

March Newsletter

The AGS Learner

*“Real courage is when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what.”*

When Harper Lee gave Atticus these words in *To Kill a Mockingbird* back in 1960, did she realise how much they would resonate in education today? A quick search online or in newspapers reveals that “character” is the current buzz word in education. Hitherto seen as a fairly traditional take on education, many now speak boldly on the benefits of characteristics such as motivation, perseverance and courage. At AGS we have long realised this, with our united aim of what it means to learn at AGS epitomised in our motto *Respect and Aspire*. As for perseverance, Harper Lee would be well qualified to speak on this, set to release her second novel this year (albeit written before the first), aged 88.

After consultation with staff, students and parents over the past months, we are delighted to have finalised the five characteristics we believe will make our students better learners: ownership, motivation, resilience, innovation and courage. The focus now will be on threading this through the curriculum - every teacher, every lesson, every day.

Recent research in character education has come from Professor Angela Lee Duckworth who advocates “grit” as a predictor of success. Her maxim *“Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint”* encourages us all to see education as the start of a longer journey through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and the importance of the values that will help our students make a success of that journey. Watch her Ted talk online ([https://www.ted.com/speakers/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth](https://www.ted.com/speakers/angela_lee_duckworth)) and email me ([vbeckley@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:vbeckley@ags.bucks.sch.uk)) or Gurdeep Singh, Assistant Headteacher ([gsingh@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:gsingh@ags.bucks.sch.uk)) if you have any thoughts on this or any other aspect of character education.

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