Ethical Understanding

The Australian Curriculum general capabilities are designed to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and characteristics that help children and young people live and learn successfully now and in the future. The capabilities are developed through the learning areas from Transition to Year 10. There are seven general capabilities:

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| * Personal and Social Capability
* Intercultural Understanding
* Ethical Understanding
* Literacy
 | * Numeracy
* Information and Communication Technology Capability
* Critical and Creative Thinking
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Ethical understanding is mainly concerned with what we ought to do and how we ought to live to maintain a civilised society. The general capability has three parts:

* understanding ethical ideas and issues – such as justice, equity, respect, fairness, freedom and empathy
* considering the reasons behind actions and decisions
* exploring values, right and responsibilities from different points of view.

Students develop ethical understanding as they talk about ethical issues and explain reasons for acting in different ways. They explore topics that people might not agree on, select and justify their own ethical positions, and take into account the different experiences and positions of others.

**Ethical understanding in a classroom**

The general capabilities are taught through all learning areas, adding depth to student learning. Examples of ethical understanding in the classroom:

* In humanities, students develop ethical understanding as they find out about ethical considerations of political, legal and social issues. For example, in Year 4, students might learn about ethical issues by exploring issues regarding media representation related to gender in sport.
* In technologies, students develop the capacity to understand and apply ethical and socially responsible principles when working with others as they create, share and use technologies. In Year 2, for example, students might consider the rights and privacy of others when they use images and other people’s work.

**You can help your child develop ethical understanding by:**

* involving your child in family decisions according to their age and ability
* explaining the reasons for making decisions when there is a consequence for others
* encouraging your child to explore ethical considerations that affect how other people do things, for example, when watching family television programs or films together
* joining in community activities with your child and modelling participating in group decision making with others.