



# DIGITAL LEARNING (INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL DEVICES) POLICY

## PURPOSE

To ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing students with the opportunity to benefit from digital technologies to support and enhance learning and development at school including our 1-to-1 personal device program
- (b) expected student behaviour when using digital technologies including the internet, social media, and digital devices (including computers, laptops, tablets)
- (c) the school's commitment to promoting safe, responsible and discerning use of digital technologies, and educating students on appropriate responses to any dangers or threats to wellbeing that they may encounter when using the internet and digital technologies
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour on digital technologies and the internet
- (e) the various Department policies on digital learning, including social media, that our school follows and implements when using digital technology
- (f) our school prioritises the safety of students whilst they are using digital technologies

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff at Mortlake College

Staff use of technology is also governed by the following Department policies:

- [Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools](#) and
- [Social Media Use to Support Student Learning](#).

Staff, volunteers and school councillors also need to adhere to codes of conduct relevant to their respective roles. These codes include:

- Mortlake College's Child Safety Code of Conduct
- [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#) (teaching staff)
- [Code of Conduct for Victorian Sector Employees](#) (staff)
- [Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities](#) (school councillors)

## DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, "digital technologies" are defined as digital devices, tools, applications and systems that students and teachers use for learning and teaching; this includes Department-provided software and locally sourced devices, tools and systems.

## POLICY

### Vision for digital learning at our school

The use of digital technologies is a mandated component of the Victorian Curriculum F-10.

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies, including the internet, apps, computers and tablets, can provide students with rich opportunities to support learning and development in a range of ways.

Through increased access to digital technologies, students can benefit from learning that is interactive, collaborative, personalised, engaging and transformative. Digital technologies enable our students to interact with and create high quality content, resources and tools. It also enables personalised learning tailored to students' particular needs and interests and transforms assessment, reporting and feedback, driving new forms of collaboration and communication.

Mortlake College believes that the use of digital technologies at school allows the development of valuable skills and knowledge and prepares students to thrive in our globalised and inter-connected world. Our school's vision is to empower students to use digital technologies safely and appropriately to reach their personal best and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

### Personal Devices at Mortlake College

Mortlake College operates a 1-to-1 chromebook learning model for Year 3-10 students. Mortlake College operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program for Years 11 & 12.

Classes at our school are delivered with the use of notebook computers.

Parents/carers are invited to purchase a device for their child. Mortlake College has made special arrangements for the purchase of devices for our students. Mortlake College can refer parents to government or community support programs that may help them if they wish to purchase a device for their child to own.

Students are expected to bring their own device to school each day to be used during class time for different learning activities. When bringing their own device to school, students should ensure that it:

- Is fully charged each morning
- Is brought to school in a protective case
- If device requires charging when at school, your child will be given a spare device from IT Manager (if there is one available) and their device will be placed on charge.
- NO device charging cords should be brought to school or used in classrooms.

Please note that our school does not have insurance to cover accidental damage to students' devices, and parents/carers are encouraged to consider obtaining their own insurance for their child's device.

Students, parents and carers who would like more information or assistance regarding our BYOD program are encouraged to contact the Business Manager.

Digital technologies, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users' safety or wellbeing. At Mortlake College, we are committed to educating all students to use digital technologies safely, equipping students with the skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world.

At Mortlake College, we:

- use online sites and digital tools that support students' learning, and focus our use of digital technologies on being learning-centred

