

# INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY & ONLINE POLICY



## **RATIONALE**

Over the past two decades, our lives have been transformed by a digital revolution, opening up a world of possibilities. Children are the greatest beneficiaries of the digital era and are learning to navigate the online world at a younger and younger age. However exploring the world -wide web is not without risk and when interacting in an online environment, children need to be educated on what to do if they are exposed to age-inappropriate content; encounter cyber bullying; or when they might be putting their privacy at risk.

The provision of Internet and online services at Aspiri Primary School will expand the range of teaching and learning opportunities available to staff and students for the purpose of improvement in learning outcomes and effective integration within the curriculum. In educating students for a rapidly changing world it is important for them to learn how to use technology constructively and effectively. The purpose of this policy is to assist all school users in becoming aware of information, obligations and procedures that need to be followed to ensure its effective use.

## **PURPOSE**

The use of technology in schools including Internet, Online Services and Social media enables staff and students to learn, use and handle information and communicate effectively in a rapidly evolving society. The use of these technologies will provide many direct and indirect benefits to staff and students. These include:

- the ability to have access to up to date and relevant information
- the opportunity to use and manipulate information and resources to suit a specific purpose
- the ability to work independently as well as collaboratively
- the opportunity to access learning resources, projects and information regardless of the users location
- the ability to develop the skills to approach learning in a manner that is both receptive and critical
- the opportunity to apply problem solving skills in an authentic environment
- access to local, interstate and international competitions
- access to vast libraries of information from sources throughout the world
- the ability to interact and collaborate with other students and knowledgeable adults
- the acquisition of knowledge and transferable skills that will be useful throughout their lives
- the opportunity to publish their own material to a wide audience

## **ASPIRI PRIMARY SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

The use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) will be developed as part of an overall quality teaching and learning program. Components of the program will include some or all of the following elements appropriate to each year group:

- **Digital Devices,**
  - **Protecting Privacy,**
  - **Searching & Researching,**
  - **Creating & Sharing,**
  - **Social Networking & Gaming,**
  - **Communicating Safely Online,**
  - **Friends & Strangers,**
- ❖ Students will have access to the Internet and Online Services under teacher direction through the school's computer network while at school.
  - ❖ The school will investigate and where appropriate, integrate quality resource material from sources such as:
    - The office of the eSafety Commissioner, including classroom resources, online training programs and events;
    - The "ThinkUKnow" web site which is a free internet safety program that delivers interactive training to parents, carers and teachers and
    - The "eSmart Schools" website which is a framework designed to help schools improve cybersafety and reduce cyberbullying and bullying.
  - ❖ It is also important to note that it is highly desirable that, where possible home use should be under parental supervision.
  - ❖ Although student use of the Internet will be of an educational nature, it is possible that they may come across material that is not in accord with school or family values, therefore as a school we explicitly teach Internet Safety and provide students with procedures to deal with these situations, and we would also encourage parents to discuss these matters with their children.

### **Access Provision and Appropriate Use**

- All students are required to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement (attached) and parents are asked to sign to acknowledge the terms and conditions of this. The completed agreement will be kept on file.
- It will be each class teacher's responsibility to ensure that students are aware of the responsibilities and obligations of the Acceptable Use Agreement mentioned above.
- Students who do not follow the Acceptable Use Agreement will be supported by the teacher and school to re-engage with the parameters or risk losing access to hardware, software and online access.
- The primary use of the Internet & Online Services will be for curriculum purposes, independent research, the transfer of information relevant to the goals of the school and achievement of improved student outcomes
- The Internet at school can only be accessed by students *under direct supervision of staff*. All efforts will be maintained to ensure that students do not access the Internet unsupervised
- Students and staff are required to be aware of and practice responsible copyright procedures for both print and electronic materials

- Students are not to print without the permission of the teacher and responsible use of printers is encouraged in order to conserve resources
- Games can only be played on school computers that have an educational purpose and with the express permission of a teacher

## **SECURITY**

The Department of Education's network is a highly controlled and monitored ICT environment and it has been configured to allow staff members and access to online and DoE resources. The following are recommendations are designed to ensure that the integrity of student, staff and system level access and accounts is maintained:

- Staff must not allow students access to a computer that is logged on to another students or staff account.
- Staff and students must log off of a computer when it is no longer required
- Staff with DoE laptops should connect them to the school's network at least once a week to allow DoE and virus updates to take place
- Staff and students must not open any files attached to an email from an unknown or suspicious source
- Staff and students must delete chain and junk emails immediately
- If in doubt when downloading from the Internet seek advice before completing downloads or copy the file to and external source (*eg. USB thumb drive*) so that it can be checked for viruses
- Staff are required to change their password every month.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is acknowledged that one of the directions in the *Department of Education's Focus 2015* guidelines is for schools to work with their communities to promote the safe use of internet access and social media by students.

This policy has been developed so that students, parents and staff are fully aware of the Information and Communications resources available at Aspiri Primary School while at the same time bringing attention to the specific requirements of Internet and Online Services within a school setting. Every effort is made to ensure that access to these resources is monitored, embedded within the curriculum and will be for appropriate educational purposes.



## ONLINE CONSENT FORM

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Our new school has access to a wide range of online services provided by the Department of Education and Training. These increase the range of teaching tools available to staff and will enhance the learning opportunities available to students.

I am writing to you to seek approval for your child to be given access to these online services. This will involve your child engaging in a range of opportunities encompassing many elements of information and communication technologies (ICT) such as accessing components of the Department of Education IT infrastructure as well as IT equipment provided by the school. Every student will undertake a range of learning activities in relation to cyber-safety, appropriate online behaviour and password management prior to being given access.

If you agree to your son or daughter making use of these online services, please complete the permission slip attached to this letter. You will also need to ensure that your son or daughter reads and understands the acceptable usage agreement, also attached to this letter, before the permission slip is signed. Both signed documents should be returned to school so that online access and equipment use can continue to be enabled for your child.

Please note that while every reasonable effort is made by schools and the Department to prevent student exposure to inappropriate online content when using the Department's Online Services, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of such exposure. On every occasion immediate steps will be taken to remedy the situation and review the occurrence with students and staff so that it becomes unlikely the occurrence will reoccur.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents of the dangers of unmonitored student access to the internet from home and portable computers, laptops, tablet devices and phones from locations other than school. These are generally **not** monitored or filtered by responsible adults and, at times can pose great risks to your child's health and welfare. The dangers are real and seem to increase every year so we ask that you maintain your vigilance.

Yours sincerely

Noel Morgan

Principal

