



St. Mary's Primary School – Swan Hill

Digital Technology Policy

Policy Dated: 2018
Policy Ratified: 2018
Policy Review: 2021

Rationale

As an ESmart School St. Mary's School recognizes that digital technology is an integral part of life. It also plays a role in learning. The school needs to ensure that staff, students and the school community engage in these technologies appropriately, legally and ethically. The school also needs to ensure there are levels of protection of child safety in the use of any technology in the school.

Digital technology is used to effectively find, analyse, create, communicate and use information to enhance staff and student learning and to engage the school community. This includes the use of technology such email, Internet, phone, mobile device, social media sites, online discussion and chat facilities, copying and printing.

Policy Statement

St. Mary's School embeds technology in the life and operations of the school. It is important that the use of this technology is used in a purposeful, responsible, legal and ethical manner that is consistent with the school's vision.

Principles

- While staff, students and school community will have access (as deemed appropriate) to electronic resources it is a privilege not a right.
- Users are responsible for ensuring that the resources are used in a purposeful, responsible, legal and ethical manner that is consistent with the school's vision.
- Electronic resources are provided for work and education purposes.
- Technology is increasingly changing. Technologies, not yet known or not present in the school, may become part of the school's approach (if appropriate) and will be covered by this policy
- Technology use will be monitored including the appropriateness of sites, material accessed, downloaded or distributed and communication use.
- Technology plays an important role in staff and student learning.
- At all times child safety requirements and processes are to be considered in any use of technology.

Implementation

- All staff (teaching and non-teaching) will receive training about online safety and be able to recognise and respond to online safety issues.

- Staff, students and parents must annually sign the Acceptable use and Cybersafety Agreement each year in order to access the school’s technology resources.
- All users are to comply with St. Mary’s policy and any diocesan and government legislation (such as copyright, discrimination, defamation and privacy laws) in the use of technology.
- An audit of technology use will be conducted as required.
- Inappropriate material must not be accessed, downloaded, transmitted or posted.
- Communication and feedback between students, parents and staff via electronic media must be appropriate at all times.
- Electronic media must not be used for gambling purposes.
- Personal use for staff is restricted and limited. It must not take place during teaching or classroom time. It must not interfere with work obligations or used while supervising students (unless an emergency call to services or administration is required).
- Student and school community use is limited to educational use for engaging in student learning
- Email correspondence must contain the appropriate disclaimer.
- Downloaded files must be checked and be virus free.
- All digital content stored and produced at or on behalf of St. Mary’s school remains the property of the school.
- Privacy and confidentiality must be considered in forwarding or providing access to electronic communication. Permission from the sender should be sought. Staff should ensure that personal information is kept private.
- Correspondence such as email is not necessarily kept confidential when sent to an external party and can be forwarded on or accessed by others without the writer’s knowledge. It is important to check whether it is appropriate to send confidential information electronically.
- Communication via chat rooms, social media email and text messages should always have appropriate content, images (if used) and language. They must not embarrass the school’s reputation or be construed as bullying or harassing or embarrassing someone.
- Violation of the policy may include:
 - informing police after an initial investigation
 - For students-restriction or suspension of use for a set period of time or in the case of a serious breach suspension from school following procedures outlined in the St. Mary’s Behaviour Management Policy
 - For parents/school community- restriction or suspension of use and access for a set period. In the case of a serious breach this may be permanent.
 - For staff - informing VIT (teachers) or performance/disciplinary processes that may lead to termination of employment.
- Regular reminders about acceptable use of technology will be communicated to staff and parents via school newsletter, staff bulletins and at staff meetings.
- St. Mary’s school has a web filtering system in place to ensure inappropriate material cannot be accessed at school.

Learning and Teaching

- The learning environment must foster student confidence to report to staff if they have seen or received anything that has made them uncomfortable or threatened. This should always be followed up in a timely manner.
- Learning and teaching practices, strategies and technologies are effectively incorporated into learning process and are used by teachers and students.