- use digital technologies in the classroom for specific purpose with targeted educational or developmental aims
- supervise and support students using digital technologies for their schoolwork
- effectively and responsively address any issues or incidents that have the potential to impact on the wellbeing of our students
- have programs in place to educate our students to be safe, responsible and discerning users of digital technologies, including [Values Education Presentation & Victoria Police Presentation]
- educate our students about digital issues such as privacy, intellectual property and copyright, and the importance of maintaining their own privacy and security online
- actively educate and remind students of our *Student Engagement* policy that outlines our School's values and expected student behaviour, including online behaviours
- have an Acceptable Use Agreement outlining the expectations of students when using digital technologies for their schoolwork
- use clear protocols and procedures to protect students working in online spaces, which includes reviewing the safety and appropriateness of online tools and communities and removing offensive content at the earliest opportunity
- educate our students on appropriate responses to any dangers or threats to wellbeing that they may encounter when using the internet and other digital technologies
- provide a filtered internet service at school to block access to inappropriate content
- refer suspected illegal online acts to the relevant law enforcement authority for investigation
- support parents and carers to understand the safe and responsible use of digital technologies and the strategies that can be implemented at home through regular updates in our newsletter, information sheets, website/school portal and information sessions.

Distribution of school owned devices to students and personal student use of digital technologies at school will only be permitted where students and their parents/carers have completed a signed Acceptable Use Agreement.

It is the responsibility of all students to protect their own password and not divulge it to another person. If a student or staff member knows or suspects an account has been used by another person, the account holder must notify [IT Manager or Advocate], immediately.

All messages created, sent or retrieved on the school's network are the property of the school. The school reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, as necessary and appropriate. Communications including text and images may be required to be disclosed to law enforcement and other third parties without the consent of the sender.

Information on supervision arrangements for students engaging in digital learning activities is available in our Yard Duty and Supervision Policy.

### **Social media use**

Our school follows the Department's policy on [Social Media Use to Support Learning](#) to ensure social media is used safely and appropriately in student learning and to ensure appropriate parent notification occurs or, where required, consent is sought. Where the student activity is visible to the public, it requires consent.

### **Student behavioural expectations**

When using digital technologies, students are expected to behave in a way that is consistent with Mortlake College's *Statement of Values, Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy, and *Bullying Prevention* policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community (including cyberbullying, using digital technologies to harass, threaten or intimidate, or viewing/posting/sharing of

inappropriate or unlawful content), Mortlake College will institute a staged response, consistent with our student engagement and behaviour policies.

Breaches of this policy by students can result in a number of consequences which will depend on the severity of the breach and the context of the situation. This includes:

- removal of network access privileges
- removal of email privileges
- removal of internet access privileges
- removal of printing privileges
- other consequences as outlined in the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying Prevention* policies.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website [
- Included in staff induction and child safety training processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions if required
- Abbreviated version included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2023
Approved by	Principal and School Council
Next scheduled review date	March 2024

## ***STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT***

**This Agreement is to be signed by both the student and parent.**

**When I use technology, both at school and at home I have responsibilities and rules to follow. I agree to:**

- be a safe user whenever and wherever I use that technology.
- be responsible whenever and wherever I use technology. I will support others by being respectful in how I talk to and work with them, and I will never write or participate in online bullying. This includes forwarding messages and supporting others in harmful, inappropriate or hurtful online behaviour.
- report to an adult if I feel unsafe or uncomfortable online or see a friend being unsafe or being made to feel uncomfortable by others.
- Not download or copy onto my 1:1 device any software, games, images or footage, that is deemed inappropriate.

**When at school I agree to:**

- behave in a way outlined in the College's Student Engagement Policy when online or using mobile technology.
- keep myself and my friends safe by not giving out personal details including full names, telephone numbers, addresses and images, and by protecting my password
- use the technology at school for learning, use the equipment properly and not interfere with the work or data of another student
- not bring or download unauthorised programs or files
- not go looking for rude or offensive sites
- remember that the content on the web is someone's property and ask my teacher / parent to help me get permission if I want to use information or pictures
- think carefully about what I read on the Internet, question if it is from a reliable source and use the information to help me answer any questions (I **will not** copy and paste the information as my answer).
- talk to my teacher or another adult if:
  - I need help online
  - I am not sure what I should be doing on the internet
  - I come across sites which are not suitable
  - someone writes something I don't like, or makes me and my friends feel uncomfortable or asks me to provide information that I know is private
  - I feel that the welfare of other students at the school are being threatened

**I understand, and agree to, the following school rules regarding mobile phones, headphones and earbuds, and other electronic devices:**

### ***Mobile Phones and other electronic devices:***

Our College recognises that mobile phones are an important means of communication and that many parents have provided students with mobile phones. Whilst the College permits certain students to have mobile phones at school, it is recognised that they can be disruptive to the learning environment, and often used inappropriately.

