What words do you associate with the manosphere?
HISTORY OF THE MANOSPHERE

1970s

Men's Liberation Movement

Influenced by feminist scholarship, this movement acknowledged men's institutional power, critiqued hegemonic masculinity, and led to the split between pro-feminist and anti-feminist Men's Rights Movement (MRM).

1990s/2000s

Rise of the Manosphere


2010s

Influence and Extremism

Social media amplified extreme elements, intersecting with events like Gamergate (2014) and #MeToo (2016). The manosphere's extremist factions retreated to the dark web, with mass violence linked to incel ideology.

2020s

Growing Concerns and Regulations

Increased online engagement. Bans on hate groups sparked free speech debates, pushing them to less regulated platforms. Calls for stricter regulations. Concerns rose over the impact on teenage boys' mental health and social interactions.
Which group of people believe most strongly that feminism has done more harm to society than good?
EMERGING TENSIONS?

37% of Young Men
Versus 19% of young women find the phrase “toxic masculinity” unhelpful.

68% of Young Women
Versus 35% of young men say it’s harder to be a woman than a man in British society today.

21% of Young Men
who’ve heard of T*te have a favourable view of his opinions.

17% of Men
Versus 8% of women say that equal opportunities have gone too far.
RECRUITMENT NARRATIVES

VICTIMHOOD & INJUSTICE
Emphasizes societal biases against men, fostering solidarity and validating experiences of injustice within echo chambers.

SELF-IMPROVEMENT
Promotes personal growth to regain control, reinforcing harmful stereotypes and unrealistic expectations, and male dominance.

BROTHERHOOD & BELONGING
Creates a supportive brotherhood for isolated men, reinforcing shared grievances and transforming them into a collective movement.

HYPERGAMY
Simplifies relationships to status exchanges, fostering competition and resentment, leading to isolation and harmful behaviours.
How to Support Pupils?

Be Proactive  Sustainable  Values-led
Taking a values-based approach through character education
What is meant by “character”?

“The ways of thinking and feeling a person is disposed to, the kinds of things that they are motivated by and value, and the kinds of action they regularly choose or habitually carry out.”

[Feelings] - [Thoughts] - [Motivations] - [Values]
[Actions] - [Reactions]
[Repeated]
[Considered/Chosen]
What is character education?

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Literally

Broadly
What does it have to offer here?

Internalism: Facts and knowledge alone can’t motivate.

A good life is complicated – it takes a lifetime and a community.

Character traits are skills – they can be learned, practiced and honed.

“What kind of person do I want to be?” and “What kind of world do I want to create?” are questions that transfer to any context. **They anchor**.
Caveat 1: Age-appropriate adjustments both in content and moral reasoning.

Caveat 2: Consequentialist, deontological and knowledge-based approaches appear to be necessary but not sufficient for long-term health and moral sensitivity/good character in this area.
A Character Approach in Action

**Stage One:** What kind of people do we want our pupils to be? Which character traits do we want them to have?

**Stage Two:** Personal and collective literacy check...
A Character Approach in Action

1) Can I define and explain what this character trait is?
2) Can I give examples of people who have this character trait?
3) When do people practice this character trait in everyday life?
4) Can I explain why this character trait is a good one to have?
5) When does this character trait become a vice?
6) Are we all on the same page? [Do we have to be?]
A Character Approach in Action

**Stage Three:** Can I explain interaction with the manosphere in terms of any of these character traits?

- **Scaffold:** What would an “x” person do when it comes to interacting with the manosphere?
- **Knowledge check:** Why do I think that? What information is needed to set up and defend that link? Are there any contextual moral exemplars? Are there any counter-arguments and do I have a response?
A Character Approach in Action

**Stage Four**: What are the barriers to them becoming that kind of person in this area? Can I actually help them overcome them?

- **Self-check**: Is one of the barriers my own preconceptions, biases (ignorance, moral panic, nostalgia, unjustified innocence preservation, etc.) or approach?

- **Society check**: Where can an onus on the individual not change things?
A Character Approach in Action

Stage Five: How far can I get in this process without needing to introduce my own thoughts?

- Stage 1: What kind of person do you want to be and why is that important to you?
- Stage 2: Literacy check
- Stage 3: How do you think this relates to the manosphere? Why do you think that?
- Stage 4: What barriers exist to becoming that person and how can you overcome them?
Facilitating Discussion

“This is a safe space.”

Surprising statistics

Hokey-Cokey Method

“Guess what’s in my head.”
“What’s in your head?”

“Stop facilitating my family!”

Question X
Thank you!

Any questions?