

CARDINAL WISEMAN

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Wider Personal Development @ Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Dear parent/carers,

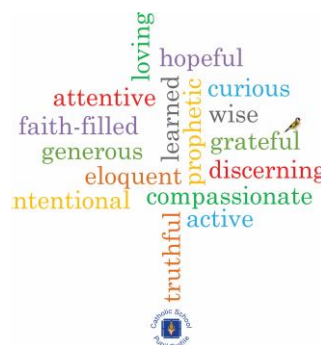
In a recent questionnaire that was sent to all parents/carers, one of the statements was as follows:

The school supports my child's wider personal development.

From the 155 responses, we had 11% stating that they don't know, 9% disagreed and 1.3% strongly disagreed. With this in mind, I feel it is important that parents/carers fully understand what is meant by wider personal development.

As a Catholic school, we strongly value the development of the whole child.

We know that good examination results are important for future success. However, we strive to provide a fully rounded education where our children become great citizens who are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain. With that in mind, the Wiseman Virtues are at the heart of our school. We reflect upon and use these virtues across the school in many ways such as our merit system, rewards events, assemblies, prayer etc.



Below is information regarding some of the things that we do at CWCS in regards to the **wider personal development** of your child. Please note that this does not cover all that we do but focuses on some of the activities that we offer.

Formation Time - pupils meet as a form group with their Formation Tutor once a day for a range of learning activities. Here is a plan of the activities that take place on a weekly basis:

- **Assemblies** - this year we have had assemblies about a range of themes including safeguarding, mental health, careers etc.
- **Two Personal Development sessions per week with a focus on PSHE** (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education). We cover a wide range of themes under the heading of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World which are taken from the PSHE Association (leading association for PSHE).

The PSHE curriculum is designed to help our students stay healthy, safe and prepared for life and work in modern Britain. As well as this, the PSHE curriculum aims to improve the psychosocial wellbeing of students too. With improved health and well-being, students can achieve better academically, leading to greater success.

Each aspect of PSHE is a vital part of the subject and is covered thoroughly; key topics such as bullying, drugs education, mental and emotional health, well-being, relationships, health and sex education and

money in the wider world are all explored. We aspire our students to thrive as moral individuals and respectable members of society, thus providing them with both the skills and knowledge to manage their lives and make the right decisions is crucial.

- **Citizenship** topics have been plotted into the personal development long-term plan, and each year group spends time having bespoke Citizenship lessons, where they gain a greater understanding of how to play an active role in modern society. They learn about democracy and government, rights and responsibilities, the justice system, active citizenship, diversity and identity, and financial literacy.
- **Careers** - we devote a lot of time in school preparing the pupils for their lives beyond Cardinal Wiseman. Pupils have to stay in education, employment and / or training until they are 18, and therefore need to plan for what they are going to do immediately post-16, and then with their longer-term future career. Careers is an important part of the PSHE curriculum and is promoted in different subject areas. Careers related workshops, Work Experience, talks, trips and events are a regular part of the school calendar; every pupil in Year 10 and 11 has a one-to-one interview with a qualified, impartial careers advisor, and Unifrog is the platform we use to promote careers at every opportunity.

Transformation Curriculum – this initiative, which started in Sept 2019, allows every child to experience a range of activities beyond the normal curriculum. We do this to:

- ✓ Develop pupils' character - including their confidence, independence and resilience
- ✓ Broaden our pupils' horizons with new opportunities and enriching experiences
- ✓ Prepare pupils to be active citizens who contribute positively to society
- ✓ Strengthen pupils' sense of belonging within our school community

Transformation is also one of the many ways we seek to promote skill development with the pupils. Indeed, in the summer of 2024 the school was recognised for all that we do to promote the 8 essential skills with the pupils by being awarded the **Skills Builder Silver Award**, putting us in a select group of schools and colleges across the UK. Essential skills are the fundamental abilities that everyone needs to succeed in school, work, and daily life. They help you to build a strong foundation for your future careers because they are transferable to nearly any job or industry, and so it is really important the pupils work on developing these skills every day.



