



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES (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 principal on 9736 2499

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 Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School (YRSDS)
- (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 at YRSDS and the OSHC program.

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:

- Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School 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 technology at our school

YRSDS understands that digital technologies including the internet, apps, computers and tablets provide students with rich opportunities to support learning and development in a range of ways. Digital technologies also, most importantly provides some students at YRSDS with access to alternative and augmentative means of communication (AAC).

Through increased access to digital technologies, students can benefit from enhanced learning opportunities. Digital technologies enable our students to interact with and create high quality content, resources and tools. It also enables personalised learning tailored to students’ individual goals, particular needs and interests.

Our school’s vision is to empower students to use digital technologies to reach their personal best and fully equip them to contribute positively to society as happy, healthy young adults.

iPads at Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School

Classes at YRSDS use specific apps on iPads relevant to the classroom learning content or the student’s individual goals.

Some students may bring a charged iPad to school each day to be used as their communication system.

Yarra Ranges SDS has in place arrangements to support families who may be experiencing long or short-term hardship to access devices for schoolwork.

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

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

Digital technology, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users’ safety or wellbeing. At YRSDS, we are committed to educating and supporting all students to be safe and responsible in the use of digital technologies, where possible equipping them with skills and knowledge to navigate the digital age.

At YRSDS, we:

- use online sites and digital tools that support students’ learning, and focus our use of digital technologies on being learning-centred
- restrict the use of digital technologies in the classroom to specific uses with targeted educational or developmental aims
- Restrict access to YouTube through teacher login only
- supervise and support students using digital technologies 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 promoting safe, responsible and discerning use of digital technologies, including Bully Stoppers
- educate our students about digital issues such as online privacy, intellectual property and copyright, and the importance of maintaining their own privacy online
- explicitly teach expected behaviours
- have an Acceptable Use Agreement outlining the expectations of students when using digital technology at school
- provide a filtered internet service 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 safe and responsible use of digital technologies and the strategies that can be implemented at home through regular updates in our newsletter and annual information sheets.

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

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.

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 YRSD'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), YRSDS will institute a staged response, consistent with our policies and the Department's *Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines*.

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 school network R:drive
- Included in staff /parent handbooks
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter

- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

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

- Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School 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)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2022
Consultation	School council – School community –
Approved by	Principal- School Council -
Next scheduled review date	May 2024

Acceptable Use Agreement

School statement

At Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School we support the rights of all members of the school community to be provided with and engage in a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment. This extends to the use of digital tools and online communities and is underpinned by our expectation of safe and responsible behaviour of all members of the school community.

At our school we:

- have a **Student Engagement Policy** that states our school's values and expected standards of student behaviour, including actions and consequences for inappropriate online behaviour
- educate our students to be safe and responsible users of digital technologies. *(Include internet usage, email usage and controlled social media)*
- raise our students' awareness of issues such as online privacy, intellectual property and copyright
- supervise and support students when using digital technologies within the classroom and establish clear protocols and procedures when working in online spaces including reviewing and considering the safety and appropriateness of online tools and communities
- provide a filtered internet service but acknowledge that full protection from inappropriate content can never be guaranteed
- respond to issues or incidents that have the potential to impact on the wellbeing of our students including those reported through online services
- know that some online activities are illegal and as such we are required to report this to the appropriate authority
- support parents/guardians to understand safe and responsible use of digital technologies, potential issues and the strategies that they can implement at home to support their child; providing this Acceptable Use Agreement and current information from both the Department of Education and Training and Cybersmart:
 - [Bullystoppers Interactive Learning Modules - parents](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/parentmodules.aspx)
(www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/parentmodules.aspx)
 - [Cybersafety guide - parents](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx) (www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx)
- provide students with communication facilities such as email to teach them about responsible communication using digital media.
- reserve the right to read, block and disable the use of emails and or technology if we feel inappropriate or questionable behavior is taking place.

Safe and responsible behaviour

When I use digital technologies and the internet I **communicate respectfully** by:

- always thinking and checking that what I write or post is polite and respectful
- being kind to my friends and classmates and thinking about how the things I do or say online might make them think or feel (*Ask students to reflect on how they would feel.*)
- working to stop bullying. I don't send mean or bullying messages or pass them on to others
- using email, computers & technology during appropriate hours (8am to 8pm)
- using email, computers & technology for education purposes.

When I use digital technologies and the internet I **protect personal information** by being aware that my full name, photo, birthday, address and phone number is personal information and is not to be shared online. This means I:

- protect my friends' information in the same way
- protect my passwords and don't share them with anyone except my parent
- only ever join spaces with my parents or teacher's guidance and permission
- never answer questions online that ask for my personal information
- know not to post three or more pieces of identifiable information about myself

When I use digital technologies and the internet I **respect myself and others** by thinking about what I share online. This means I:

- stop to think about what I post or share online
- use spaces or sites that are appropriate for my age and if I am not sure I ask a trusted adult for help
- protect my friends' full names, birthdays, school names, addresses and phone numbers because this is their personal information
- speak to a trusted adult if I see something that makes me feel upset or if I need help
- speak to a trusted adult if someone is unkind to me or if I know someone else is upset or scared
- don't deliberately search for something rude or violent
- turn off or close the screen if I see something I don't like and tell a trusted adult
- never share photos or personal information with people I don't know.
- never write anything that may hurt others feelings or embarrass them.
- am careful with the equipment I use.

At school we/I:

- discuss ways to be a safe and responsible user of digital technologies and the internet.
- ask my parent\teacher before using technology

I will use this knowledge at school and everywhere I use digital technologies and the internet.

Student agreement

Student agreement

(Teacher/Principal's)

acknowledges the commitment of

(Student)

**to being a respectful, safe and responsible user of
digital technologies with support.**

As a student I continue to learn to use digital technologies safely and responsibly.

I will ask a trusted adult for help whenever I am unsure or feel unsafe.

Student's signature (as appropriate)

Or Parent's signature

Teacher/Principal's signature

Date: _____



