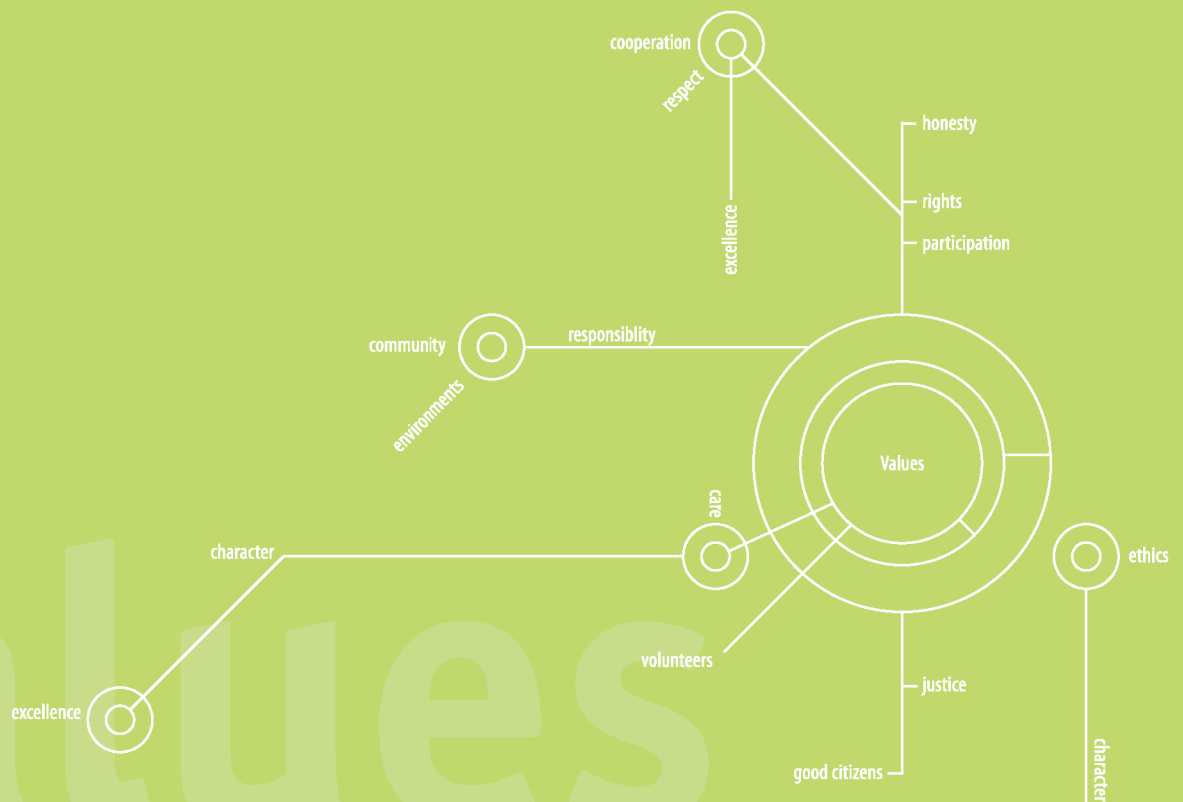


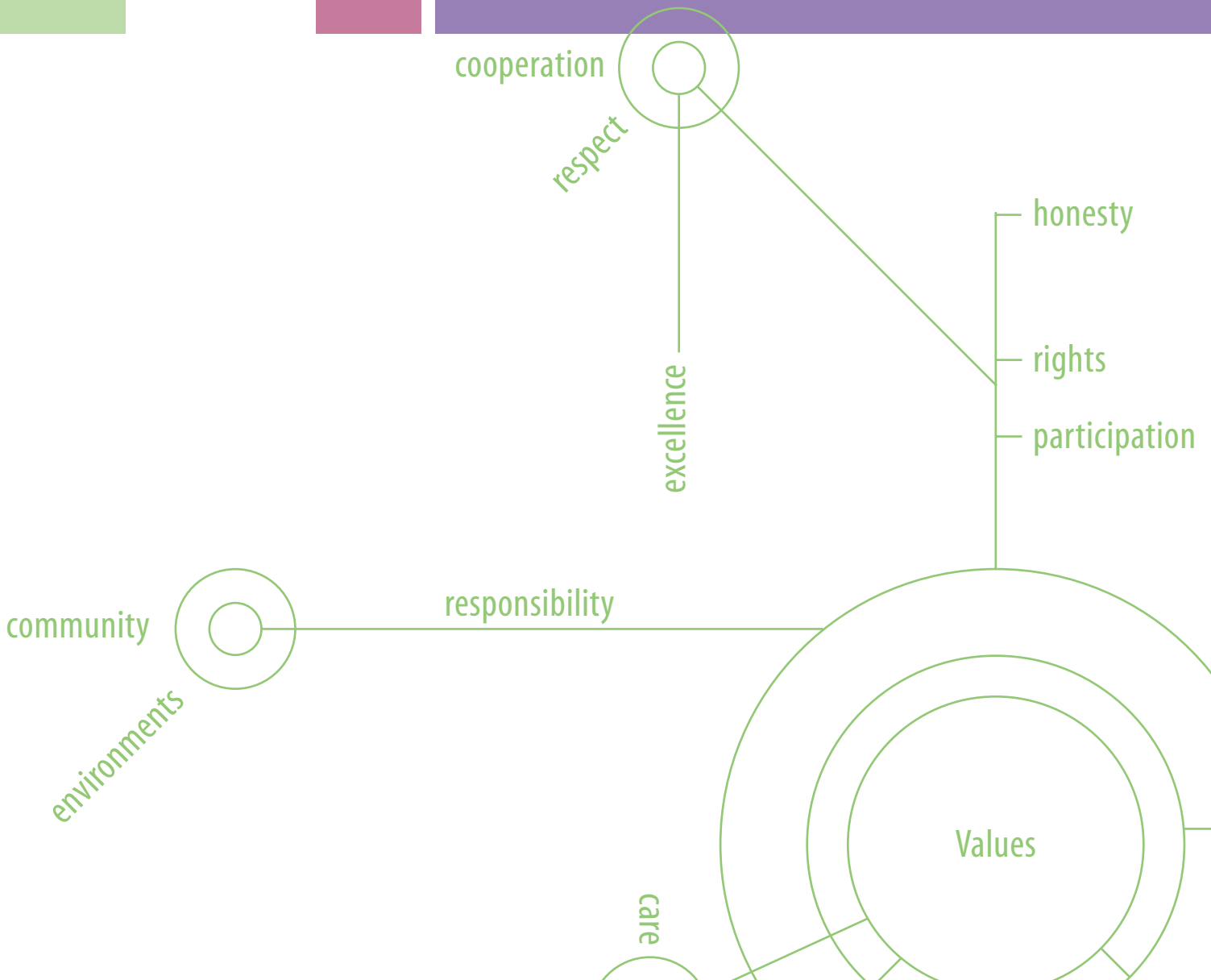


Australian Government
**Department of Education,
Science and Training**

A Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools



A Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools



INTRODUCTION



The following *Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* has been developed from the outcomes of the Values Education Study.

The Framework recognises and acknowledges the various policies and programmes already in place in schools in States and Territories. It also recognises that schools in all sectors have developed effective approaches to values education.

The Framework includes:

- a context,
- an underpinning vision for improved values education in Australian schools,
- a set of guiding principles to support schools in implementing values education, and
- a set of key elements and approaches providing practical guidance to schools in implementing values education.





In 2002 the Commonwealth commissioned a national Values Education Study to inform the development of a framework and set of principles for values education in Australian schools. The study was unanimously supported by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) at its meeting on 19 July 2002.

MCEETYA also:

- acknowledged that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills;
- noted that values-based education can strengthen students' self-esteem, optimism and commitment to personal fulfillment, and help students exercise ethical judgement and social responsibility; and
- recognised that parents expect schools to help students understand and develop personal and social responsibilities.

Internationally and nationally there is increasing engagement and discourse about schools and their role in the formation of the values young people live by. The international context includes the experience of the United Kingdom in the 1990s where a set of agreed core values was included to form part of the national curriculum. It also includes the United States where the 'character education' movement and character-building schooling programmes have been adopted in many local education districts.