Congratulations to

Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

We're building the essential skills for success.



Tom Ravenscroft,
Founder & CEO, Skills Builder Partnership
skillsbuilder.org



We have many additional external providers offering *Taekwondo*, *LAMDA examinations in Speech and Acting*, *Archery*, *Boxing*, *the Army* to name a few and we have increased the number of nationally recognised schemes and awards on offer to our pupils including the *Duke of Edinburgh Award*, *Jas Award*, *Sports Leaders*, *Young Enterprise (Business)* and *LAMDA examinations in acting*

When Ofsted visited in 2021, they wrote the following about the Transformation Curriculum: ***"It contributes exceptionally well to pupils' wider development"***. ***Ofsted Oct 2021***

Character Education – in May 2023, Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School was successful in our application for the **Quality Mark + Award** from ACE (Association for Character Education) for our exceptional character provision. The CEO of ACE, Tom Haigh, spoke to a range of pupils from Years 7-10, staff and a governor and looked at a range of evidence that shows that we are a school where the Wiseman Virtues and good character are at the heart of all that we do. This prestigious award, which is the top award, clearly shows that as a school we focus on developing well-rounded individuals. It is wonderful to see such recognition for the fabulous work by everyone in our school community.

Extra-curricular activities

We have a strong provision of extra-curricular activities on offer which have already been shared with you. I cannot emphasise enough the importance of extra-curricular activities in the overall development of our pupils. I hope to see more and more pupils participating in activities in the future.

Enrichment trips - each year we offer an extensive range of enrichment trips to broaden our pupils' horizons, provide opportunities to develop essential skills and further develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

This year we have taken pupils to Switzerland, Germany and France, the National Science Museum, Symphony Hall in Birmingham to see the world class 'CBSO - City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra', retreats for all year groups, a walking tour of London to name just a few of the trips.

We also have an extensive range of trips that are linked to subject specific areas such as the Geography trips to Carding Mill Valley and Birmingham city centre, drama trips to the theatre and music concerts and RE trips to visit places of worship such as a synagogue in Birmingham etc.

Later this month we have pupils going to Twycross Zoo, Conkers to develop teamwork and the beach.

Mental Health and Wellbeing – at Cardinal Wiseman we teach the pupils that it is 'okay not to be okay' at times and encourage them to reach out for support, both internally and externally, should they feel they need it. We also teach about the importance of resilience and of learning how to help ourselves when we are struggling. We have a dedicated team of staff who have specific mental health first aid training, and a series of wellbeing initiatives running across the school. We also work closely with external organisations such as Compass MHST and KOOTH. **All that we do for wellbeing was recognised in our recent BREATHE survey results.** For the past 4 years Cardinal Wiseman has ranked in the top 5 of all secondary schools in Birmingham for pupil wellbeing, as voted for by the students themselves. This is an impressive achievement.

A few years ago, I shared with you a wonderful report written by Anna Bateman who is a specialist in the field of Mental Health about what we do in regards to Mental Health and Wellbeing for our school community. The report was wholly positive. Here is a short extract:

"I have had both the privilege and benefit of working with 100's of schools over the last 10 years or so. It means that when I see a school and leadership team as committed to the well-being of students (and mean it) as this school, I know that the legacy they leave for students is long lasting. The school plays a part in developing a healthy personality, personal growth and a positive grounding on which to maintain good mental health well into adulthood".

For more information about Personal Development, please go to: <https://www.cardinalwiseman.net/personal-development-2/>

Our school mantra this year has been 'ad astra' which translates as 'to the stars'. I firmly believe that through the vast array of different ways in which we focus on the wider, personal development of the pupils in our school this enables pupils to aim for, reach and go beyond the stars.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Beckett

Senior Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development / DSL

'The school's promotion of pupils' wider development is extremely effective. Leaders place as much emphasis on personal development as they do on academic excellence'. Ofsted Sept 2021