

Purpose

'The digital world is characteristic of the contemporary world...the web and social networks have created a new way to communicate and bond...Yet to understand this phenomenon as a whole, we need to realise that, like every human reality, it has its share of limitations and deficiencies.'

Pope Francis, *Christus vivit*, 2019.

Access to digital technologies, including the internet, is provided to students and staff at St Margaret's Primary School East Geelong, because digital information and communication are important mediums for contemporary learning and teaching and administration. Within Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), a range of technology platforms, such as the Integrated Catholic Online Network (ICON) provide access to a suite of digital technologies. The information, communication and learning technologies used by students in classrooms will be appropriate to the age and development of students. These technologies are used to support professional learning and the development of networks within and between St Margaret's Primary School and other schools for professional learning. They also enable effective communication with our parents and allow them to participate in their children's education, working in partnership with teachers.

In using and managing internet and network services, students and staff at St Margaret's Primary School are expected to respect the rights and privacy of all persons. They are called upon to respect the dignity of every human person. St Margaret's Primary School, along with parents in our community, educate students in the use of information and communication technologies to assist them to become responsible users, creators and publishers in the digital environment.

Rationale

Digital technologies and their use in classrooms are opening up new opportunities for learning, and previously unimagined approaches to teaching and learning. Today, young people have access to knowledge, people and new ideas like never before. They are able to connect, collaborate and build relationships with peers, educators and the wider global community. The use of digital technologies within Catholic schools supports learners to question, evaluate and consider the validity of information and then search for truths contained in those ideas. Learners are empowered to demonstrate adaptability and versatility in thinking and strategies as they select, use and manage a range of applications and technologies. We seek to develop students who are responsible and ethical communicators, creators and publishers in the digital community.

This policy applies to all digital technologies, social media tools, and learning environments established by St Margaret's Primary School, or accessed using school owned networks or systems, including (but not limited to):

- School owned ICT devices (e.g. iPad's, Chromebooks, desktops, laptops, printers, scanners)
- Email/Gmail and instant messaging
- Internet, Google for Education Suite (G Suite)
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Blogs, Picasa, YouTube)
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia)

It also applies when students use any of the above digital technologies (school or personal) at school, at home, during school excursions, camps and extracurricular activities.

Scope

This policy outlines the appropriate use and management of digital technologies such as the internet and network services at St Margaret's Primary School in accordance with legal and moral requirements and expectations.

This policy applies to members of the St Margaret's Primary School community in their use of digital technologies. It applies to all computers, devices, internet and network services, information and communication technologies, applications, and systems provided, operated and managed by the school. This policy does not apply to the curriculum content or the expected standards of usage by students or staff in the school. The curriculum and teaching practices and pedagogy are outlined in documents related to our learning and teaching programs.

Definitions

Computer is either a desktop or portable laptop device that performs processes, calculations and operations based on instructions provided by a software or hardware program.

Device refers to a unit of physical hardware or equipment that provides one or more computing functions within a computer system. It can provide input to the computer, accept output or both. Typical hardware includes a computer mouse, speakers, printer and microphone.

Email means the system that enables users to send data over the internet using computers and mobile devices.

ICON means the Integrated Catholic Online Network which is used to deliver shared services for educational and administrative purposes across Catholic schools.

Internet means the system of interconnected networks that connects computers for data transmission and storage.

Intranet refers to a local system of computers enabling students and staff to communication and share information within their school community.

Mobile devices refers to (but is not limited to) mobile phones, PDAs and portable storage devices.

Network services means the facilities and resources located on and delivered via a computer-based network, including communication systems, internet and intranet services, mobile devices, electronic mail, web services, printer services, database services, back-up services, file services and network management services.

Parents includes parents, guardians and carers.

Social networking means web-based services that allow individuals to create their own online profiles and communicate with each other by voice, chat, instant message, image sharing, video conference and blogs in a virtual community.

Staff means salaried, voluntary and contracted persons.

Students means those students enrolled at St Margaret's Primary School.

Website is an internet based page or series of pages grouped together and managed by a person or group.