- Teachers have clear processes and practices and scaffold learning to manage classroom and online behaviour and respond appropriately to any incidents that may arise.
- Teachers provide students with an understanding of appropriate sites and materials and a process to follow if an inappropriate site/material opens.
- The school cannot filter Internet content accessed by a student from home, from other locations away from school or on mobile devices owned by students. St. Mary's school recommends the use of appropriate Internet filtering software on such devices.
- Teachers develop a curriculum scope and sequence for cyber safety that includes teaching safe, responsible and ethical online behaviours. The scope and sequence is consistent with the Victorian government requirements for curriculum (see Learning and Teaching Policy).
- Copyright and privacy laws and other legislation must not be breached in using the Internet and in posting material onto sites.
- The leadership team will monitor the cyber safety ESmart curriculum and professional learning requirements for all staff.
- Electronic teaching materials and sites used by teachers are to enhance learning and be appropriate.
- There will be regular communication to staff, students and school community on policies and procedures that foster a safe classroom environment. Information will be available on school website, Staff and Parent Handbooks. Teachers will also discuss issues and procedures with parents in informal meetings and information nights.
- Students will engage as part of their learning in using the internet which will include accessing sites such as websites, electronic chats (social media), bulletins, educational apps and classrooms (such as Google Classroom) and use of email.
- Teachers will provide guidance as to which sites can be accessed and programs that can be downloaded on to school devices. Teachers will develop processes for students to follow if they access an inappropriate site or are confronted with material or text that makes them uncomfortable.
- Teachers will use educational resources such as the Office of Children's eSafety Commissioner at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/> to develop student knowledge, skills and capabilities in cyber safety.
- Students must not post any inappropriate texts or images or engage in bullying or harassment through the use of these sites or in using email. Students must not download any unauthorised programs.
- St. Mary's school uses Google Classroom. Teachers at all times will engage in a professional manner in responding to student messages, student work and in providing appropriate materials.
- Parents will be provided access to Google Classroom to communicate with teachers and view their own child's work and feedback. Parents at all times must communicate appropriately when using this or other modes of communication with the school.
- All families receive a copy of the Acceptable Use and Cyber Safety Agreement annually. Parents are asked to read the agreement with their children and sign the agreement. This is returned to the school.

Mobile Phone/Electronic Devices

- Phones/electronic devices must be handed to teachers upon arrival at school. These are then locked away, before being handed back to children at the end of the day.

- Students are not permitted to use phones/electronic devices in school grounds or during school hours. This includes making calls, texting, using camera and Internet functions, or using media/music players.
- Failure to meet these requirements will see the phone/electronic device removed from the student and held in the School Office until a parent collects it. The school may as a consequence not permit the phone/electronic device to be brought to school for a short or extended period.

School electronic equipments and devices

- Students are expected to use school equipment and devices safely and with care.
- Teachers will induct students on how to safely use and look after any electronic equipment or device.
- Students must not download programs on to school equipment or device without the permission of the teacher.

Social Media

- St. Mary's School accepts that the use of social media is used by members of the school community as a social tool and is commonly used to express views, comments, and ideas on a range of issues.
- Students, as part of the educational program, will engage, from time to time, in electronic chats to share their learning, pose questions and provide feedback to other students. This interaction may occur with students within their own classroom, classes in the school or students in another school.
- Teachers will have access to these sites and will monitor that the content is appropriate and that students are not engaging in anti-social behaviour such as cyberbullying.
- Teachers are not permitted to engage in other social media (non school) where students participate.
- It is expected that all members of St. Mary's School community when in engaging with each other through using social media behave in such a manner that:
 - the welfare of all members of the school is not adversely impacted upon.
 - the reputation of the school is not negatively affected or brought into disrepute
 - personal information is kept private
 - not uploading or posting inappropriate content on any space or sight.
- Social media sites (other than those established for student learning under the supervision of a teacher) using the school name must not be established unless the principal gives permission. This permission would only be for a specific school purpose. If the site is not used appropriately according to the requirements for its use, it will be closed down.
- When using social media, it is expected that members of our school community will:
 - demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries and behaviours
 - ensure online behaviour reflects the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that a person uses when communicating face-to-face
 - respect the rights, privacy and confidentiality of others.
 - ensure all content published is accurate and not misleading
 - not post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, threatening, violent, racist, sexist, pornographic, or is otherwise unlawful.
 - not infringe on copyright or cause damage to the reputation of St. Mary's school, or bring it into disrepute.

Relevant Legislation

The use and provision of technology must not intervene the following legislation:

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Equal opportunity Act 2010 (Victoria)
- Crimes Amendment (Bullying) Act 2011

Related Policy and Documents

- St. Mary's Duty of Care-Supervision of Students
- St. Mary's Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy
- St. Mary's Acceptable Use and Cybersafety Agreement
- St. Mary's Pastoral Care Policy

Communication

- Policy is available on school website
- Reference to the policy is in staff and parent handbooks
- Students are inducted each year on the requirements
- Staff, students and parent sign the Acceptable Use and Cybersafety Agreement

Risk Management

The technology coordinator and risk management leader in conjunction with the principal will identify any risk management issues and follow the processes for risk management to ensure that risks are recorded, monitored and minimized.