

## Introductory note for parents and carers

Welcome to Primary Ethics Bites!

This **Bite** takes 10 - 15 minutes to complete, but you may find the ideas within are revisited in conversations around the dinner table for weeks to come.

This **Bite** is available in both audio and printed (PDF) formats. The same content is covered in each, so simply choose the option that best suits your student's learning environment.

**Bites** for the 3 – 6 age group are designed for students to tackle individually or with one or more siblings or peers. An adult may like to participate by helping to read the stories and questions, by modelling genuine curiosity and by supporting the student to think for themselves.

Aim to be neutral when listening to the ideas expressed by your student and ask them to give the reasons behind their opinion rather than try to do the thinking and reasoning for them. Encourage the student to talk through their ideas by using expressions like "Ok", "Hmmm, I wonder..." and "that's an interesting thought!".

There is often not a single right answer when it comes to exploring an ethical dilemma. In that way, ethics is different to other lessons like maths. Instead, what ethical inquiry helps us do is to look at a situation or idea from different points of view, and to think about the reasons *behind* those points of view. When we do this, we think more deeply about our own views, discover new ideas, and build a deeper understanding of the considerations in each dilemma. We develop our skills in critical thinking and ethical reasoning and our ability to make well- thought-out decisions in a range of circumstances.

## *No put downs please!*

### Objectives/ethical concepts explored

- Encouraging students to think for themselves about the difference between meaning or intending to cause harm and causing harm 'accidentally' or without wanting to
- Whether side effects, such as harmful side effects, sometimes result from our own carelessness or thoughtlessness

### Skills developed

- Listening and recalling
- Empathising
- Reasoning
- Evaluating

### Essential questions

- Is it okay to keep silent if you disagree? Or could there be times when it's important to tell your friends you disagree with them, even if you know it will annoy them or hurt their feelings?
- If no one tells you you've made a mistake, will you go on believing the incorrect information?
- If someone disagreed with you, would you want to know their reasons for disagreeing? Why?

This topic focuses on one of the ground rules of an ethics class – 'No put downs'.

**Bites** are based on Primary Ethics lessons developed for use by trained adult volunteer facilitators in NSW public schools. Our lessons are based on philosophical ethics and use a 'community of inquiry' approach – the *asking power* of the group – to work together in discussion. The community of inquiry approach provides students with the opportunity to reflect on and form their own responses and consider the ideas of others in a safe and supportive environment.

You can read more about the community of inquiry approach here: <https://primaryethics.com.au/about-ethics-classes/what-happens-in-an-ethics-class/> And watch this video for a great explanation of philosophical ethics: <https://vimeo.com/199903>