



VIC-EDU-P-022 Relationships and Sexual Education Policy

1. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all students, parents/guardians/carers (referred to as 'guardians'), staff, and stakeholders within MacKillop Education. It encompasses the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and outlines the guidelines for educating students about relationships, sexuality, consent, and related topics.

2. Policy Outline

Context

Our values of respect, hope, justice, compassion, and collaboration inform the quality of relationships we establish and all that we do to ensure our learning community is a place of welcome and safety. MacKillop Education celebrates diversity, and we are committed to inclusion, so that every student, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender identity or personal circumstances, including barriers to learning, can access education and experience success.

Our model, Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE), supports our trauma-informed practice and highlights the critical partnership between students, guardians, and staff, as we work together, to enhance the learning outcomes for every child.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students receive comprehensive and age-appropriate relationships and sexuality education that includes education about sexuality and consent. It aims to create a safe and supportive learning environment that respects diversity, promotes inclusivity, and empowers students to make informed decisions about their relationships and sexual health.

Policy statement

MacKillop Education will provide relationships and sexuality education that is inclusive, non-judgmental, and respectful of diversity. The school will ensure that all students receive comprehensive and age-appropriate information about sexuality, including education about consent. This education will be delivered in a manner that is sensitive to the cultural, religious, and individual beliefs of students and their families.

MacKillop Education is not obligated to seek guardian permission for the inclusion of sexuality education within the school's health education, however, a guardian may decide not to allow their child to participate in RSE. To do so, guardians need to meet and discuss this requirement with the classroom teacher upon commencement of each year of their child's schooling (or during the year as family priorities/choices change).

The reason for this is that sexuality and consent education is tightly woven into everyday teaching and learning in the classroom and teachers will need to fully understand the elements of the

curriculum to be excluded or amended on a regular basis. These discussions should be clearly documented.

Principles

The Victorian government mandates that all students receive a comprehensive and age-appropriate sexual health education aligned to the Victorian Curriculum, including the teaching of consent.

Further, Ministerial Order 1359 states that schools must ensure:

- The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and students feel safe and be less isolated
- Students are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.

MacKillop Education recognises the importance of providing comprehensive RSE to students as an integral part of their holistic development. This education is designed to foster healthy relationships, promote respectful behaviour, and equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate issues related to sexuality and consent.

The following elements underpin the MacKillop Education RSE program:

- **Age-Appropriate Content:** The content of the RSE program will be age-appropriate and developmentally sensitive, recognizing the varying needs and maturity levels of students.
- **Community Engagement:** MacKillop Education actively involves guardians and the local community in the development of sexuality education programs, recognising the importance of collaboration in creating a well-rounded curriculum that aligns with community values.
- **Consent:** The program will emphasise the importance of consent in all relationships and provide students with the skills to recognise, seek, and respect consent.
- **Inclusivity:** The RSE program will be inclusive and affirming of diverse gender identities, sexual orientations, and cultural backgrounds.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Discussions on sexuality will be conducted in a respectful and dignified manner, fostering an environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their thoughts.
- **Whole-School Approach:** The RSE program is integrated across all year levels, ensuring a consistent and age-appropriate delivery of content. This approach fosters a supportive school culture that values open communication and learning.

3. Responsibilities

- **School Leadership:** Responsible for ensuring that the RSE program aligns with the school's values, complies with relevant legislation, and is regularly reviewed for effectiveness.
- **Teachers:** Responsible for facilitating age-appropriate RSE lessons, fostering open discussions, creating a safe space for students to ask questions, and incorporating feedback from the school community.
- **Guardians:** Encouraged to engage in open communication with their children about relationships and sexuality, respecting the cultural and religious values of their families.

4. Related legislation, policy & guidelines

- Ministerial Order 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises.
- Child Safety Standard 3 CCYP | Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- Department of Education: Sexuality and Consent Education Policy
- Victorian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (F-10) Health and Physical Education - Curriculum - Victorian Curriculum (vcaa.vic.edu.au)
- The Australian Curriculum (Version 8.4) - Respect matters

5. Resources

- **Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships** — this age-appropriate resource includes lesson plans and activities that help students learn and practice social skills and apply them in a positive way to learning, life and relationships.
- **Building Respectful Relationships** — this age-appropriate resource includes lesson plans and activities that help students learn and practice social skills and apply them in a positive way to learning, life and relationships.
- **Catching on Early** is an evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching and learning resource available to support the delivery of sexuality education to Foundation to Year 6 students.
- **Catching on Later** is an evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching and learning resource available to support the delivery of sexuality education to Year 7 to 10 students. Age-appropriate consent education classroom activities are included in the resource.
- **Power to Kids** - MacKillop Family Services
- **Department of Education Victoria**
 - Respectful Relationships: A Resource Kit for Victorian Schools
 - Sexuality and consent education resources
- **Sexual Health Victoria** - School and teacher resources.
- **Better Health Channel** - Talking to children and young people about relationships, sex and sexuality

6. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Group Director, The MacKillop Institute and MacKillop Education
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