

Family Information – Advice to support the safe and responsible use of digital technologies at home

At school the internet is mostly used to support teaching and learning. At home, however, it is often used differently. Not only is it a study resource for students, but it is increasingly being used as a social space to meet and chat.

The term “space” is used here to describe a website that works like a community with live interaction and the capacity for your child to chat with others, personalise their space and share information. Each space has a purpose, audience and tool set including those around security and protection. The internet also provides access to websites with information, images videos for students to view. Not all content is presented as a space.

About the Acceptable Use Student Agreement:

In signing this agreement your child will be agreeing to behave in a certain way online and to take appropriate action when and as required. Some elements of the agreement are explained more fully below. Please contact the school to clarify or receive additional information.

- **Be a safe, responsible and ethical user and never deliberately do things that I know are wrong.**

The school’s Student Engagement/Wellbeing Policy outlines the values of the school and expected behaviours which extend to the use the internet and digital technologies at school. It is also presumed that the same values will be enacted at home.

- **Be respectful in how I communicate with others online and never write or participate in online bullying (this includes forwarding messages and supporting others in harmful, inappropriate or hurtful online behaviour).**

Being online can make students feel that they are anonymous and sometimes students may say things online that they would never say to someone’s face. The web space or online chat environment that they use in leisure time might also have explicit language and they may feel they have to be part of it. Bullying online can take a number of forms from repeated messages to exclusion from social spaces. Students who forward on messages or participate in the exclusion may not see themselves as bullying. These actions also contribute to the hurt and distress of others.

- **Talk to a teacher if I feel uncomfortable or unsafe online or see others participating in unsafe, inappropriate or hurtful online behaviour.**

Incidents online often go unreported. Students have reported their reasons as embarrassment, a belief that online issues are theirs to solve as adults don’t understand, a feeling that reporting it will make it worse and the most common reason given is a fear that they will lose access to their technology.

Students are advised to report an incident if:

- they feel that the welfare of other students at the school is being threatened
- they come across sites which are not suitable for their school
- someone writes something they don’t like, or makes them and their friends feel uncomfortable or asks them to provide information that they know is private
- they accidentally do something which is against the rules and responsibilities they have agreed to.
- **Make sure I understand and follow the terms and conditions of websites and online communities that I use (including age requirements) and be aware that content I upload or post is my digital footprint which can be tracked and used as evidence of my online behaviour.**

Many websites/spaces have conditions of use, such as ownership of the content and the age of participants. For example: Children under 13 years of age are not permitted access to Facebook. When posting information online - A good rule is “Don’t post what you wouldn’t want your Grandparent, Principal, or future boss to read.”

Protect my privacy rights and those of other students by not giving out personal details including full names, telephone numbers, addresses and images.

Students like to publish information about themselves and their friends and in doing so, this can put them at risk of being approached, groomed or bullied online. To avoid this we recommend they:

- use their first name only and not reveal their surname
- don’t share personal details, including images of themselves or their friends online
- don’t make public information about after school groups you belong to (eg footy, gym etc.) & where you play
- password protect any spaces or accounts they have

- don't allow anyone they don't know to join their chat or collaborative space
- are reminded that any image or comment they put on the internet is now public (anyone can see, change or use it) so no full names should appear in reference to individuals in any image, movie or sound recording
- understand the terms and conditions of any website or online community that they might join.

- **Use the internet at school for educational purposes and use the equipment properly**

It is important to realise that there is a time for fun and a time for work even on the internet. Students may often see the internet as 'free' however even just looking at a page on the internet incurs a download cost. By taking care with the equipment, and thinking carefully about printing and downloading from the internet students can save time, money and the environment. Staying on task will reduce the risk of inappropriate access and teach students strategies to use the internet or mobile technologies for their learning.

- **Use school approved social networking sites for educational purposes and only as directed by teachers.**

Web 2.0 tools and social networking spaces allow students to be contributors to the web and to work collaboratively online with other students. Creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, digital stories and podcasts can all be legitimate educational activities which allow students to publish, share and inform others and be active contributors to the web. It is important for students to understand that working in a collaborative space as part of a learning task, has a very different purpose to using a social networking space to link up with friends in their own time.

- **Abide by copyright procedures when using content on websites (ask permission to use images, text, audio and video and cite references where necessary).**

Music, information, images and games on the internet are owned by someone. The term copyright is a legal one and there are laws to enforce it. Not only is breaking copyright morally, ethically and legally wrong, it can introduce potential risks. By downloading a 'freebie' you can risk bringing a virus or spyware to the computer or system. These can destroy a computer system or provide hackers with details such as passwords and bank accounts.

