

Laidlaw Scholars – Extracurricular School Programme

Title Identifying a character framework for co-curricular programmes in Oxfordshire primary schools

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Aim Create a character framework that is specific to the needs of primary school students in Oxfordshire to improve life outcomes.

SDGs
SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being
SDG4: Quality Education
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
(The template said to also list the subgoals)

Research Question:

Based on the existing literature suggesting that character education improves life outcomes, which character qualities should co-curricular educators focus on to improve the life outcomes of primary school students in Oxfordshire?

What character education framework should the University of Oxford implement in the co-curriculars that it wants to deliver to local primary schools, based on their context-specific character needs and wants?

Objectives (List Three)

Create a rationale that will help us identify the character needs of primary school students in Oxfordshire (through a literature review and interviews with character education experts), which we can use to design data collection tools.

Analyse the collected data using the rationale to identify the character qualities that will be best to focus on / prioritise for students (within co-curricular programmes), turn those character qualities into a framework that help primary students in Oxfordshire achieve desired life outcomes, when implemented effectively into co-curricular programmes and present this framework to the students, teachers and parents to see they feel aligned to it / if it resonates with them.

Present our research in the form of a 4000–6000-word dissertation and accompanying poster

Rationale (250-500 words)

1) Context: What is the current situation/problem you're addressing?

10 out of Oxford's 83 neighbourhoods are amongst the 20% most deprived in England (and one of them, Northfield Brook, is amongst the 10% most deprived). 1 in 4 children live below the poverty line. Blackbird Leys has some of the lowest educational attainment in the country. Identifying a suitable character framework is crucial to the effectiveness of character-building co-curriculars, which in turn could prove a useful method to improve life outcomes for schoolchildren in Oxfordshire.

2) Gap: What don't we know or what needs to be solved?

Parts of Oxfordshire are educationally deprived, and character education can be used to improve live outcomes. Therefore, we need to develop a framework of the character-specific needs of Oxfordshire schoolchildren with which to design a co-curricular program.

3) Significance: Why does this matter now? Who is affected? (This is important because...)

Creating a framework of the character specific needs of primary students in Oxfordshire will pave the way for future Laidlaw scholars (or other organisations, such schools themselves) to design, implement and evaluate character-building co-curriculars.

4) Evidence: What existing research/data supports your rationale? (Include at least 5 key references)

Oxford City Council (2019). *The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 Oxford City Results Overview*. [online] Available at:

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1251/indices-of-deprivation-2019-oxford-report>.

EVALUATION HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOLS Guidance, approaches and methods for the self-evaluation of taught and caught character education provision

CHARACTER EDUCATION. (n.d.). Available at:

<https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/CharacterEducationEvaluationHandbook.pdf>.

Lamb, M., Brant, J., & Brooks, E. (2021). [How is virtue cultivated? Seven strategies for postgraduate character development](#). *Journal of Character Education*, 17(1), 81–108

Laidlaw X. (n.d.). Laidlaw Foundation.

Crossan, M. M., Byrne, A., Seijts, G. H., Reno, M., Monzani, L., & Gandz, J. (2017). [Toward a framework of leader character in organizations](#). *Journal of Management Studies*, 54(7), 986–1018

5) Your contribution: How will your research help address this gap?

Our research will create a character framework tailored to the unique character needs of primary students in Oxfordshire. In our careful consideration of rationale and methodology, we hope to create a blueprint for identifying the character-specific needs of a community, which future researchers can test and expand upon.

Stakeholder Mapping:

Identify at least three key stakeholders for your research. Stakeholders are people/groups who are affected by your topic or can help with your research.

Stakeholder	Why they're relevant to your topic	How you'll engage them	What you need from them
1. Students	<p>These are the people whose life outcomes we want to improve</p> <p>Some students may be able to effectively reflect and identify their unique character needs, which will help us identify the character needs of the larger group of students we are trying to serve (students in a specific age group in a specific school etc.)</p>	Indirectly, through teacher-led / head teacher-led / head of year or key stage-led focus groups and or surveys	Data about their character specific needs
2. Parents / Guardians	Their children are the people whose life outcomes we want to improve. It is their role to allow or disallow their children from taking part in the co-curricular programmes in which we want to integrate	Directly, through surveys and or focus groups	<p>Data about their views on the framework that we end up proposing</p> <p>Data about the character specific needs of their children</p>

