

Digital Technologies Policy

Purpose: To outline the basis on which students engage with the internet, on-line material and activities and to comply with Ministerial Order 1359

Scope: Staff, students and their families

Implemented by: Principal

Approved by: VHS Board

Reviewed: Every three years, as regulatory changes arise or improvements are identified through internal review.

Communicated via: Website, Policy Manual, Enrolment Agreements

Digital Technologies Definition

Digital technologies are electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data. These include social media platforms, online games and applications, multimedia, productivity applications, cloud-based programs and systems, , devices.










Overview

Village High School (VHS) values the learning opportunities that engagement with the internet and digital technologies provide. It facilitates the deep exploration of topics, connection with others and development of new skills in ways that are standard practice in our society. We believe it is important that students are provided with regular and ongoing opportunities to develop their skills and understanding of the online world so that they can be confident, creative, thoughtful, empowered users of this space.







In doing so, the school has a duty of care to provide a safe environment for students, this extends to online environments.

Implementation Guidelines



The school will:

-  Facilitate access for all students and staff to the programs, applications and services that are necessary, including access to the internet.
-  Provide regular lessons which outline strategies to enable students to keep themselves safe online by identifying risks and understanding how to seek support, understand online etiquette and what to do if they experience cyberbullying.
-  Ensure that the privacy of students, parents, staff and other users is recognized and respected at all times.
-  Ensure that email address and user names created do not disclose a staff member or students full name (first name and surname).
-  Seek permission (or otherwise) from parents via the Enrolment Agreement for their child to be photographed whilst enrolled at school for educational reporting, administrative and promotional purposes which may include for use online. When it is necessary to identify students, only their first name will be used.
-  Ensure the Principal works with staff and technical support personnel to ensure school networks are running to a good standard with web filters at settings which are appropriate for the users' age levels.
-  Take every reasonable effort to ensure that information published on the Internet by students (or by the school featuring students) is done in a way that does not compromise the safety of students.
-  Regularly review online activity and look for unusual patterns of usage, inappropriate content or other activity that is considered unnecessary or of risk.
-  Ensure the Principal approves all systems, platforms, devices and programs to ensure they are safe and fit for purpose.

Staff will:

-  Support students to develop the skills necessary to filter, critically analyse interpret and evaluate online content.
-  Support students to develop and use known strategies for safe online activity.
-  Identify and mitigate risks in the online and digital environments that students are accessing without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
-  Understand that it is their responsibility to evaluate material and programs used in learning programs, prior to their use, to ensure they do not expose students to inappropriate or unlawful content.
-  Evaluating materials and programs, taking into account the age and developmental stage of students, ensure they are appropriate, inclusive and respectful and meet the educational needs of the student group.
-  Seek parent/guardian permission prior to creating online accounts for students, if the program or application falls outside of standard educational platforms that a parent would reasonably expect their child to have access to.




Students will:

-  Notify a staff member of any inappropriate or unlawful material that is accessed through the school network so that access can be blocked and web filter settings reviewed.
-  Abide by the Digital Technologies Code of Conduct which is included in the Student Enrolment Agreement and to be signed annually.

VHS does not condone the use of gratuitous violence for the purposes of education or entertainment in online material, games or social environments.

Inappropriate or Unlawful Content

During school hours and activities, and whilst using the school network, Students, Staff, Parents and Volunteers are strictly prohibited from using, storing or interacting with inappropriate or unlawful content. Such material, whether real or simulated, may include, but is not limited to;

-  Content that infringes on another person's rights
-  Content of a sexually explicit nature
-  Content that promotes or instructs crime or violence

Concerns relating to the use of inappropriate or unlawful content should be raised immediately with a Mentor or the School Principal.

Related Documentation

Digital Technologies Code of Conduct (included in the Enrolment Agreement for Students)

Enrolment Agreement for Students

Enrolment Agreement for Parents / Carers / Guardians

Behaviour Management Pathway





Child Safety Code of Conduct for Staff

Parent / Carer / Guardian Code of Conduct (included in the Enrolment Agreement for Parents)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

Related Policies

-  Behaviour Management Policy
-  Bullying and Harassment Policy
-  Privacy Policy
-  Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy