



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Science and Training

# Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community

CHARACTER IS DESTINY

— *George Eliot*



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

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* was funded under the Australian Government's Values Education programme administered by the Department of Education, Science and Training. It is a component of Primary and Secondary *Values for Australian Schooling Kits* distributed to all Australian schools.

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community*

ISBN: 1 86366 601 X

SCIS order number: 1227179

Full bibliographic details are available from Curriculum Corporation.

Published by Curriculum Corporation

PO Box 177

Carlton South Vic 3053

Australia

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The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training.

Design: Chris Collins, Curriculum Corporation

Printed in Australia by Printgraphics Pty Ltd

## Acknowledgements

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The publishers would like to thank especially the following people for their time and valued advice:

- Nominees of the State and Territory education systems, Catholic and Independent Schools sectors, primary and secondary principals' associations, parents' organisations and other stakeholders who provided advice through the Values Education Project Advisory Committee
- The Values Education Reference Group
- State and Territory Values Education Contact Officers
- Academic Advisers: Professor Terry Lovat and Emeritus Professor Brian Hill

# Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community



## VALUES FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLING



### **Care and Compassion**

Care for self and others

### **Doing Your Best**

Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

### **Fair Go**

Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society

### **Freedom**

Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

### **Honesty and Trustworthiness**

Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

### **Integrity**

Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds

### **Respect**

Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view

### **Responsibility**

Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

### **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion**

Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

**CHARACTER IS DESTINY**

— George Eliot

# Foreword



It is with pleasure that I introduce the *Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* publication. A whole school approach to the implementation of values education will result in consistent messages being delivered to our children about what it is we value and the expectations we have for their future.

The Australian Government is committed to making values a core part of schooling and it has allocated \$29.7 million over 2004–2008 for its Values Education programme. This includes funding for values education forums in every school, clusters of schools implementing good practice approaches, a website (<http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>), curriculum resources (including this *Values for Australian Schooling Kit*) and national partnership projects with parents, principals, teachers and teacher educators.

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* (part of the *Values for Australian Schooling Kit*) will support school communities across the country in preparing for and getting the best out of their values forums. Research emphasises the importance of a partnership approach between schools and their local communities.

The *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*, endorsed by all State and Territory Ministers, has become the blueprint for a consistent approach to the implementation of values education in Australian schools. The Framework includes the vision that all Australian schools will provide values education in a planned and systematic way. Although your school would have already received the Framework, a further copy of it is included in this kit for your reference.

The purpose of education is, as it has always been, to inspire and educate the next generation to see their world through the eyes of others. We want children to become adults who are tenacious, tolerant, fair and compassionate. The values forums will help school communities to focus on how they can help in attaining such goals.

I wish you well in using *Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community*.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Bishop". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**The Hon Julie Bishop MP**  
Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training

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# Background

## What is the Values Education programme?

The Australian Government, through the Values Education programme, is providing \$29.7 million for activities that help make values education a core part of Australian schooling. These include:

- values and drug education forums in every school (\$10 million for values education forums and \$6 million for drug education forums);
- clusters of schools implementing and disseminating good practice approaches;
- the development of a Values Education website and curriculum resources (including the *Values for Australian Schooling Kit – Primary/Secondary*) for all schools; and
- national activities, including an annual national forum, and projects with parents, principals, teachers and teacher educators.

The Values Education website (<http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>) provides further information on and documents relating to the programme.

## About this booklet

This booklet, *Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community*, forms part of the *Values for Australian Schooling Kit (Primary/Secondary)* being distributed to all schools. The booklet is designed to be used by a values education working group in the school.

The Kit will assist schools to develop values education within the parameters of the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005)*, referred to as the *National Framework* in this booklet.

The *National Framework*, sent to all Australian schools in March 2005, contains a vision for values education that is based on consultation with the school community in developing a whole school approach to values education. To realise this vision the Australian Government is providing funding, through the Values Education programme, for forums in all school communities in Australia over the period 2005 to 2008. Funding is being distributed through education authorities in States and Territories.

Each school community will make decisions about its forum in the light of the *National Framework* and its own particular circumstances. Forums are not designed to be isolated or one-off events, but intended to be linked to other values initiatives and priorities of the school. Schools may choose to run a single forum or a series of meetings. They may also work in clusters with other schools. Each school in a cluster will still apply for its own funding and complete an individual report to receive funding.

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* is a support booklet for school communities in the planning and conducting of values education forums.

The booklet provides:

- A context for strengthening values education in Australian schools, including information on the key messages in the *National Framework* and findings from the *Values Education Study*.
- Practical advice for conducting a values education forum including forming a representative working group, reviewing local curriculums, programmes and policies in the light of the *National Framework*, conducting surveys and deciding on goals and outcomes, as well as a range of ideas for using other resources in the Kits.
- A tool box of forms, guidelines, templates and surveys.

# 1 Values education forums in context



## Providing values education

In Australia, as in other countries, there is significant debate and discussion about what values our children should learn, where our children should learn their values and how they will acquire them. An important focus in this discussion is the role schools play.

This conversation around values education is not new. Schools have always been engaged in values education in varying degrees of explicitness. As the States and Territories have reviewed their curriculums in recent years, values statements and values domains have appeared as essential elements in their curriculum frameworks.

What is new is the Australian Government's vision that all Australian schools provide values education in a planned and systematic way. This calls for the values that underpin education to be explicit and shared, and for a comprehensive approach across all sectors and systems.

A commitment to, and focus on, values was endorsed by all State, Territory and Commonwealth Education Ministers in 1999 in the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century (Adelaide Declaration)* which can be found at <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/nationalgoals>.

This document states that when students leave school they should:

- *have qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members (Goal 1.2) and*
- *have the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their own lives and to accept responsibility for their own actions (Goal 1.3).*

While recognising that many Australian government and non-government schools already embraced and promoted values-based education, in 2002 the Australian Government commissioned a new study into what could be done to extend and improve values education in Australian schools.

All States and Territory Education Ministers endorsed the proposal for a *Values Education Study* at the 2002 Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. This meeting acknowledged that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills. It noted that values-based education can strengthen students' self-esteem, optimism and commitment to personal fulfilment, and help students exercise ethical judgement and social responsibility. It also recognised that parents expect schools to help students understand and develop personal and social responsibilities.

## Recent research

The *Values Education Study* (2003) provides information on values education practice in Australian schools. The *Values Education Study* was designed to enable schools to develop and demonstrate current practice in values education; provide an informed basis for promoting improved values education in Australian schools; and make recommendations on a set of principles and a framework for improved values education in Australian schools.

An online survey for the study collected data from students, parents and teachers in 40 representative schools across the country. The survey covered what they thought about values education in Australia, what values should be fostered in Australian schools and what role schools should play in fostering values education. The results showed overwhelming support from parents for the school's role in values education.

- 97% of parents who responded believed that there is a need to teach values education in schools.
- 93% believed that schools should have a consensus about what values are taught.
- 97% thought that values should be taught as part of the school's curriculum and that the school's curriculum should reflect the school's values.
- 100% believed that schools should inform parents and guardians about the values that are fostered in schools.
- 97% thought that parents and guardians should have an input into what values are taught in schools.

There was similar strong support from teachers.

- 99% of teachers believed that parents should be active participants in values education.
- 98% believed that all teachers should teach values as part of the day-to-day curriculum.

The findings of the survey and outcomes from the 50 school projects reinforce the timeliness of the current priority being given to values education, the primacy of the home in values formation, the role of the school and all teachers in values education, and the importance of home and school working together.

The international research cited in the *Values Education Study* also suggests that participation, encouragement to behave responsibly and provision of a supportive school environment have a positive impact on the development of student values. In addition, schools being explicit about values, and the extent to which teachers actually practised shared values, seem to have an important influence on students' values development.

The full report on the *Values Education Study* was published in November 2003 and is available online at <http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>.

The *National Framework* was drawn from the results of this study and widespread consultation on the *Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*. It provides a basis for the implementation of values education in schools.

## What is in the *National Framework*?

The *National Framework* consists of a *Vision*, nine *Values for Australian Schooling*, *Guiding Principles* for values education, and *Key Elements and Approaches* that inform best practice.

The *Vision* is that all Australian schools provide values education in a planned and systematic way by:

- articulating, in consultation with their school community, the school's mission/ethos;
- developing student responsibility in local, national and global contexts and building student resilience and social skills;
- ensuring values are incorporated into school policies and teaching programmes across key learning areas; and
- reviewing the outcomes of their values education practices.

Nine *Values for Australian Schooling* emerged from Australian school communities and the *Adelaide Declaration*:

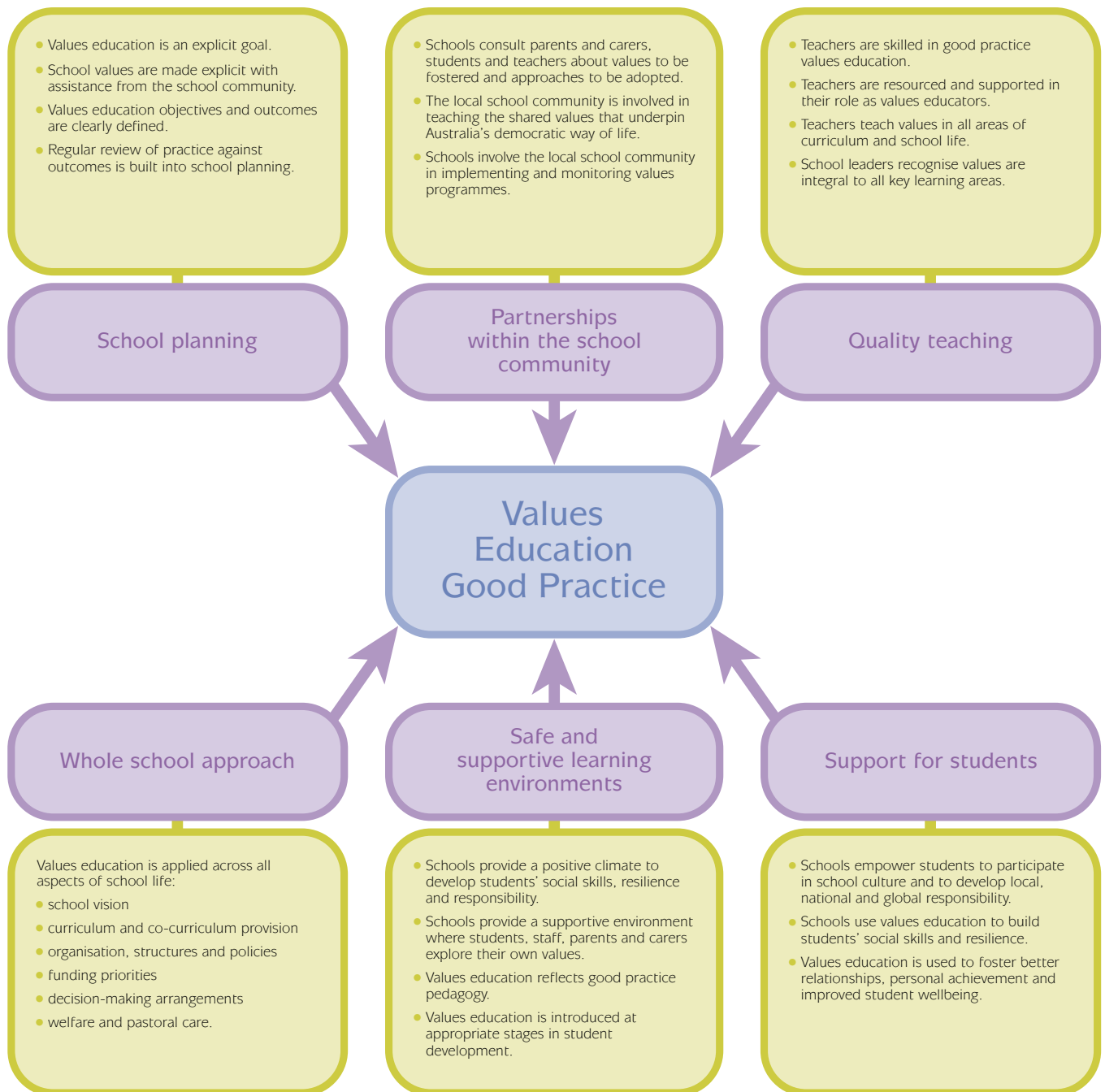
- Care and Compassion
- Doing Your Best
- Fair Go
- Freedom
- Honesty and Trustworthiness
- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion.

These shared values are part of Australia's democratic way of life and reflect our commitment to a just, multicultural and environmentally sustainable society.

The *Guiding Principles* for effective values education emphasise:

- values as an explicit goal of schooling;
- helping students understand and apply values;
- a safe and secure learning environment where students can explore values;
- curriculum which meets individual student needs;
- teacher professional learning;
- a whole school approach; and
- regular review of approaches and outcomes.

The *Key Elements and Approaches* that inform good practice are derived from the *Guiding Principles*, and are listed in the *National Framework*, along with some suggested starting points for implementing values education. The principles and approaches are graphically illustrated in the replication of Poster 1 below: *Values Education Good Practice – Key Elements from the National Framework*.





## 2 Preparing for your school forum: Advice for forum planners

### Applying for funding

The Australian Government has made funding available for all schools. To access funding you need to contact your State or Territory Contact Officer (see the Values Education website at <http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>), use the guidelines Applying for a Grant to Conduct a School Forum (Tool 1), and complete a brief Sample School Forum Report after you have conducted your forum (a sample is shown in Tool 2). Details will differ between States and Territories.

Further information and all tools provided in this booklet can be downloaded from the Values Education website.

### Forming a working group

Experiences of the project schools in the *Values Education Study* suggest that school community forums in values education are best implemented through a committed working group.



*Talking Values* DVD-ROM:  
Lina Salfino, Principal at Modbury School, SA discusses the whole school approach to values education



*Talking Values* DVD-ROM: A parent at Modbury School, SA discusses parent engagement in the school's values education program

Consider the following people for membership of your working group.

#### Staff

- school principals;
- teachers with a responsibility for curriculum/school planning/professional learning/student welfare/careers/student co-curricular programmes;
- teachers interested in values education.

#### Parents

- parent members of the School Council and other parent associations;
- parents who bring the different perspectives of groups within your school community (eg language, year level groups);
- parent volunteers who know particular aspects of the school (eg literacy supporters, canteen workers, sports coaches);
- parents who are interested in values education.

#### Students

- students from student representative bodies;
- students who participate in school co-curricular or other special programmes;
- students from a range of year levels;
- students who are interested in values education.

Use the following two questions to guide your thinking about the composition of your working group.

- ❓ • Is our forum working group representative of our school community?
  - What knowledge and skills do we need?



## Previewing the values education resources

One of the first tasks for the members of the working group will be to familiarise themselves with the resources in the relevant *Values for Australian Schooling Kit* (either the Secondary Kit or the Primary Kit). The Kit includes a copy of the *National Framework*, posters and the DVD-ROM *Talking Values* (which includes a video, support notes, and PowerPoint® presentations).

These resources cover:

- the nature of values education;
- the background to the Australian Government's Values Education programme;
- the content and approaches of the *National Framework*; and
- views of, and models for, values education from parents, teachers, students and schools around Australia.

When you have reviewed the resources consider:

- ❓ • Which parts of these resources can we use, or adapt for use, in our school community?
- Who will present these materials?
- How will these resources fit into our forum and link with our priorities for values education?

## Getting to know your school context

The success of your forum will depend on its relevance to your school and community. Review your own school in the light of the *National Framework* values and approaches. Look at some or all of the following in relation to your school:

- broad school data on areas such as student achievement, attendance, language backgrounds and socioeconomic factors;
- results of parent, teacher and student surveys conducted for earlier school reviews;
- school mission or vision statement;
- key school policies in areas such as welfare, discipline and curriculum;

- approaches to values education in key learning areas;
- school governance and participation;
- school programmes in areas such as student leadership, sport, enterprise learning, community service and community partnership learning;
- other programmes that support students to develop responsibility, social skills and resilience (eg *MindMatters*, *National Safe Schools Framework*); and
- your State or Territory curriculum documents and priorities.



Principal, Cheryl Gleave, with HSC students from Burwood Girls High School, NSW

Anthony Johnson/Courtesy of The Age

The audit forms in Tool 3 (Auditing Our School), Tool 4 (Audit of Student Co-Curricular Programmes), Tool 5 (Audit of Values in the School Curriculum) and Tool 6 (General Audit of Values Provision) will help in recording this information. After reviewing your audits ask:

- ❓ • What strengths are there in our current provision of values education?
- What opportunities are there for further development of values education in our school?
- Which parts of this information will be useful to present at our forum?
- How might we use this information to structure forum activities and collect feedback?

## Conducting surveys of parents, teachers and students

Surveys will provide valuable qualitative and quantitative information about your school. As part of the preparation for your forum you may choose to survey parents and carers, teachers and students. Alternatively, administer the surveys at the forum itself, using the questions as an opportunity for group discussion among participants, and using the results as feedback to your working group.

You can use the three survey forms provided in Tools 7, 8 and 9 or adapt them for local circumstances.

- For the Parents' and Carers' Survey (Tool 7), you could either select a representative sample of your school parent and carer population or conduct a general or targeted direct mailout. You could administer survey forms at parent-teacher interviews or at other school meetings.
- The Teachers' Survey (Tool 8) could be conducted at staff meetings, briefing sessions or through other school communication structures.
- The Students' Survey (Tool 9) could be conducted in pastoral care groups, level assemblies or classes (brief teachers first).

When compiling the results of your surveys, consider:

- ❓ • What do they show about the views of our school community on values education?
  - What are our school's strengths?
  - Where are the opportunities for improvement?
  - How can this information be used to generate discussion at our school forum?

## Deciding on goals and outcomes for your forum

Having collected a range of information about your school, you will be in a position to plan the goals and outcomes of your forum and decide what will be achievable in your local context.

Forum goals might include:

- Building a school community consensus on values that are to be explicitly fostered in our school in the light of the *National Framework*.
- Examining values education with the school community and our school's achievements in achieving these values.
- Reviewing our student co-curricular programmes in the light of the *National Framework* and exploring other programmes that provide opportunities for students to develop responsibility, social skills and resilience.
- Exploring how values education can be made more explicit in the teaching and learning programmes of our school.
- Developing a plan of action for the review of policies and programmes in the light of the *National Framework*.

## Activities for your forum

Develop a forum 'running sheet' which includes content and activities to promote discussion and feedback. Your agenda will depend on the forum goals and priorities decided by the working group. The following are suggestions to consider.

### What are values? What is values education?

Show the film, *Talking Values*, on the DVD-ROM and select questions from the support notes to discuss with participants.

Form groups and allocate one or two of the values from the nine *Values for Australian Schooling*. Have participants in each group discuss these values and provide five suggestions of what the value would look like in action in their school community.

Collect feedback from each group, and consider:

- ❓ • What responses are there in common?
  - What responses are different?
  - What is the significance for our school?



## What is in the *National Framework*? What is the context for values education?

Examine the *National Framework* using:

- The PowerPoint® presentation on the *National Framework* on the *Talking Values* DVD-ROM.
- The posters: *Values Education Good Practice – Key Elements from the National Framework* and *A Whole School Approach – Values Education for Australian Schooling*. Give groups copies of Tool 10 (*Values Education Good Practice – Key Elements Poster*), ask them to fill in the activities and information relevant to your school and compare these with the key elements suggested in the complete *Key Elements* poster.

## Our school and values education

Present the working group's findings on the links between your school's mission, policies and programmes and the *National Framework*. Participants can discuss and respond to the findings. Ask participants to consider the strengths of your school's values provision, and opportunities that exist in your school to extend values education.

Present the working group's findings on your school's co-curricular programmes which provide students with opportunities to practise values and responsibility in local, global and national contexts. Participants can discuss these and provide feedback and suggestions.

Present an overview of your school's curriculum policy and programmes. Provide participants with a copy of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling*. Create activities that generate focused discussion of the values taught in each key learning area (KLA).

## Our school surveys

Have a panel of parents and carers, teachers, and students present the findings of your surveys to the community, allowing time for feedback and discussion.



Teachers and Values Education State and Territory Contact Officers at the Values Education Briefing Session, Melbourne, June 2005

Alternatively, as suggested earlier, have participants complete the surveys in the forum. You can then discuss the results in groups and report back on your conclusions.

## Ideas from the *Values Education Study* schools

Use the comments in section 3 (pages 9–12) to stimulate discussion in small groups about activities at your school.

## Other activities

Ask participants what information they need to develop a better understanding of values education.

Consider convening a panel of parents, local community leaders, religious leaders, councillors, representatives from other school systems, health professionals or other service providers to present different perspectives on values education in the school.

Develop an action plan, based on suggestions from forum participants, to be circulated and reviewed after the forum.

## Evaluation

Remember to have participants evaluate the forum. As well as being a measure of your forum's success, the evaluation will provide your school with information to develop further school community opportunities in values education. Tool 11 provides a simple Forum Evaluation Form.

## After the forum

Convene a meeting of your working group to:

- Read the evaluations
- Produce a forum report
- Submit the forum report to your Contact Officer
- Plan the next steps in your school and community.

Provide all forum participants with a summary copy of the forum report and write a summary of your forum for the school newsletter. Develop an email distribution list to keep participants informed. Seek further feedback and publicise ongoing values education activities.

## Practical considerations for the working group

Your working group will need to take into account the practical considerations shown in Tool 12 (Practical Considerations Template). Fill in the empty boxes in Column 2 for your forum. The following are questions to consider:

What kind of forum?

- ? • a single meeting or series?
  - formal or informal?
  - linked to parent–teacher evenings, year level parent meetings, school curriculum information nights?

How will we encourage participation?

- ? • school newsletters, direct invitations, telephone trees, email communication, student-produced invitations?
- invite an expert facilitator or well-known community guest to be part of the forum?

What is needed and who will organise items?

- ? • print materials, technical requirements?
  - catering?
  - facilitator?
  - proceedings' recorder?



# 3 Some perspectives from the *Values Education Study* schools



## Particular issues related to forums

Although many schools conduct explicit values education initiatives across a range of areas, your school may just be starting out on its explicit values' journey. On such a journey, it is helpful to hear how others are approaching similar issues. The work of other schools may provide inspiration for your context.

Twelve detailed case studies from the *Values Education Study* report the major focus of each school's activity in relation to values education. The case studies have been gathered together in *Values Education in Action: Case Studies from 12 Values Education Schools – For the National Values Education Forum, Melbourne, April 2004* which is available on the home page of the Values Education website (<http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>).

## On forming a values education working group ...

**Salisbury High School** in South Australia reported: 'We have a group of between 10–25 parents who meet regularly on a Tuesday morning in our school. They use this time to plan fundraising or do craft or practical work around the school. However, often staff consult with them to get feedback about a range of issues in the school from topics like litter and homework to curriculum initiatives and budget planning. This group formed the basis of our Forum group along with several teachers, our school counsellors, four students from different year levels.'

## On consulting widely ...

**Cabramatta High School** in western Sydney held a number of forums. The aim was to understand the different cultural value systems in the community. At parent forums (conducted in their first language) they used a simple survey with the following questions covering the value of education in society, parents' values, the role of the school, and aspirations:

1. What is the importance of education in life?
2. What are the three most important things you want for your child?

3. What do you think we should be teaching your child at school?
4. What do you want your child to be doing when he or she leaves school?

The information gained was evaluated and widely published to generate further discussion.

## On forum goals and conducting the forum ...

Early in its deliberations, the working group at **St Monica's College** in Melbourne decided to conduct a community forum on values education as a key component of the audit process. The forum allowed for 'an open, frank and public discussion about practical ways Catholic values are expressed and articulated within the college', contributing significantly to the final conclusions of the working group.

At the **Don College** in Tasmania the forum was used to map the school's implicit values and to reveal impressions and answers to the following guiding questions:

1. What is a value? Are there absolute values? If so, what are they?
2. What is values education? Should schools try to teach values? Whose role is it really?
3. How can a school teach values? What aspects does the school need to consider (eg curriculum, student programmes)?
4. What are other ways that students learn values (eg family, peer groups, other groups, the media)?
5. Is all values teaching 'obvious'? If yes, why? If no, why not? Is there an 'osmosis' effect?
6. What implications do the answers to these questions have for the school community?

The material gathered from the forum directly contributed to the formulation of an agreed statement of values for the school.

## On encouraging participation and engagement ...

**Penola Primary School** in South Australia included a range of activities in its forum to generate interest, including displays of class work around values, a short skit, focused discussion around how values are developed, and a students' values 'rap'.

Acknowledging the difficulty of attracting a large number of parents to meetings after school, **Albany Primary School** in Western Australia had the Student Council present the *Tribes* agreements (a particular values programme) through a series of role-plays to the first assembly of the year, which always attracts a large number of parents.

To encourage attendance, the **Canterbury Community of Schools** in Sydney staged an 'expo' of student performances and oral presentations.

At **Alice Springs High School** in the Northern Territory informal meetings, including BBQs at the school and local parks, were held each term. In a school that had tended to struggle for parental support, 80 per cent of parents (and extended families) attended. Alice Springs High School's flexibility in shaping their forums resulted in increased community participation.

**Bridgewater-on-Loddon Primary School** in Victoria used a high-calibre speaker and facilitator to encourage attendance. The school also held two forums – one in the day and one in the evening to provide maximum opportunity for parent participation.

## After the forum ...

A group of parents at **Kirinari Community School** in Adelaide became very interested in implementing the ideas given at the community forum. They took this further in a meeting with the speaker and a subsequent meeting with other parents where they developed the skeleton of an approach they called 'open communication', designed to make discussing meaningful issues within the school community easier.

At **Guardian Angels' School** in Brisbane 30 parents enrolled in a weekend workshop to continue their involvement.



Eddie Jim/Courtesy of The Age

Sudanese mothers at the mothers' club of Springvale Primary School, Vic, engaging in school activities

## Case studies

The case studies recounted here could be used in your forum during a small-group session to generate ideas for future action. Each group could be given the case study to read and then asked to discuss the following:

- What area of values education did this school address?
- Is our school addressing this area? How?
- Has this school's experience provided me with any ideas for our school?

## The Don College, Devonport, Tasmania

In an environment where many parents were finding the task of teaching values to their teenagers increasingly difficult, the school felt it was timely to ensure that the values it enacted were both explicit and agreed across the school community. The starting point was to map the values implicitly practised through its various curricular and extracurricular programmes and to develop an agreed statement of values. This would enable the school to formulate and implement a values education framework that ensured the values enacted reflected the values espoused.



For example, in the mapping exercise it was discovered that an evening of excellence with a past student undertaking a PhD was promoting values of personal excellence incorporating setting goals, generating a sense of community through sharing successes, and encouraging creativity, flexibility and enterprise.

The following is an excerpt from the *Beliefs and Values Statement* developed by the school from its mapping exercise:

*'The college community enjoys many rights, including the right to learn, be respected, be heard, be safe, have personal freedom and responsibility and to have personal property to be respected. No one, however, can enjoy rights without due responsibility and at college we mutually encourage and support responsible behaviour as a means of enjoying our rights.'*

### Matthew Hogan High School, New South Wales

(for disadvantaged youth 'at risk' aged 12 to 18 years)

Service learning is a significant part of Matthew Hogan's programme. This is underpinned by the teaching of the 'six pillars of character':

- Responsibility and self-control
- Cooperation and teamwork
- Respect and appreciation of diversity
- Trustworthiness
- Fairness and justice
- Caring.

The service learning project itself provides the opportunity for students to learn and develop through active participation in a thoughtfully designed service experience that meets an actual community need. The school describes it as a process of self-discovery where students experience success in helping others and learn to view themselves differently, recognising they have gifts which are of value to others.

One of Matthew Hogan's projects was to raise funds for orphanages in East Timor. The students were required to fundraise and plan, which developed their communication skills and encouraged them to be responsible and reliable. It took

great courage for them to fly to and live in East Timor as it required them to leave their comfort zone. They also needed to work as a team while planning the project and visiting the orphanage. They were challenged to develop their empathy skills as they spent time with people from another country. The experience gave them an enhanced appreciation of, and a new perspective on, their own lives.

The comments of the students speak volumes:

*'We might have problems, but there are some people out there far worse. I can make a difference and all I have to do is apply myself.'*

*'When I wake up in the morning I worry about what to wear, then worry about what to eat. This experience has taught me about having (and not having), learning and generosity.'*

### Albany Primary School, Western Australia

Albany Primary School noted a growing lack of tolerance among its students. New children were not readily included and some were overtly excluded. In response the school investigated the *Tribes* programme.



Students from Albany Primary School, WA, participating in a *Tribes* activity

*Tribes* centres on five core agreements and the development of a common language around these and their implementation in the school: Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Right to Pass, Expressing Appreciations – No Put Downs, and Personal Best. Issues of morality, ethics and social justice are regularly addressed as part of the daily dialogue within each classroom, ‘enacted on the small stage of the safe learning community and extrapolated to cover issues within the broader community’.

The day in most classrooms begins with a Community Circle where class members are able to share their ‘cares, concerns and celebrations’ before getting down to work. This gives everyone ‘a chance to work out who is likely to be a bit fragile or a bit over-exuberant and why’. This in turn helps teachers adopt strategies for individual students, and the class as a whole, that enable the focus to remain on student learning and growth, rather than seeking to manage negative behaviours throughout the day.

As well as the five core agreements, the process involves:

- student membership of small groups (tribes) to support learning and positive social behaviour;
- adoption by teachers of cooperative learning methods with a transfer of responsibility to students to help each other;
- all members taking responsibility for each other and for group accountability;
- taking time to reflect on tribe members’ work, special qualities and skills after every group task;
- acknowledgement of equal participation, fairness, and open and honest communication;
- mediation of group issues and conflict within the peer group; and
- teacher observations, instruction and modelling to support cooperation within the tribes.



The Values Education website: <http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>

# 4 Tool Box



The following tools are also available as downloadable PDFs and Microsoft™ Word documents on the Values Education website. Schools are encouraged to amend and adapt them to serve their particular needs.

## 1. Applying for a Grant to Conduct a School Forum – Page 14

- A guide on how to apply for funding your forum. Apply through your State and Territory Contact Officer.

## 2. Sample School Forum Report – Page 15

- A guide for developing your forum report. The report is a requirement of the grant.

## 3. Auditing Our School – Page 17

- A tool to gather data on the values evident in your whole school context (see page 5).
- Use it to support planning your forum and as part of a forum activity.

## 4. Audit of Student Co-Curricular Programmes – Page 18

- A tool to gather data on your school co-curricular programmes (see page 5).
- Use it to support planning your forum. Results could be presented at the forum.

## 5. Audit of Values in the School Curriculum – Page 19

- A tool to gather data on the values evident in the curriculum (see page 5).
- Use it with KLA and school curriculum leaders to support the planning of your forum.

## 6. General Audit of Values Provision – Page 20

- A tool to identify how the nine *Values for Australian Schooling* are evident in your school (see page 5).
- Use the tool to support the planning of your forum. Results could be presented at the forum.

## 7. Parents' and Carers' Survey – Page 22

- A tool to identify *parents'* views on values and the school's role in values education.
- Provide a copy of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling* with the survey.

## 8. Teachers' Survey – Page 23

- A tool to identify *teachers'* views on values and the school's role in values education.
- Provide a copy of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling* with the survey.

## 9. Students' Survey – Page 24

- A tool to identify *students'* views on values and what makes a good school.
- Provide a copy of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling* with the survey.
- Discuss the questions with the students first and present them as a think-pair-share activity.

## 10. Key Elements Poster – Page 25

- An incomplete poster for use in a small group activity with staff or at the forum.
- Introduce the notion of 'good practice' and the six Key Elements from the *National Framework*.
- Use the tool to identify current values education practice at your school.
- Compare your findings to the *Values Education Good Practice – Key Elements from the National Framework* poster from the *Values for Australian Schooling Kit*.

## 11. Forum Evaluation Form – Page 26

- A sample or template to assist data gathering on the effectiveness of the forum and to inform your report.

## 12. Practical Considerations Template – Page 28

- A checklist tool to assist planning for the practical considerations of the forum.

# Tool 1: Applying for a Grant to Conduct a School Forum



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

Schools are invited to apply for funding to conduct a values education forum.

To apply for a grant, please contact your State or Territory Contact Officer. These officers are listed on the Values Education website (<http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>).

The grant: You need to contact your State or Territory Contact Officer to discuss the amount your school can claim.

To receive the grant payment you must provide a report on your forum. This report should provide a brief account of the forum, numbers of students, parents and community members involved, an evaluation of the outcomes of the activity and an acquittal of expenditure (see Tool 2 for a template).

Schools can cluster together to hold the forum. However, each school in the cluster needs to apply for its own funding and complete a separate report on the forum.

## Conditions of funding

1. Values education forums allow school communities to consider what place values education plays in your school policies and practices. Schools should consider adopting the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* as a whole school approach in developing planning for the forums in terms of three domains:
  - school ethos and governance (integrating values into all school policies and practices, including community partnerships);
  - student social skills (developing student responsibility in local, national and global contexts, and building student resilience); and
  - integration of values education in all areas of the curriculum (incorporating values across all KLAs).
2. The Australian Government's resources on values education including the *National Framework* must be used to inform the delivery of the school forum.
3. One forum is to be held per school or school cluster.
4. The local Federal Member of Parliament needs to be informed when and where the forum will be conducted.
5. The school forum must acknowledge the support of the Australian Government initiative in values education.

# Tool 2: Sample School Forum Report



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

Please note: You need to obtain the report form that is being used in your State or Territory from your State or Territory Contact Officer as there may be some variations (contact details for these officers are available at <http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>). A sample school forum report template is provided below to give some guidance.

## Report on school forum to access funding

(To be completed within one month after the forum has been conducted)

School name: .....

Address: ..... Postcode: .....

Sector (please circle):      Catholic      Government      Independent

Date the forum was conducted: ..... Amount of grant sought: \$ .....

Contact name: ..... Telephone: .....

Contact email: .....

Number of participants involved:

Staff .....

Parents .....

Students .....

Community members .....

Total attended: .....

Was your local Federal Member of Parliament informed of the forum?      Yes       No

Were you a member of a cluster?      Yes       No

Names of schools in cluster: .....

Were your grant funds used in accordance with your application?      Yes       No

## Tool 2: Sample School Forum Report continued

Outcomes of forum – Please tick the appropriate boxes:

1. School ethos and governance (integrating values into all school policies and practices, including community partnerships). The school:
    - a. reviewed other initiatives that are linked to values education (eg safe schools)
    - b. examined its mission statements and practices
    - c. reviewed its school organisation and structures, including sports, excursions, assemblies
    - d. examined how it manages relationships between staff, students and parents within their school community
    - e. other .....
  2. Student social skills (developing student responsibility in local, national and global contexts and building student resilience). The school:
    - a. examined how to build student resilience and self-esteem and developed a plan of action
    - b. explored student responsibilities within the school and within the community
    - c. developed a plan of action with milestones and timelines for this aspect
    - d. other .....
  3. Integration of values education in all areas of the curriculum (incorporating values across all the key learning areas). The school:
    - a. explored whether values were mentioned in KLA syllabus documents
    - b. explored how values education could be articulated explicitly
    - c. developed a plan of action against milestones and timelines for the integration of values education across KLAs
    - d. other .....
- Did you use the Australian Government's resources to help deliver your forum? Yes  No

Principal's Declaration

I declare that I have read the above statement and confirm its accuracy.

Principal's name: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Please return this report to your State or Territory Contact Officer.

# Tool 3: Auditing Our School



Values focus areas from <i>National Framework</i>	<i>National Framework</i> values
School mission statement	
Values incorporated in school policies	
Values incorporated in teaching programmes across the KLAs	
Developing student responsibility in local, national and global contexts – programmes that involve students enacting values	
Building student resilience and social skills	

## Tool 4: Audit of Student Co-Curricular Programmes

School programmes offered	Who is involved (eg Year 6, elected student representatives)	Knowledge, skills and values learned and practised	Links to the <i>National Framework</i>

# Tool 5: Audit of Values in the School Curriculum



KLA or domain	Values implicitly taught in the KLA or domain	Values explicitly taught in the KLA or domain	Relationship to the <i>National Framework</i>
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
SOSE/ HSIE/ Humanities			
The Arts			
Languages			
Technology			
Health and Physical Education			

## Tool 6: General Audit of Values Provision

Nine <i>Values for Australian Schooling</i>	How are we doing at our school?
<p><b>Care and Compassion</b> Care for self and others</p>	
<p><b>Doing Your Best</b> Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence</p>	
<p><b>Fair Go</b> Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society</p>	
<p><b>Freedom</b> Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others</p>	
<p><b>Honesty and Trustworthiness</b> Be honest, sincere and seek the truth</p>	

# Tool 6: General Audit of Values Provision continued



Nine <i>Values for Australian Schooling</i>	How are we doing at our school?
<p><b>Integrity</b></p> <p>Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds</p>	
<p><b>Respect</b></p> <p>Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view</p>	
<p><b>Responsibility</b></p> <p>Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment</p>	
<p><b>Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion</b></p> <p>Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others</p>	

# Tool 7: Parents' and Carers' Survey

1. What values are important to you?

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2. What values do you think your child should be taught at school?

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3. Does the school support the values that you try to encourage in your child at home?

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4. Look at the list of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling*. Comment on the extent to which you feel that the school promotes these values.

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# Tool 8: Teachers' Survey



1. What values do you promote in the learning areas you teach and the way you teach?

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.....

2. How does your school identify and decide on its core shared values?

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.....

3. How are values fostered in the school?

.....  
.....

4. Look at the list of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling*. In what ways are these values reflected in the life of your school community? How do these values relate to the values currently fostered in your school?

.....  
.....

5. How are positive relationships fostered in your school between teachers and students, parents and teachers, and teachers and school leadership?

.....  
.....

6. Who do you think should be responsible for values education in your school?

.....  
.....

7. What support do you need to further develop your values education knowledge and skills?

.....  
.....

## Tool 9: Students' Survey

1. What makes a good school? What values does a 'good' school practice?

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2. What makes a good teacher? What values does a 'good' teacher practice?

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3. What makes a good student? What values does a 'good' student practice?

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4. What makes a good class?

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5. How does the school help you become the person you want to be?

