Digital Learning Policy

(Internet, social media and digital devices)

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact your child's school.

PURPOSE

To ensure that all students and members of our Wodonga Federation of Government Schools 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

(b)   expected student behaviour when using digital technologies including the internet, social media, and digital devices (including computers, laptops, tablets, iPads)

(c)   the member 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 member 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 member schools follow and implement when using digital technology

(f)   our member schools prioritise the safety of students whilst they are using digital technologies

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff at our member schools.

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.

Baranduda Primary School
Belvoir Special School
Melrose Primary School
Wodonga Middle Years College
Wodonga Senior Secondary College
Wodonga South Primary School
Wodonga Primary School
Wodonga West Children's Centre

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

- Wodonga Federation of Government Schools' 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 within our member schools

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, iPads 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.

The Federation member schools believe 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 member schools' 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 member schools

Across the Federation, member schools may provide devices, offer leasing options, Bring Your Own Device programs or a combination of these.

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Please note, that our member schools do 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 personal devices at one of our member schools are encouraged to contact their member school's office.

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

Digital technologies, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users' safety or wellbeing. At our member schools, 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 our member schools, we:

- use online sites and digital tools that support student learning, and focus our use of digital technologies on being learning-centred
- use digital technologies in the classroom for specific purposes with targeted educational or developmental aims
- supervise and support students using digital technologies for their schoolwork
- effectively and responsibly address any issues or incidents that have the potential to impact 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 privacy and security online
- actively educate and remind students of our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* Policy outlines each 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

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- 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 member schools' newsletter, information sheets, website/school portal and information sessions.

Distribution of our member schools' 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 the classroom teacher as appropriate, immediately.

All messages created, sent or retrieved on the member school's network are the property of the school. Our Member Schools reserve 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 each school's Yard Duty and Supervision Policy.

Social media use

Our member schools follow the Department's policy on [Social Media Use to Support Learning](link) 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.

Under 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 each member school's *Statement of Values, Student Wellbeing and Engagement* Policy, and the Federation's *Bullying Prevention* policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school communities (including

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cyberbullying, using digital technologies to harass, threaten or intimidate, or viewing/posting/sharing inappropriate or unlawful content), our member school will institute a staged response, consistent with our student engagement and behaviour policies.

Breaches of this policy by students can result in several 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 member school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and the Federation's *Bullying Prevention* policies.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on each member school's website and the Federation's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our member school staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Annual reference in the school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Hard copy available from our member school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	August 2024
Consultation	School community – August 2024
Approved by	Principal (20/09/2024)
Next scheduled review date	20/09/2026

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