

# Australian Curriculum general capabilities

## Information for parents and carers

LITERACY

NUMERACY

INFORMATION &  
COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGY (ICT)  
CAPABILITY

CRITICAL AND  
CREATIVE  
THINKING

PERSONAL &  
SOCIAL  
CAPABILITY

ETHICAL  
UNDERSTANDING

INTERCULTURAL  
UNDERSTANDING

## Ethical understanding

The Australian Curriculum general capabilities are designed to develop the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that help children and young people live and learn successfully now and in the future. The capabilities are developed through the learning areas from reception to year 10.

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 3 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 include contentious aspects, select and justify their own ethical positions, and take into account the different experiences and positions of others.

For example in the learning area of humanities and social sciences, students develop ethical understanding as they find out about ethical considerations of political, legal and social issues, now and in the past. They develop their own informed values and attitudes and become aware of their roles and responsibilities as citizens. In year 4, students might learn about ethical issues by exploring how some natural resources are used and managed in sustainable and non-sustainable ways.

In technologies, students develop the capacity to understand and apply ethical and socially responsible principles when working together with others as they create, share and use technologies. Year 2 students might consider the rights and privacy of others when they use images and other people's work and make decisions about whether or not to publish their work online.

You can help your child develop ethical understanding by:

- involving your child in family decisions according to their age and ability
- talking about ethical principles when making family decisions
- explaining the reasons for making decisions when there is an impact on others
- encouraging your child to explore and investigate ethical considerations that affect how other people do things, for example when watching family TV programs or films together
- joining in community activities with your child and contributing to group decision making with others.

Find more information at [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au)



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and  
Child Development