

DIGITAL LEARNING POLICY (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices)



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school.

PURPOSE

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

- 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
- expected student behaviour when using digital technologies including the internet, social media, and digital devices (including computers, laptops, iPads)
- 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
- our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour on digital technologies and the internet
- the various Department policies on digital learning, including social media, that our school follows and implements when using digital technology
- our school prioritises the safety of students whilst they are using digital technologies

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff at Patterson Lakes Primary School.

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 also follow our school's Acceptable Use Agreement.

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

- Patterson Lakes Primary School'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.

Patterson Lakes Primary School believes that the use of digital technologies allows the development of valuable skills and knowledge and prepares students to thrive in our globalised and inter-connected world. Our school's digital learning 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 Patterson Lakes Primary School

Patterson Lakes Primary School operates an optional 1-to-1 program. Years 3 – 6 classes at our school are delivered with the use of notebook computers as a resource to support their learning.

Parents/carers are invited to purchase a device for their child to bring to school. Patterson Lakes Primary School has made special arrangements with Edunet who offer discounted prices for the purchase of devices for our students. Payments by families are made directly to the supplier, Edunet.

Students are invited 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 clearly labelled in a protective labelled case
- has a clearly labelled charger
- has at least 128 GB of storage
- operates on OS version Windows 10

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 1-to-1 program are encouraged to contact the school or read the information on our school's website.

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

Digital technologies, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users' safety or wellbeing. At Patterson Lakes Primary School, 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 Patterson Lakes Primary School, 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 in the classroom
- 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
- 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 Wellbeing and Engagement* policy that outlines our school's values and expected student behaviour, including online behaviours
- have an *Acceptable Use Agreement* (Annexure A) 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, Compass 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. This will be provided to families at the commencement of the school year.

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 immediately notify their classroom teacher or Principal.

All messages created, sent or retrieved on Patterson Lakes Primary 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

In accordance with the Department's policy on social media, staff will not 'friend' or 'follow' a student on a personal social media account, or accept a 'friend' request from a student using a personal social media account unless it is objectively appropriate, for example where the student is also a family member of the staff.

If a staff member of our school becomes aware that a student at the school is 'following' them on a personal social media account, Department policy requires the staff member to ask the student to 'unfollow' them, and to notify the school and/or parent or carer if the student does not do so.

Student behavioural expectations

When using digital technologies, students are expected to behave in a way that is consistent with Patterson Lakes Primary School'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), Patterson Lakes Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy.

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 at www.patterson-lakes-ps.vic.edu.au
- 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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as an annual reference in the school newsletter
- Included in our annual 'Information Package' to all families at the commencement of each school year
- Made available in hard copy from the school office upon request

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/report.aspx>

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Consultation	Staff and School Council
Approved by	Carole Mayes - Principal Mandy O'Toole - School Council President
Next scheduled review date	August 2026

ANNEXURE A: ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

Acceptable Use Agreement – Staff

Staff are directed to the 'Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct' and the 'Code of Conduct for Victorian Sector Employees'. Bullying and harassment of any kind is prohibited. No messages with derogatory or inflammatory remarks about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, or sexual preference will be transmitted. Violations of any guidelines listed above will result in disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment. Teachers are responsible for responding to reports made by students in relation to cyber bullying and any other inappropriate use of digital technologies.

While the Internet may be largely a self-regulated environment, the general principles of law and community standards still apply to communication and publishing via the Internet. In addition to school penalties, there are legal sanctions for improper use of the Internet. Safe and responsible user agreements support school communities to understand the behaviours and processes that will help them to act in a safe and responsible manner when using digital technologies.

Acceptable Use Agreement - Students

When I use digital technologies, I agree to be a safe, responsible, and ethical user always, by:

- respecting others and communicating with them in a supportive manner; never writing or participating in online bullying (for example, forwarding messages and supporting others in harmful, inappropriate online behaviours).
- protecting my privacy; not giving out personal details, including my full name, telephone number, address, passwords, and images.
- protecting the privacy of others, never posting, or forwarding their personal details or images without their consent.
- not bringing any digital device to school that I do not have a signed acceptable use agreement for.
- talking to a teacher if I feel personally uncomfortable or unsafe online, or if I see others engaging in or displaying unsafe, inappropriate, or hurtful online behaviours.
- following all teacher instructions regarding the use of the Internet and E-mail.
- only accessing appropriate information, which is relevant to my work.
- getting permission from the teacher if I want to use information or pictures from the web.
- thinking carefully about what I read on the internet, question if it is from a reliable source and using the information to help answer any questions.
- taking great care of all digital technologies equipment in the school. This includes laptop computers, interactive data panels, projectors, iPads, iPods, printers, cameras, robots, microphones, and headphones.
- not installing, uploading, or downloading software without permission from the school.
- not bringing or downloading unauthorised programs, including games, to the school or running them on school devices.
- using a mobile device with a built-in camera in a responsible way by:
Only taking photos and recording sound or video when it is part of a class or lesson and I have teacher approval.

Seeking permission from individuals involved before taking photos, recording sound, or taking a video of them (including teachers).

Seeking teacher permission before uploading any content to websites, e.g. blogs.

This acceptable use agreement also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extracurricular activities. Failure to adhere to the agreement will result in the student forfeiting their privilege to be part of the Patterson Lakes Primary School Digital Network.

Advice for Parents

Please keep this as a resource to use at home.

At school the internet is mostly used to support teaching and learning. However, at home 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, play, and chat. If you have the internet at home, encourage your child to show you what they are doing online. If not, we strongly encourage you to visit the school to see their work and how the school uses the Internet. Bullying, stranger danger, accessing inappropriate material, gossip, telling the wrong people personal information have long been issues for young people growing up. These are all behaviours which now present online. These are not 'virtual' issues. They are real and can harm and hurt.

As parents, we recommend that you:

- set an example to your child(ren) about how to use social media responsibly. Parents should be mindful when posting photographs of their children, containing three points of identity (for example, their full name, location, school uniform, etc.).
- think twice before posting negative statements or reviews about people or places, as your first responsibility is to be a role-model to your children
- take some time to sit with your child to find out how they are using the internet and who else is involved in any online activities

- ask your child to give you a tour of their 'space' if they are using a site which allows them to chat, publish photos, play games, etc.
- always get your child to set their social media space to 'Private' if they are old enough to use a social networking site
- have the computer with internet access set up in a shared place in the house - not your child's bedroom
- negotiate appropriate times for your child's online activities and use of mobile phones and devices

Make some time to sit with them online and ask questions such as:

- What is it that is so enjoyable about the activity or space you are using? What is it's purpose?
- How does it work? How do you set it up? What are the conditions of use?
- Who else is sharing or in 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.*
- What are the age limitations for using this space?