robust and ambitious financial planning

to ensure that school financial resources are used well and keep the school site fit for purpose as a modern school.

- Deliver best value for money for parents, giving excellent outcomes and providing transparency in financial matters.
- Ensure that the school is well resourced and supported with appropriate technology and the physical resources and spaces necessary.
- Focus on renewing relationships with our alumni and developing sustainable fundraising to grow philanthropic income in the medium term.
- Develop our commercial letting activities, seeking to maximise income and make best use of our facilities and to support local community initiatives and partners.





Being accountable.

Each year the school will challenge and review each of the six strategic threads.



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