

Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices) Policy

Review Cycle

This policy was updated in 21/08/2023

This policy was approved by the Principal in August, 2023

To be reviewed August 2025



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact [insert school contact details].

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

- Ballarat North 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.

Ballarat North Primary School 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.

Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

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

At Ballarat North 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
- 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 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 [insert relevant role/s, i.e. classroom teacher, the administration], 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.**

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 Ballarat Norths 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), Ballarat North Primary School 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 safe 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 annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration hard copy from school administration upon request

ANNEXURE A: ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

Ballarat North Primary School Responsible Use Agreement for Internet and Digital Technologies 2023

Ballarat North Primary School believes the teaching of safe and responsible online behaviour and cyber safety are essential in the lives of students and is best taught in partnership between home and school.

Students of the 21st century spend increasing amounts of time online, learning and collaborating. To be safe online and to gain the greatest benefit from the opportunities provided through an online environment, students need to do the right thing by themselves and others online.

Safe and responsible behaviour is explicitly taught in collaboration with the eSmart guidelines at our school. Parents/guardians are requested to reinforce this behaviour at home.

School Support for the Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies

Ballarat North Primary School uses the Internet and digital technologies, e.g. iPads, as teaching and learning tools. We see the internet and digital technologies as valuable resources, but acknowledge they must be used safely and responsibly by all.

At Ballarat North Primary School we:

- have policies in place that outline the values of the school and expected behaviours when students use digital technology and the internet
- provide a filtered internet service
- provide supervision and direction in online activities and when using digital technologies for learning
- support students in developing digital literacy skills
- implement the eSmart cyber safety program across the school
- use mobile technologies for educational purposes (e.g. iPads and photos from excursions)
- work with students to outline and reinforce the expected behaviours when using school email facilities
- use 'Google apps for Education' (this includes Google Classroom) and Seesaw as a tool for classroom learning and collaboration. This will include sharing the student's full name and username with Google Apps and Seesaw.

This signed document will be kept on file for the remainder of the school year. Students and their parents are required to resign the agreement at the beginning of each school year.

ICT Responsible Use Agreement

Student Agreement

When I use information communication technologies (ICT), I have responsibilities and rules to follow.

I agree to:

- only work on the internet for purposes specified by my teacher
- not give out information such as my surname, address, telephone number, or parents' address/telephone number work
- never send a person my picture without first checking with my teacher
- compose email messages and comments using language I understand and that is acceptable in my school
- not use the Internet to frighten, annoy or bully other people
- follow school guidelines and procedures when preparing materials for publication on the internet
- not access any school computer using another student or teacher's username or password
- not bring or download unauthorised programs, including games, to the school or run them on school computers
- 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 should not copy and paste the information as my answer.)
- talk to my teacher or another adult if:
 - I need help online
 - I come across sites that are not suitable for our school
 - Someone writes something I don't like, or makes me and/or my friends feel uncomfortable or asks me to provide information I know is private
- treat school technological devices with care and respect and report any damage to my teacher
- not bring personal devices (ie mobile phone, tablet) to school unless previously discussed/arranged with my teacher. Any devices at school will be brought at my own risk and must not be used.
- personal devices should be handed into the school office at the commencement of each day and collected after school. Personal devices SHOULD NOT be kept in school bags. Any wearable smart device needs to have notifications turned off during school hours.

I understand that breaches of the rules will see me lose my ICT access rights for a period of time in accordance with the schools' Code of Conduct.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I understand the school will provide adequate supervision in respect to the Internet and email access and that steps have been taken to minimise risk of exposure to unsuitable material.

I give consent to my child using the Internet at school for educational purposes in accordance with the Student Agreement above.

I give consent to my child corresponding with others, for example using email or leaving comments on Seesaw, for educational purposes.

I have read the above agreement and have discussed it with my child.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____