All key stakeholders in the Australian education context have a strong commitment to values education. This is most notably reflected in the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century, the Adelaide Declaration by all education ministers in 1999. Within the community at large there is also a growing debate and discussion about what values our children should learn, where our children should learn their values and how they will acquire them.

Emerging from this background, the 2003 Values Education Study has revealed a broad range of varied and excellent practices and approaches to values education in Australian government and non-government schools. In particular, the Study provides a range of examples of good practice in three different domains of values education:

- articulating values in the school's mission/ethos,
- developing student civic and social skills and building resilience, and
- incorporating values into teaching programmes across the key learning areas.

The Study clearly demonstrates the will and desire of all 69 participating school communities to utilise values-based education to enrich students' holistic development and to respond constructively and positively to a range of contemporary schooling challenges. Some common values (Appendix) emerged from the school communities in the Study. Schools and education sectors may wish to consider these in their discussions on values education with staff, students, parents and the wider community.

Some of the challenges addressed in the Study include how to increase student engagement and belonging and minimise student disconnection to schooling, how to tackle violence, anti-social and behaviour management issues, how to improve student and staff health and wellbeing, how to foster improved relationships, how to build student resilience as an antidote to youth suicide and youth substance abuse, how to encourage youth civic participation, how to foster student empowerment, how to improve whole-school cultures, how to develop a school mission statement incorporating a set of values, and how to incorporate values into key learning area lesson programmes.

All Australian schools will promote values education in an ongoing, planned and systematic way by:

- *examining, in consultation with their community, the school’s mission/ethos;*
- *developing student civic and social skills and building resilience; and*
- *ensuring values are incorporated into teaching programmes across the key learning areas.*

KEY ELEMENTS AND APPROACHES

Key elements stemming from the Guiding Principles that help schools to implement effective values education are identified below. They are accompanied by a range of suggested approaches designed to support schools, to help them to reflect on their existing practices in consultation with their communities and to plan for improvement. These approaches are not intended to be exhaustive, but provide examples of good practice to guide schools in implementing values education. These Key Elements/Guiding Principles should be considered in conjunction with the results of the 50 case studies (involving 69 schools) in the Values Education Study.

Guiding Principles	Key Elements	Suggested Approaches
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	A. School planning	<p>Values education is an explicit goal of school planning.</p> <p>School values are made explicit with the assistance of the school community.</p> <p>Values objectives are made clear in planning strategies and introduced to students at an appropriate learning stage with clearly defined outcomes identified.</p>
2, 3	B. Local development	<p>Values education involves the local school community in the development and teaching of values.</p> <p>Schools discuss values to be fostered with the school community.</p>
2, 3	C. Whole-school approach	<p>Schools involve students, staff, school management, parents and sector advisers in structured discussion to negotiate and manage the process of clarifying school values and the roles of parents and teachers.</p> <p>Schools apply their values education priorities to their overall curriculum provision, their structures and policies, their procedures and rules, their funding priorities, their decision-making arrangements, their disciplinary procedures, their community relations and their welfare/pastoral care approaches.</p> <p>Schools monitor their approach to values education on an ongoing basis, audit their policies and strategies and use evaluation data to inform future planning needs and practice.</p>



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following draft principles have been developed from the Values Education Study. They reflect the findings of the literature review of national and international developments in values education, the experiences of the 69 project school communities and the online survey of another 20 non-grant school communities. They recognise that in *all* contexts schools promote, foster and transmit values to *all* students and that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills. They also recognise that schools are not value-free or value-neutral zones of social and educational engagement.

Effective values education:

- 1 Is an explicit goal of schooling that promotes care, respect and cooperation and values the diversity of Australian schools.
- 2 Articulates and makes explicit the values of the school and the community in which it is based and applies these consistently in the practices of the school.
- 3 Occurs in partnership with students, staff, families and the school community as part of a whole-school approach to educating students and strengthening their resilience.
- 4 Is presented in a safe and supportive learning environment in which students are encouraged to explore their own, their school's and their community's values.
- 5 Is presented in a developmentally appropriate curriculum that meets the individual needs of students.
- 6 Addresses clearly defined and achievable outcomes, is evidence-based and uses evaluation to monitor outcomes and inform decisions.
- 7 Is delivered by trained and resourced teachers able to use a variety of different models, modes and strategies.

Guiding Principles	Key Elements	Suggested Approaches
4, 5, 6, 7	D. Safe and supportive learning environment	<p>Schools provide a positive climate within and beyond the classroom to help develop students' social and civic skills and build student resilience, and to ensure a safe and supportive environment for values education.</p> <p>Students, staff and parents are encouraged to explore their own values.</p> <p>Values education reflects best practice pedagogy and is introduced in the curriculum at appropriate times for learners.</p>
2, 3	E. Partnership with parents and community	<p>Schools consult their communities on values to be fostered and approaches to be adopted (eg through school values forums or summits).</p> <p>Schools involve parents and the school community in the implementation and monitoring of values education programmes.</p>
3, 4, 5	F. Support for students	<p>Schools develop programmes and strategies to empower students to participate in a positive school culture, eg peer support systems.</p> <p>Schools use values education to address a wide range of issues including behaviour management and discipline, violence and bullying, substance abuse and other risk behaviour, disconnectedness and alienation, student health and wellbeing, improved relationships and students' personal achievement.</p>
5, 6, 7	G. Quality teaching	<p>Teachers are skilled in best practice values education.</p> <p>Teachers are provided with appropriate resources including professional development to support their efficacy as teachers of values within all areas of the curriculum and total school life and to monitor this efficacy on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Schools and educational leaders recognise that values interact with and are integral to all key learning areas.</p>

GLOSSARY

Evaluation	The process of measuring the value of a programme or intervention. It is a structured, staged process of identifying, collecting and considering information to determine goals, progress and outcomes. Evaluation is central to good practice and ensuring an evidence-based approach to values education.
Principles	A statement encapsulating a fundamental concept for action that guides effective practice. The principles in this document are recommended guidelines for providing improved values education in schools.
Resilience	A range of what might be called student 'coping strategies', or self-management qualities such as <ul style="list-style-type: none">• personal responsibility and self-discipline,• connection to the school and sometimes the community as well,• a sense of school, community and civic engagement, participation and service, and• overall confidence and self-esteem.
Safe and supportive learning environment	An environment which protect the emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing of students.
School community	The school community is generally considered to include students, school staff (for example, teachers and other professionals, administrators, other support staff and volunteers) and parents/guardians and other carers.
Values	'... the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged as good or desirable.' (J Halstead, J and M Taylor, 'Learning and teaching about values: A review of recent research', <i>Cambridge Journal of Education</i> , Vol. 30, No. 2, 2000, p169).
Values education	Any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community.



APPENDIX: SHARED VALUES

The following common values have emerged from Australian school communities. Schools may wish to use them as 'discussion starters' for working with their communities on values education. These values are consistent with Australia's democratic traditions including beliefs in equality, freedom and the rule of law, and our overall commitment to a multicultural society where all are entitled to justice and a fair go. They are:

- 1 **Tolerance and Understanding** (Accepting other people's differences and being aware of others).
- 2 **Respect** (Treating others with consideration and regard).
- 3 **Responsibility** – personal, social, civic and environmental (Being accountable for and in charge of a course of action – responsibility for one's own actions, including the exercise of self-discipline; responsibility for the way in which one interacts and cooperates with others especially for resolving differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways; responsibility for one's role in and contribution to society; and responsibility for one's own role in the maintenance and preservation of the environment).
- 4 **Social Justice** (Being committed to the pursuit and protection of the common good where all persons are entitled to legal, social and economic fair treatment).
- 5 **Excellence** (Seeking to accomplish something noteworthy and admirable individually and collectively, and performing at one's best).
- 6 **Care** (Caring for self and showing interest in, concern for and caring for others).
- 7 **Inclusion and Trust** (Being included and including others, listening to one another's thoughts and feelings actively and creating a climate of mutual confidence).
- 8 **Honesty** (Being truthful and sincere, committed to finding and expressing the truth, requiring truth from others, and ensuring consistency between words and deeds).
- 9 **Freedom** (Enjoying all the rights and privileges of citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and standing up for the rights of others; ensuring a balance between rights and responsibilities).
- 10 **Being ethical** (Acting in accordance with generally agreed rules and/or standards for right [moral] conduct or practice).