We acknowledge there are occasions when it is appropriate and beneficial for students to have access to a mobile phone. However, our school discourages the bringing of mobile phones to schools by all students.

Headphones, earphones or earbuds are also a distraction to learning when not used according to teacher instruction for a specific task, and the inability of a student to hear what is going on around them may also pose a safety risk, especially in the event of an emergency. These devices may only be used at teacher discretion during class time.

***Students and parents therefore need to be aware of the following requirements in regards to Mobile Phone Use and the use of headphones, earphones or earbuds. These requirements are to ensure that these items do not disrupt learning or the safe environment of our school and students within.***

1. Students in Years Foundation to Year 12 are **not** permitted to have mobile phones **on their person** at school during the day from 8.55am to 3.20 pm. Students who bring a mobile phone to school must keep them on silent or turned off either in their locker, school bag or handed in to the General Office for secure safe keeping.
2. All teachers are given full jurisdiction to confiscate a student's mobile phone, and or wearable devices such as the Apple Watch, or headphones
  - a. where at any point in time a student in years F-12 is found to have been using the device in contradiction to this policy  
Students who, in the opinion of the responsible teacher, breach this policy are required to surrender the device/s immediately.
3. Our school reserves the right to prohibit students from bringing mobile phones into certain spaces or during certain activities e.g. excursions, school camps, sports days, etc.
4. The principal may revoke a student's privilege of bringing or using a mobile phone whilst at school.
5. Mobile phones owned by students and staff are brought to school at their own risk. The College will not compensate damaged, lost or stolen personal mobile phones.
6. Mobile phones brought to school must never be loaned to other students.
7. Parents needing to contact students during the school day **MUST** do so via the General Office.
8. Confiscated phones will be placed in the General Office for safekeeping, and may only be collected by the Parent or Guardian between 4.00pm and 4.30pm, or by the student the following day, before school starts. Where a phone has been confiscated, parents will be notified to ensure arrangements are made for after school duty of care and phone collection purposes.
  - Appropriate action, according to our Student Engagement Guidelines will be taken against any student who;
  - uses their phone (or allows others) to take images or record another person without their consent
  - makes harassing or threatening calls, sends harassing, threatening or inappropriate messages, or allows others to use their phone to do so.
  - Refuses to hand over their phone (or other electronic device) for confiscation.

9. Students who receive inappropriate material, or whom feel they have been a victim of harassment or bullying in any form, are encouraged report it immediately to a trusted adult, who may then notify the AP, or Principal of the matter. We especially encourage this to occur during school hours.
10. Where deemed appropriate (e.g. there may be any unjust or inappropriate messages or pictures suspected to be on the phone) the school reserves the right to confiscate the phone and will seek for the student to show the content being questioned. Where a student refuses to share any content on their phone, parents will be contacted immediately. It is noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the school is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.
11. In accordance with the Departments Mobile Phone Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used during schools hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exemption has been granted.  
(Refer to <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx> for full exception details) Where a students has been granted an exemption, the student must use their mobile phone ONLY for the purpose by which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

This Acceptable Use Agreement also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.

***I acknowledge and agree to follow these rules. I understand that my access to the Internet, ICT devices and mobile technology at school will be renegotiated if I do not act responsibly.***

Student Name:.....Student Signature:.....

**Parent Permission-** *I agree to allow my child to use the Internet at school. I have discussed potential problems and responsible use of the Internet with him/her. I will contact the school if there is anything here that I do not understand or If there is a situation which concerns me.*

Parent/Guardian Signature .....Date:.....