Legal Age for Social Media. As part of their privacy policies, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube specify that users must be at least 13 years old. Parents may be unaware of this requirement. [Australian Institute of Family Studies \(aifs.gov.au\)](http://aifs.gov.au)

Principles

The use of digital technologies within our school by staff and students at St Margaret's Primary School is underpinned by the following principles and understanding:

- that digital technologies provide valuable opportunities for staff and students to collaborate, connect and create with peers, colleagues, experts and the wider community
- that online behaviour will at all times demonstrate respect for the dignity of each person in the community
- users will behave in a manner that is ethical when using the internet and network services (even for personal communication)
- the Catholic beliefs and ethos of the school, and professional expectations and standards required by teachers are demonstrated in the way the technologies are used
- inappropriate online behaviour, including cyberbullying, will not be tolerated.

Policy

Internet and Network Access

Access to internet and network services are provided by MACS to staff and students of St Margaret's Primary School for educational and administrative purposes. From time to time, other MACS policies and requirements in particular schools may result in restrictions.

Access rights assigned to students and staff at St Margaret's Primary School will be determined by the principal and may vary as educational and administrative purposes change.

Students and staff at St Margaret's Primary School may not use the internet and network services provided for commercial purposes, either offering or acquiring goods or services for personal use. The services cannot be used for political lobbying or proliferation of unnecessary communications.

Expectations of users

All students and staff at St Margaret's Primary School are required to use the internet and network services in accordance with this policy. Any use of devices or services that may be questionable, offensive, and controversial or against the Catholic ethos is unacceptable. This includes personal communication with students on matters not related to curriculum or education. These standards apply whenever St Margaret's Primary School equipment or communication lines are used, including use from home or other non-school location and when a private account is used.

Non-compliance with this policy

Disciplinary action may be undertaken by St Margaret's Primary School against any student or staff member who is found to be inappropriately using the provided internet, network services, device or mobile device. The principal will determine the disciplinary measures to be undertaken in accordance with other policies and guidelines. These measures may be outlined in staff handbooks or the Acceptable User Agreement for students used by St Margaret's Primary School.

Duty of Care

At St Margaret's Primary School, we see the skills and knowledge acquired in Digital Technologies as vital to flourish in our current and future world. The curriculum allows and encourages the students to be critical decision makers and being thoughtful about the impact that digital solutions, designs and decisions may have on society. This includes the ethical impact our decisions may have and our ability to keep ourselves safe online.

St Margaret's Primary School will provide instruction to students in online personal safety issues, including inappropriate sites, stranger danger, cyberbullying and scams. The School will prepare staff to deal with these issues.

Monitoring

Students

Online activities may be monitored or reviewed to assess network efficiency, examine system security and to investigate alleged breaches of this policy.

Staff

An authorised person (e.g. a principal, a regional manager or other MACS staff member can monitor the use of MACS ICT resources. Server logs may also be used in an investigation of an alleged breach of this policy.

Security

To minimise risk to MACS information and communication networks from viruses and intrusions, current virus screening software is to be activated, and where appropriate, passwords are to be used by staff and students of St Margaret's Primary School. Firewalls are to be maintained. The management of system protocols and configurations are the responsibility of the staff authorised by the school or MACS. Non-authorised staff and students are not permitted to have access to these levels of system management.

Email

Email service is provided for educational and administrative purposes. Staff and students at St Margaret's Primary School must identify themselves appropriately by using a signature block at the bottom of the email message that includes their name, school phone number and postal address. St Margaret's Primary School advises students and staff that they may be held accountable for the email they create and distribute using the network.

Websites

St Margaret's Primary School may create, or have created, a website with the approval of the principal. These websites must be established and maintained in accordance with MACS policies and guidelines and relevant legislation.

Social networking

Provision of social networking for students must be related to an educational purpose. This is at the discretion of the principal.

Students

St Margaret's Primary School provides students and parents/guardians with the following:

- a copy of St Margaret's Primary School Acceptable User Agreement
- a copy of this policy.

The Acceptable Use Agreement is provided in full for consideration by all signatories. The Agreement is to be signed by the student, parent/guardian and school representative before the student is given access to, and use of, a school's internet, network services and devices.

Staff

Staff are required to use the internet and network services in accordance with this and other policies. St Margaret's Primary School provides staff with the following:

- a copy of this policy
- a copy of the Acceptable User Agreement.

Related school policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Codes of conduct
 - [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
 - [Student Code of Conduct](#)
 - [Parent, Guardian, Carer Code of Conduct](#)
- Data Breach Policy
- [Complaints Handling Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Student Behaviour Policy.](#)

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