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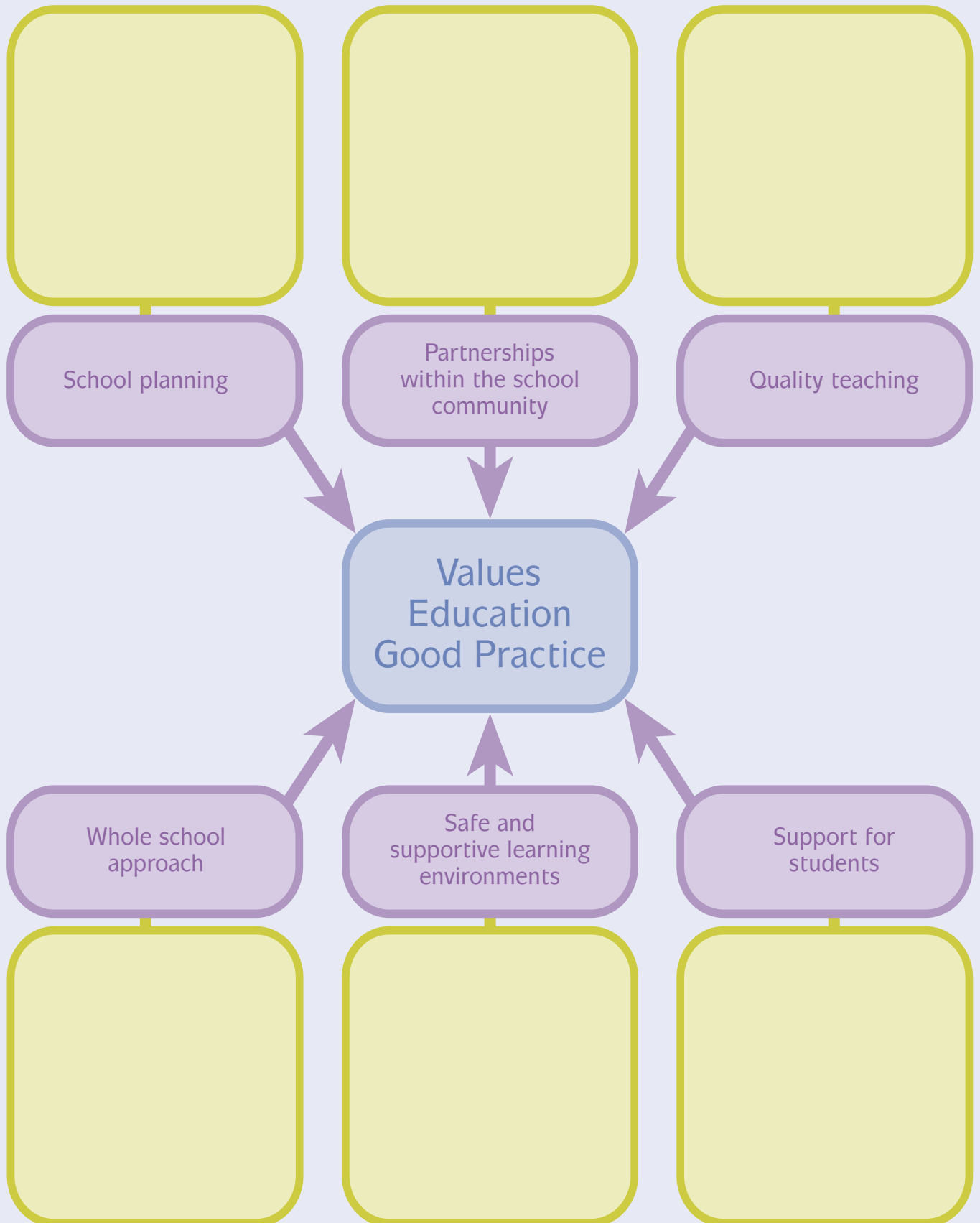
6. Look at the list of the nine *Values for Australian Schooling*. Which of the nine is most important to you? Why?

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# Tool 10: Values Education Good Practice – Key Elements Poster



# Tool 11: Forum Evaluation Form

Please provide your responses to the following questions about the Values Education Forum.

1. My role: (please circle)

Parent or Carer      Teacher      Student      Other school      Community member

2. I heard about the Values Education Forum via: (please circle as many as apply)

School newsletter

Personal invitation

Local media

Information evening

My child

My friends

Local advertising

Other (please specify) .....

Please answer Questions 3 to 7 by circling the appropriate number.

3. The values education forum has given me a better understanding of current directions in this area.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know /unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

4. The activities were interesting and allowed me to become actively involved in discussions.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know /unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

5. I enjoyed, and felt comfortable with, the style of the forum.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know /unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

6. The school's values education work and policies are comprehensive and seem to be in line with the *National Framework*.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know /unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

# Tool 11: Forum Evaluation Form continued



7. I would like to be involved in further work on values education in our school.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know /unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Please answer Questions 8 to 10 by listing as many aspects as apply.

8. The aspects of the forum I found most interesting were:

.....  
.....  
.....

9. Things that could have made the forum better include:

.....  
.....  
.....

10. Suggestions from the forum I think the school could adopt are:

.....  
.....  
.....

You do not have to include your personal details below. They will be used to send you personalised information about future initiatives in values education at our school.

Name: .....

Tel: ..... Email: .....

Please return your form to .....

## Tool 12: Practical Considerations Template

Working group consideration	Actions for our school
Applying for an Australian Government grant to conduct our forum	<p>Contact our State or Territory Contact Officer (see details on the Values Education website: <a href="http://www.valueseducation.edu.au">http://www.valueseducation.edu.au</a>).</p> <p>Complete an application form.</p>
Inform our local Federal MP when and where the forum will be conducted.	Invite your local Federal MP.
What kind of forum?	
How will we encourage participation?	
Venue, timing and duration?	
What is needed and who will organise these?	
Facilitators, presenters and discussion group leaders from our working group and elsewhere?	
Develop a forum evaluation sheet.	
A forum report, to be submitted to our Contact Officer, is a funding requirement.	



## Values Education Forums: **Engaging your school community**

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* is a resource to assist schools in planning and conducting values education forums in their school communities.

This booklet provides a background to the Values Education programme, the context for values education forums, advice and practical activities for forum planners, perspectives from *Values Education Study* schools and 12 tools that may be photocopied and freely used when planning school values education forums. The tools include *Applying for a Grant to Conduct a School Forum* and a *Sample School Forum Report* template.

*Values Education Forums: Engaging your school community* is one of a suite of resources in the *Values for Australian Schooling Resources Kit* (Primary/Secondary). The Kit is designed to support schools in making values education a core part of schooling through the implementation of the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (2005). The *National Framework* was distributed to all schools in early 2005.

A PDF copy of this book and Microsoft™ Word versions of the tools may be downloaded from the Values Education website:

<http://www.valueseducation.edu.au>