- **Think carefully about other users' intellectual property and how I use content posted on the internet, not simply copy and paste information from websites.**

Not everything on the internet is true, accurate or unbiased. The school is working to teach digital literacy skills, which enable students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively on the internet. It is important that your child respects the Intellectual property of people who contribute resources online. Students should use their own thoughts and language to express what they have learnt, and avoid simply copying and pasting information from the internet.

- **Not interfere with network security, the data of another user or attempt to log into the network with a user name or password of another student.**
- **Not reveal a password to anyone except a classroom teacher.**
- **Not bring any personal digital device (ie camera, iPod, iPad etc. to school without permission from a teacher. This includes a USB/memory stick. Note: students in year 5 do have permission to bring iPads as they are participants in the Year 5 BYOD iPad program.**
- **Not download any programs without permission, including games, onto the school system.**
- **Only take photos and record sound or video when it is a part of an approved school activity.**
- **Get appropriate written permission before publishing or sending photos of or information about others.**
- **Protect the privacy of others.**

In school settings, internet service providers set up filters to block out a lot of inappropriate content, but these filters are not always foolproof. Students who deliberately seek out inappropriate content or use technologies which bypass filters, will have their internet access removed (until further notice) and their parent/carers will be immediately informed.

Computer facilities are for the use of all students so due care should be taken at all times when using these resources. Students are responsible for everything they do in using their accounts, and everything in their home directories. To this end, students need to keep their log on details confidential and not gain access to other students' login details. The school connects all of the computers through a network. The introduction of unknown games or files could introduce viruses, etc and these put all school equipment and student work at risk.

GENERAL DIGITAL DEVICE REMINDERS

If using a digital device as a phone, a student will:

- have a parent complete and sign the school's mobile phone permission form and follow the school's procedures
- Protect the privacy of others and never post private information about another person using Short Message Service (SMS).

When using a digital device as a camera, a student will:

- Only take photos and record sound or video when it is part of a class or lesson.
- Seek permission from individuals involved before taking photos, recording sound or videoing them (including teachers).
- Seek appropriate (written) permission from individuals involved before publishing or sending photos, recorded sound or video to anyone else or to any online space.
- Be respectful in the photos I take or video I capture and never use these as a tool for bullying.

Mobile phones and digital devices are a seamless part of our lives. The school allows the use of these digital technologies (as outlined above) as a tool to enhance the capacity for learning in a classroom.

The recording of images and sounds can breach students' rights under the Privacy Act. Sometimes students are reluctant to tell their peers that they don't want their image or voice recorded. The Privacy Act says that the posting and sharing of information online or in any other way requires consent.

This consent must be **fully informed, freely given, current** and **specific** in how the information will be presented and who it will be presented to. Schools are required to obtain signed authority for any work, images or information posted online. All citizens need to respect the rights of others to privacy and students are no exception. Consent can be withdrawn at anytime.

Key Discussion Questions for parents to ask

At home we recommend that you make some time to find out how your child is using the internet. When they are online, make some time to chat and ask questions such as:

- What is it that is so enjoyable about the site or space you are using? What is the purpose of the site or space?
- How does it work? How do you set it up? What are the conditions of use?
- Who is else is sharing this space? Do you know them or did you 'meet' them online? How can you control who is in your space?
- Can you see any risks or dangers in the activity? What would you say to warn/inform a younger child?
- What are you doing to protect yourself or your friends from these potential dangers?
- When would you tell an adult about an incident that has happened online? Who would you tell?
- When wouldn't you tell and why not? *Research shows that students are reluctant to report issues and put at risk their internet/phone access.*

Ensure that all internet activities occur in a shared place– not your child's bedroom. Negotiate appropriate times for online activities and use of mobile phones. Consider the use of "safe search filters" freely available as settings on Google, Bing etc

Scenarios for teacher/parent/guardian/student discussion:

What can you do?

- You found the car picture you were searching for, but it includes a naked person!
- Someone keeps messaging nasty and upsetting comments about you and your friends on your mobile phone.
- A person you met online asks you to give them your full name, phone number and suggests you meet. Is it different if they have been your "friend" for a long time?
- You are sent a message which has been forwarded by someone else. It has embarrassing comments/image about someone you know.
- A game online will only let you play it if you give your name, address, date of birth, etc.
- An online community asks you to sign up and allow the space to "Connect you to all your friends" It wants your email address and password to do this. It needs access to your address book.
- In an online space/chat someone suggests you all exclude /block a classmate.
- Your friend took a video of you and your friends 'mucking around' and posted it on a video hosting service like YouTube.

- You told your parent/guardian that you are doing homework for hours every night on the computer.
- Your friend has an online profile published (not set to private). You can see their personal details and photos. Other people you know are in the photos.
- A friend tells you about a great site where there is 'free' music or a game to download.

If you have any concerns about this agreement or ideas for making the agreement better please contact the school principal.

For further support with online issues students can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800. Parents/carers can call Parentline 132289 or visit <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>