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The Personal Development Evidence Framework

An Ofsted-informed practical guide
for schools and MATs

How to build a credible picture of resilience, character development and personal growth.

The practical companion to the Personal Development Evidence Audit



NOTICE



UNDERSTAND



ACT

PRIMARY FOCUS | ENGLAND | A LEADERSHIP GUIDE

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A practical companion to the web audit

From an audit finding to a useful next step

What does good evidence look like and how do we get it?

The Audit identifies your reported strengths and gaps. This Framework helps you decide what evidence to gather and what to do next.

Your school may already provide valuable opportunities. The next question is what pupils learn, how they apply it and what changes over time. Completing an activity shows participation; it does not, by itself, show development.

One approach, six shared domains

The web Audit asks 19 questions across Provision, Participation, Reflection, Measurement, Evidence, and Goal Setting & Verification. Your report gives a six-domain traffic-light summary and three suggested priority actions. Use page 3 to explore those priorities.

Where Ofsted fits

Ofsted considers the wider personal development and wellbeing offer, pupils' learning and experiences, and inclusion. Inspectors do not require a special presentation format or documents produced only for inspection. The six domains and scoring bands are Embrace's own, not Ofsted requirements. [1]

[1] Ofsted: inspection toolkit and guidance

[2] PSHE Association: assessment guidance

[3] EEF: social and emotional learning guidance

Sources checked 19 November 2026. The practical methods are our recommendations, informed by these sources. This is not a full statutory or inspection audit, or an Ofsted endorsement.

01 / The six-domain framework

Use the same questions as your Audit

Start with existing information. Add something only when it answers an important question.

1. Provision
What do we intend pupils to learn, and what do we provide?
Look at planned outcomes, lesson coverage and practice opportunities.

2. Participation
Who takes part, who misses out, and what helps pupils benefit?
Check records, barriers, suitable support and adjustments.

3. Reflection
Can pupils show or explain what they are learning about themselves?
Use conversations, reflections, drawings or supported communication.

4. Measurement
How do we check individual and group development over time?
Compare suitable starting and follow-up information; note context.

5. Evidence
What can we reasonably conclude, and how do we act on it?
Bring sources together; note limits, actions, owners and review dates.

6. Goal Setting & Verification
Can pupils set goals, review progress and support their account?
Use goal reviews, pupil examples, teacher and relevant family views.

Check learning, application and change. A change during a programme does not prove the programme caused it.

02 / Evidence quality

What does each piece of evidence tell us?

Different sources answer different questions. Keep their strengths and limits visible. [2, 3]

Evidence you hold	What it tells you - and what to add
A completed activity	Shows recorded participation. Add a learning question or a later example of application.
A pupil reflection	Shows the pupil’s view. Ask about a specific situation and what helped.
A parent sign-off	Confirms reported activity. An example may show how learning was used.
A teacher observation	Shows behaviour in a situation. Note the date, opportunity and support; look again.
A survey or rating	Shows answers at that time. Use suitable questions and explain missing responses.
Records over time	May show a pattern. Check that situations and pupils are reasonably comparable.

What does “Embedded and tested” mean?

An approach happens routinely and leaders have checked how well it works. They consider who is missing from the evidence and use findings to improve practice. An established process does not, by itself, prove pupil benefit.

Before making a claim

Be specific about what happened. Compare similar situations. Ask what else might explain a change. More records do not automatically mean better evidence.

03 / The TEDS contribution

Where TEDS could support your priorities

Check which features are available in your school’s version. These are potential areas of support, not a guarantee of impact.

Audit domain	TEDS is designed to support
Provision	Structured sessions, lesson resources and topic coverage.
Participation	Pupil participation, completed activities and engagement information.
Reflection	Pupil reflection, self-reporting and self-assessment.
Measurement	Starting-point and follow-up assessments, progress reviews and group summaries.
Evidence	Teacher observations, reports and agreed actions, owners and review dates.
Goal Setting & Verification	Personal goals and missions, progress reviews, optional family feedback and parental confirmation.

Other sources or specialist work are still needed

TEDS does not replace whole-school enrichment records, safeguarding records, EHCP documents or specialist assessments. It does not provide a validated psychological measure of resilience or independent proof that TEDS caused improvement.

Keep the perspectives separate

Pupil, teacher and family accounts can add different insights. Consider them together and explore differences. Confirmation that an activity happened is different from evidence that learning was applied.

04 / Common questions

Make evidence useful and inclusive

Do we need tests before and after a programme?

Not always. Suitable existing records, pupil conversations or observations may help. Agree what to look for and return to it later. If teaching has begun, call the first assessment a starting picture rather than a pre-programme test.

How do pupil, teacher and family views fit together?

Keep views separate, consider them together and ask why they differ. A child may respond differently at home and school. A sign-off confirms reported activity; it does not prove development. Missing family feedback must never count against a pupil.

How do we know disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND benefit?

Check access, suitable opportunities and support. Ask what pupils found useful and look for change. Look at group patterns, then individuals. Use communication methods that work for each pupil, and recognise progress with support. Show counts and missing information. Disadvantage is not a judgement of character or resilience.

What do we mean by verification?

Check a progress claim against relevant evidence and perspectives. Agreement is not proof of causation. The Audit itself does not independently verify pupil development.

For MAT leaders

Agree shared meanings, keep school circumstances visible and check coverage before comparing results. Avoid school league tables.

05 / Your next step

Your next step

Answer 19 questions across six domains. Receive a traffic-light summary and three suggested priorities. No email required.

The response scale: 1 Not in place; 2 Limited; 3 Developing; 4 Established; 5 Embedded and tested; N/A Not sure.

Self-reported maturity bands: Emerging (0–below 25%); Developing (25–below 50%); Established (50–below 75%); Evidence-Rich (75–100%). These rate reported processes, not pupil character, proven impact or inspection quality.

Domain traffic light	What it means
Green: 75–100%	Reported strength: check the supporting evidence.
Amber: 25–below 75%	Developing or inconsistent: choose an improvement.
Red: below 25%	Needs attention: investigate and agree a next step.
Grey: insufficient information	Clarify the picture; unknown answers are not failure.

“Not sure” is excluded. Each domain needs two scored answers and at least two-thirds coverage. Overall: the equal-weight mean of six qualifying domains. The report explains calculation and rounding.

Use your three suggested priorities

Check the answers behind each finding. Use page 3 for the domain and pages 4–6 for guidance. Agree one action, an owner, a success check and a review date.

Moving from personal development provision to verified personal development evidence.

The Audit does not independently verify pupil development. TEDS means Transformational Everyday Development System.

Personal Development Evidence Audit Tool (Click here)