	<p>character education. Their opinions and views about the character education that will be integrated into the co-curricular programmes will be an important factor that influences their decision to let or not let their children take part in the co-curricular programmes. Their opinions of the programme will also likely influence their children's opinions and perceptions about character, influencing their character development journey. Having the support of parents will enhance the positive impact of the character education integrated into the co-curricular programmes (because character is caught). These are</p>		
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	<p>people who may have a good understanding of where the students are on their character journey and what their character needs are.</p> <p>(the struggles they face, the challenges they will face in the future, what will be required of them in terms of character, what aspects of character are neglected in their upbringing and the school curriculum etc.)</p>		
<p>3. Teachers</p>	<p>These are people that will hopefully be encouraging their students to take part in the co-curricular programmes that we are trying to integrate character into.</p> <p>These are people who may have a really good understanding</p>	<p>Directly, through surveys and or focus groups</p>	<p>Data about the character specific needs of their students</p>

	<p>of where the students are on their character journey and what their character needs are.</p> <p>(the struggles they face, the challenges they will face in the future, what will be required of them in terms of character, what aspects of character are neglected in their upbringing and the school curriculum etc.)</p>		
<p>4. Head Teachers / Heads of years / Heads of Key stage</p>	<p>These are people who may have a good understanding of where students in the entire year group, key stage, school are on their character journey and what their character needs are, from being informed by the students' actual teachers and parents.</p>	<p>Directly through interviews, potentially focus groups with multiple head teachers, potentially surveys</p>	<p>Data about the character specific needs of their students</p>

	<p>(the struggles they face, the challenges they will face in the future, what will be required of them in terms of character, what aspects of character are neglected in their upbringing and the school curriculum etc.)</p>		
<p>5. Character education specialists</p>	<p>These are people who will have a really good understanding of and be able to impart knowledge and wisdom about character and the components that are needed to build an effective character framework. These are people who may have a really good understanding about and be able to impart knowledge and wisdom about effective rationales and strategies to create character</p>	<p>Directly, through interviews, indirectly through literature</p>	<p>Data regarding rationales that produce effective character education programmes and features of effective character frameworks, potentially as well features of effective context-specific character frameworks, potentially guidance / insight / wisdom as to how to go about researching and collecting data about the character specific needs of students in X context.</p>

	frameworks that are tailored to specific contexts.		
6. Youth development specialists	These are people who may have a really good understanding of where students in specific age groups and backgrounds are on their character journey and what their character needs are. (the struggles they face, the challenges they will face in the future, what will be required of them in terms of character, what aspects of character are neglected in their upbringing and the school curriculum etc.)	Directly, through interviews, indirectly through literature	Data about the character specific needs of students in particular age groups and or students in X context.

Research Methods:

Describe your proposed research approach (Quant/Qual, Survey/Interview, Lit Review):

Create a rationale (in the form of a list of criteria and guiding principles) to identify the character specific needs of primary students in Oxfordshire, through a literature review and insight from character education experts.

Use this rationale to design surveys, focus groups and interviews to collect data from parents, teachers, head teachers, character education experts and youth development experts on the character needs of the students.

Analyse the data we collect from the surveys, focus groups and interviews to create a framework of character qualities that is specific to the character needs of students in Oxfordshire and can be applied to co-curricular programmes, based on the four frameworks we found in literature (Laidlaw, VIA, Jubilee, and Crossan). Transcripts from interviews and focus groups will require thematic analysis alongside survey results.

Present the framework to students, teachers, parents, head teachers, youth development experts to find out to what extent they think our framework will be an effective educational tool for developing the students' character.

Write up the research chapter and the poster.

Time Management:

Key thing to consider: timeline of the school ruby anne proposed and working w. other groups + also Corey, would it at all be possible if you could please help us find articles for the literature review(s)?

Create a Gantt chart ([template](#)) outlining your research strategy/timeline

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Research proposal					
Literature review					
	Design Survey				
	Contact schools				
	Design interview questions				
		Speak to character education experts conference (17/7)			
		Deliver surveys and interviews at other schools			
			Analyse data to make framework		
			Discuss framework with experts		
				Discuss framework with teachers and parents	
					Write up and poster

