

Peter Lalor Secondary College

Digital Learning Policy

Internet, social media and digital devices



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Peter Lalor Secondary College on 03 9464 0122 or peter.lalor.sc@education.vic.gov.au.

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 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 Peter Lalor Secondary 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, volunteers and school councilors also need to adhere to codes of conduct relevant to their respective roles. These codes include:

- Peter Lalor Secondary 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 councilors)

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

1. Vision for digital learning at our school

The use of digital technologies is a vital component of the Teaching and Learning Curriculum.

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.

Peter Lalor Secondary 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 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.




2. Personal Devices





Peter Lalor Secondary College operates a Digital Technologies program. Classes at our school are delivered with the use of iPads/tablets/notebook computers. Parents/families are not required to provide digital technologies as the school provides students with access to digital technologies.

3. Safe and appropriate use of digital technologies

Digital technologies, if not used appropriately, may present risks to users’ safety or wellbeing. At Peter Lalor Secondary College, we are committed to educating all students to use digital technologies safely, equipping students with the skills and knowledge to navigate the digital world.



4. What we do

	<p>We set clear expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have clear expectations about appropriate conduct using digital technologies. • Our Mobile Phone Policy outlines our school’s expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours. • We have clear and appropriate consequences when students breach these expectations, in line with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.
	<p>We teach appropriate conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We teach our students to be safe, intentional and responsible users of digital technologies, including age-appropriate instruction on important digital issues such as cybersafety and cyberbullying.
	<p>We partner with families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We work with parents and carers to understand the digital technology-related issues they are facing at home. We support them with information and tools that help.

	<p>We provide access to technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We provide access to educational software for students to use. ● We create student email accounts which are non-identifiable.
	<p>We supervise digital learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We supervise students using digital technologies in the classroom, consistent with our duty of care. ● We use clear protocols and procedures to protect students working in online spaces.
	<p>We take appropriate steps to protect students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We provide a filtered internet service to block inappropriate content. Full protection from inappropriate content cannot be guaranteed, however, we have processes to report and act on inappropriate content. ● We may access and monitor messages and files sent or saved our network, if necessary and appropriate.
	<p>We appropriately manage and respond to online incidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We work to prevent, respond, and learn from issues or incidents relating to the use of digital technology, including cybersecurity incidents, cyberbullying and risks to child safety. ● We refer suspected illegal online acts to the police.

5. What we expect

Below are our expectations of students at Peter Lalor Secondary College when using digital technologies.

<p>Be safe</p> 	<p>At Peter Lalor Secondary College, we protect personal information and keep safe online.</p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not sharing our password or using someone else's username or password. ● Logging out of our devices when they are not in use. ● Restricting the personal information, we post online, including images and videos.
<p>Be respectful</p> 	<p>At Peter Lalor Secondary College, we are kind and show respect to others when using technology.</p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acting with kindness and never bullying others online. ● Thinking about how our words might make others feel before we say or write them. ● Only taking photos or recordings of others when they are aware and have given us permission to do so. ● Seeking permission before sharing others' information online.
<p>Be responsible</p>	<p>At Peter Lalor Secondary College, we are honest, handle technology with care and follow the school rules.</p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Handling devices with care.



- Not interfering with devices, school systems, or other students' work.
- Not downloading or using inappropriate programs like games.
- Not using technology to cheat or steal, and always acknowledging when we use information sourced from others.
- Turning off and securely storing our mobile phone during school hours.
- Ensuring a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities at school.

Ask for help



At Peter Lalor Secondary College, we ask for help if we feel unsure or see something inappropriate.

We do this by talking to a teacher or a trusted adult if:

- We feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- We see others participating in unsafe, inappropriate, or hurtful online behaviour.
- We notice any damage to school technologies.
- We need help understanding about a digital tool or how it can be used.

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 classroom teacher as appropriate, 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.

6. Support for students:

The e-safety commissioner's [eSafety kids](#) page has helpful information to help you stay safe online.






7. Support for parents and carers

To learn more about how to support the safe, intentional and responsible use of digital technologies at home, the eSafety Commissioner provides [resources for parents](#), and outlines available [counselling and support services](#). The Principal may also seek support from Department of Education and Training staff when managing unacceptable parent or carer behaviour.

8. How parents and carers can help

Learning about technology and its impacts doesn't stop at the school gate. Below are our suggestions for ways you can support your children to responsibly use digital technology.

	<i>Establish clear routines</i>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talk to your child about expectations including when, where, and how digital devices can be used at home, ensuring these rules are age-appropriate and consistent. These can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Requiring devices to be used in a common area, such as a living room or kitchen ○ Setting up a specific area for charging devices overnight, away from bedrooms, to promote better sleep hygiene. ● Be present when your child is using digital devices, especially for younger children who may not yet understand online risks. ● [schools may wish to recommend parental restrictions on access to certain devices (until a certain age/Year Level), in consultation with their school community]
	<p>Restrict inappropriate content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use built-in parental controls on devices and apps to help manage their device access and restrict inappropriate content, including apps and websites that are not suitable for their age group. ● Consider restricting the use of non-educational apps and apps with addictive game mechanics (e.g. rewards, badges, limited exit options). ● [schools may wish to recommend parental restrictions for specific apps or social-media platforms (until a certain age/Year Level), in consultation with their school community]
	<p>Talk about online safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talk with your child about the importance of protecting personal information and recognising online scams. ● Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult if they feel unsafe online.
	<p>Model responsible and balanced technology use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities, especially outdoor unstructured play and time with friends and family, face-to-face. * ● Demonstrate responsible and balanced tech use in your own daily routine to set a good example for your child.
	<p>Work with us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Let your child's teacher know about concerns you have regarding their technology use ● Keep informed about what your child is learning at school, so you can help reinforce positive messages at home.

***Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines include the following recommendations for children between 5-17 years-old regarding sedentary recreational screen time:**

- **no more than 2 hours of sedentary recreational screen time per day**
- **avoiding screen time 1 hour before sleep**
- **keeping screens out of the bedroom.**

Source: Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines,

<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-children-and-young-people-5-to-17-years>.

9. 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.

10. Student behavioural expectations

When using digital technologies, students are expected to behave in a way that is consistent with Peter Lalor Secondary College’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), Peter Lalor Secondary College 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 safety training processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Personal Devices – Access](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools](#)
- [Social Media Use to Support Student Learning](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	03 rd September 2024
Consultation	School Council October 28 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before October 2026