ICT POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the 'ICT Acceptable User Agreement & Photo Permission Policy', 'Privacy Policy & Collection Notice', and 'G Suite For Education Permission Policy'

About this policy

St. Mark's believes that the teaching of the responsible use of technology is essential in the lives of students and is best taught in partnership between home and school. This document will explain the use of Information and Communication Technologies at school, as well as the role of parents/carers at home.

Today's students spend increasing amounts of time online, learning and collaborating. To be safe in digital environments, and to gain the greatest benefit from the opportunities provided through them, students need to do the right thing by themselves and others online, particularly when no one is watching.

Safe and responsible behaviour is explicitly taught at our school and parents/carers are requested to reinforce this behaviour at home. In reading this policy and signing the 'ICT Acceptable Use Agreement' your child will be agreeing to behave in a certain way online and act appropriately when using technologies.

The school is also committed to transparency between families in regards to the collection and storage of information and data of students. More information can be read in the 'Privacy Policy & Collection Notice'.

St. Mark's provides...

- a filtered Internet service for use at school

- access to Google Suite for Education (GSFE, formally Google Apps for Education) and the Integrated Catholic Online Network (ICON)- the Catholic Education Melbourne's secure learning environments

- supervision and direction in online activities when using digital technologies for learning

- support for students in developing digital literacy skills

- an enacted cyber-safety program across the school

- support to parents/carers for information sessions, policies, and communication provided through the school

Use of technology at school

Students at St. Mark's use a range of technology including laptops, desktops and tablets in the classrooms on the school network. Students in Year 3 to 6 are provided with a Chromebook for their personal use at school and at home. In some circumstances, they are also permitted to bring their own mobile devices to use for various learning activities. Students in Years 5 and 6 are also permitted to connect their personal mobile devices to their school Chromebook.

The use of technology at St. Mark's is strictly for educational use, and is consistent with the educational goals of the school. 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 viewing a page on the Internet incurs a download cost. By taking care of equipment, and thinking carefully about printing and downloading from the Internet, students can save time, money and environmental resources. Staying on task will reduce the risk of inappropriate access and teach students strategies to use the Internet or mobile technologies for their learning. For this reason, students are encouraged to use the Internet and ICT as an educational tool at school.

Parents will be notified in instances where students have broken the agreements of the 'ICT User Agreement Policy'. Disciplinary action where required will be negotiated between the student, teacher and parents, which may include a loss of privileges for a specified time.

Use of technology outside of school

At home, it is recommended that devices are only used in a shared and visible place in the house – not in bedrooms. Students should exercise caution when leaving their devices unattended at home, or sharing devices with others when they are logged in.

Please note that it is a violation of terms and conditions for minors under the age of 13 to use social networking sites and applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Kik and Youtube / Google or Gmail. The school cannot condone nor recommend that students under the age of 13 use social network sites which are not intended for children. Parents are advised to supervise their children's Internet use and regularly check what websites and applications they are using.

G Suite for Education

As stated above, users must be 13 years of age or older to have a regular Google or Gmail account. The school is able to legally provide a specialised Google Suite for Education account to students provided it abides by certain terms and conditions. Students are only permitted to use their account as directed, and may not sign up with third-party services, or log in with their accounts to websites which have not been approved by the school. Parents are required to read the 'G Suite For Education Permission Policy' and give consent to the school to create or maintain student accounts.

When students use Google Suite for Education and the Chrome Internet browser, their data and information is stored securely in the "cloud". This means that their content can be accessed from the Internet using multiple devices when they require it, but it also means that their data may be stored on servers which are located offshore. More information on the storage of data can be found in the 'Privacy Policy'.
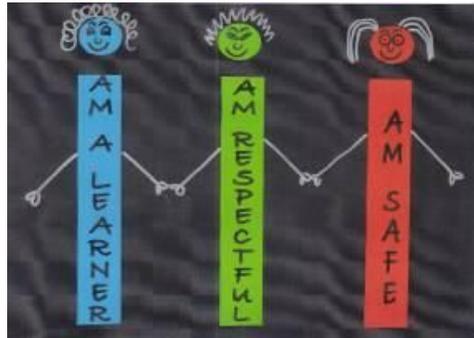
Supervision

Devices connected and managed on the school network (such as 1:1 devices) are monitored at school to ensure that students are using ICT towards educational outcomes. Teachers have access to the browsing history of managed devices when students use their devices at home. The school will contact parents in the event that it detects concerning information related to the device when it is used outside the school. This includes:

- evidence where the device is used late in the evening or early in the morning which can disrupt healthy sleep patterns

- evidence where content is accessed which is inappropriate for the age level of the student

Families should decide on the expected use of technology at home, and if a child uses their device to play games or use social media services, it is assumed that parents are aware of the risks and are supervising these services at home.

Ethical use

The school's 'School Wide Positive Support Program Policy' outlines the values of the school and expected behaviours when students use the Internet and digital technologies at school. This is modelled by the "3I's" framework:

I am a Learner. I am Respectful. I am Safe.

Cyber Bullying

Being online can make students feel that they are anonymous and sometimes students may say things online that they would never say to another person's face. Online bullying 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, just like people who passively witness bullying occurring but choose to do nothing.

Incidents online usually go unreported. Students often report their reasons as embarrassment, a belief that online issues are theirs to solve as adults don't understand, or a feeling that reporting it will make it worse. The most common reason given is the fear that they will lose access to their technology. However, it is important to realise that by children facing a problem of this nature by themselves can often make the situation worse, and that by involving an adult, they might be able to seek help to resolve the situation.

Reporting an incident

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 school

- Someone writes something they don't like, makes them and their friends feel uncomfortable, or asks them to provide personal information

- They accidentally do something which is against the rules and responsibilities they have agreed to

- They know of an incident which has happened to someone else

Students are advised to report incidents to an adult which can include a family friend, a parent, or a teacher. Students can also submit a report via an online form, which gives them the option of remaining anonymous if they wish. The school treats any incident report made electronically or in person very seriously, and will endeavour to take action wherever necessary. It is recommended that evidence of the incident is kept by taking photos or screenshots, recording details of the incident, or keeping copies of emails.

Families that support students

The school believes that the best way for families to be involved with their child's development of the smart, safe and responsible use of ICT is to set aside time for discussion at home, and to take an active interest in the way in which students use technology for both learning and leisure.

Key questions that parents can ask

- What is it that is so enjoyable about the site or space you are using?

- Who is else is sharing this space? Do you know them personally?

- Can you see any risks or dangers in the activity? What are you doing to protect yourself or your friends from these potential dangers?

Scenarios for teacher / parent / guardian / student discussion:

What can you do if…

- someone keeps messaging nasty and upsetting comments about you and your friends on your mobile device.

- a person you met online asks you to give them your personal information.

- 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 personal information.

- in an online space/chat someone suggests you 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.

- your friend has an published online profile (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.

Supporting the smart, safe and responsible use of technology in our school.

Our school has registered and attained 'eSmart Status', a guiding framework for schools to manage cybersafety and wellbeing. We will continue to update families on our eSmart program through our newsletter and website. More information is also available at www.esmart.org.au.