

ATTITUDE MATTERS

Schools and the Heads UP Programme

The Independent Sector is justly proud of producing many of the **leaders** in our society over the years and particularly so of the development of **character** in the students they have produced.

There has however, been a marked focus in the last few years on the **marketing** of schools to parents on the basis of academic results and the provision of technical resources. There is clearly now an opportunity in the Independent Sector to reorganise and modernise the **product** that is being offered. Employers are noticing a **lack of character** in many of our graduates.

In a highly competitive environment not all students can succeed, particularly not the children of today. Parents are looking to see results for their investment, no longer content to leave the child simply in the hands of the school.

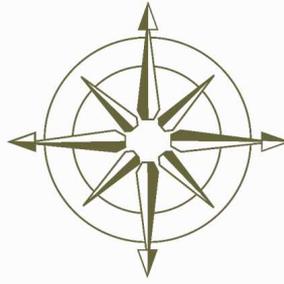
Progressive schools need to develop ways of expanding and deepening their product without adding more pressure on the children, nor passing responsibility on to the parents.

Leadership qualities are judged on both **hard** (academic) and **soft** (character) **skills**. Schools often claim to offer a broad education where each individual's potentials are developed.

By offering a comprehensive program in the development of **soft skills**, complementing the traditional hard skills in which the private sector has been dominant, schools can:

- ⇒ Reassure parents that the broad education is being catered for
- ⇒ Develop a much wider range of children's potentials, particularly in the fields of multiple intelligences, project-based work
- ⇒ Represent their programmes as offering a more balanced and modern approach to the education of tomorrow's leaders in an organised and substantial way.
- ⇒ Give the **marketing** of the school something solid to grasp in the **product**.

The ages between 8 and 13 in a child's life are a critical period in the development of those qualities we call character.



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Attitude Matters will support the development of children's character in school by offering:

1. School Senior Management and Governors a presentation of how they can reorganise much of what they already do into a manageable and comprehensive programme of soft-skill / character development from Year 3 to Year 8.
2. Lead in-service work with the whole of the staff, presenting the programme's basis and development in a practical and understandable way. Teachers will be empowered by the opportunities offered by the programme and be able to see how they can identify with and extend it in practice. A key to its management is that it does not require more work, simply a new understanding.
3. Talks and workshops for parents, under-pinning the School's work in the field.
4. An **Outdoor Education** programme throughout the whole school which builds:

An understanding of the Environment
Individual personal development
Positive social skill progression

The programme will allow schools in the Independent Sector to continue with traditional teaching styles in a more relaxed setting, incorporating present extension and enrichment programmes, PSHE, Pastoral care and Outdoor education.

It will benefit children who will be able to explore different learning focuses, feeling happier because of it, developing a greater feeling of success and raising their level of self esteem.

It will offer parents a way of feeling less anxious about the hard skills when the soft skills have an understandable context for the educational progression of their children. They will be able to see developing character as critical in the modern world of high achievers.