



The Halifax Academy

Character

**“Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living;
the other helps you make a life.”**

Eleanor Roosevelt

Our unique **Character Curriculum** runs alongside our academic curriculum, and it underpins a school-wide approach designed to give every student not just the best possible start in life but a mixture of life-long skills and awareness that will help them forever. Based around our three key pillars of **Heart, Mind, Connect**, it's about developing students into wise, conscientious and insightful citizens while giving them the personal qualities and confidence they'll need to be happy, healthy and fit for whatever future lies ahead of them.

At every point in their school life here, students are actively taught and encouraged to develop a strong moral compass and the skills and confidence to act on it, whether that's by doing the right thing, leading by example or speaking out on behalf of those without a voice. We teach British values of kindness, tolerance and social responsibility, as well as talking to students about how governance and power structures work in the wider UK. We nurture everyday qualities too, like courage and perseverance, and the resilience students will need for taking risks and sometimes failing at things they love. Communication is another recurring theme, and the work we do gives students the all-round skills and confidence to be great communicators in any situation at school, home or out in the wider world.

Staying safe and well is another theme of our **Character Curriculum** and we cover a wide range of essential everyday topics, from making good choices, dealing with peer pressure and keeping safe online through to the importance of good sleep and staying well physically, mentally and emotionally. For our adolescent students these are particularly important subjects, and sometimes challenging ones too, but the self-care habits they learn here will help them for the rest of their lives as well as while they're here. We also talk about identity, and we help our students understand their place within their families, communities and the world as a whole. Above all, we help them grow into proud and confident adults, and fine representatives of whichever ethnic or religious community they're from.

While much of this learning takes place in the classroom, we also get students involved with community and charity groups, like the local foodbank and our own community kitchen. Our Big Learning Lessons is another initiative that breaks with schooling convention, here using our Great Hall to bring older students together at least three times every year in order to help them achieve four key objectives: Develop Voice, Build Consensus, Learn Together and Create Community. We also use our internal structures and relationships to help support children and develop their character throughout the year groups, like our house, prefect and ambassador schemes, a buddy system for younger children and dedicated 'leaders' for sport and play.

Ultimately, we think the best way to help students thrive long term is to let them experience first-hand the value of mutual respect, collective effort and human connections with others, and at the same time give them the soft skills and emotional intelligence to make contributions of their own to all three. That's exactly what our Character Curriculum is about.

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