



# DIGITAL LEARNING 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
- (f) our school's standards of behaviour for the use of Social Media that are consistent with the broader values and expectations of the Ararat College Community.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all students and staff at Ararat 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 also follow our school's Acceptable [Mobile Phone Use Policy](#).

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

- Ararat 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.

Social Media refers to all social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok etc. and includes email and mobile devices.

## **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.

Ararat 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 interconnected 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 Ararat College.**

Classes at Ararat College are delivered with the use of laptop computers. Students must bring a charged device to school each day to be used during class time for different learning activities.

Parents may choose from three alternatives for how this is delivered.

#### **Lease to Buy**

Parents purchase a laptop through the College with the device stored at school until 66% of the item has been paid for. Once this threshold has been reached it can be taken from home and the laptop once fully paid it remains the property of the student.

#### **Library Laptop**

Students collect their laptop from the library each morning and return it at the end of the day. They will be allocated the same laptop for the year and it must remain at school. A small laptop maintenance fee is applicable.

#### **Bring your Own Device**

Parents have the option to arrange their own laptop for their student to bring to school. **PLEASE NOTE:** Laptops must meet certain specifications and there will be an extra expense as parents will have to pay for software, insurance and repairs. We advise parents **MUST** contact the College before they purchase any laptop with the desire to be used at school. If parents still wish to pursue this option, please contact the College for a list of specifications.

Please note that our school does not have insurance to cover accidental damage to students' devices, excess charges may apply. Deliberate damage is not covered under this insurance.

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

Students, parents and carers who would like more information or assistance regarding our device alternatives are encouraged to contact the College.

### Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

Digital technologies, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users' safety or wellbeing. At Ararat College, we are committed to educating all students to use digital technologies in ways that respect the dignity of ourselves and others and promote full flourishing for all, equipping students with the skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world.

At Ararat 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 arise within school hours and 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 the Subscool Coordinator, Subscool Leader or IT Support, 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.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

#### **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 Ararat College [Statement of Values](#), [Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy](#), and [Bullying Prevention policy](#).

- They WILL use the computer resources and their internet account solely for educational purposes
- They WILL observe all copyright laws, including those that relate to computer software and material published on the internet
- They WILL respect the rights and privacy of other users
- They WILL report any obscene or offensive material they encounter
- They understand the Logs of their internet and email access will be kept and could be scanned at any time

#### **They will NOT**

- Use the school computers to play games, excepting educational games under the direction of a teacher
- Tamper with the system (which includes the network or workstation) and its desktop in any way including, but not limited to, the storage of unauthorized software
- Bypass the proxy server to access internet sites that have been banned or restricted
- Use another student's account or tamper with another student's account in any way
- Allow anyone else to use their account or give their password to anyone else
- Attempt to retrieve, view or disseminate any obscene, offensive, pornographic or illegal material
- Threaten or abuse any other user
- Send offensive, racist or sexist messages
- Send anonymous or falsely addressed email
  
- Use any social media networking sites during school hours

- Film, photograph or record members of the School community or use film, photographs or recordings without express permission of the School.
- Harm the reputation and good standing of Ararat College or those within its community

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community (including cyberbullying, using digital technologies or social media sites to harass, threaten or intimidate, or viewing/posting/sharing of inappropriate or unlawful content), Ararat College will institute a staged response, consistent with our student engagement and behaviour policies.

All reports of cyber bullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully and may result in a notification to Police where the School is obliged to do so. 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
- subject to other disciplinary action
- may not be able to continue with subjects in learning areas which require regular computer access
- Their behaviour may be reported to the police.

#### **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on June 2021 and is scheduled for review in June 2022.

#### **ANNEXURE A: ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT**

[Computer Agreement](#)