# Digital technology at Merriang School

MERRIANG SCHOOL

# Information for parents

## Our commitment to the responsible use of digital technology

At Merriang School we are committed to building a culture of respect and responsibility. We show this in the way we use technology and interact online. We teach students to use digital devices and tools safely, ethically and responsibly, including how to recognise and respond to online dangers and threats. We support students to develop the digital skills they need to make a positive impact in the world. We make careful choices about when and how we use digital devices and tools. Their use is teacher-led, carefully planned and limited to specific learning goals required by the Victorian Curriculum 2.0, or where they provide a clear advantage over non-digital alternatives.

## What we do

| | |
|---|---|
| | **We set clear expectations**<br>• We have clear expectations about appropriate conduct using digital devices and tools.<br>• We have clear and appropriate consequences when students breach these expectations, in line with our **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy**. |
| | **We teach appropriate conduct**<br>• 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. |
| | **We partner with families**<br>• 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. |
| | **We provide access to technology**<br>• We provide access to educational software for students to use.<br>• We create student email accounts which are non-identifiable. |
| | **We supervise digital learning**<br>• We supervise students using digital technologies in the classroom.<br>• We use clear protocols and procedures to protect students working in online spaces. |
| | **We take appropriate steps to protect students**<br>• 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.<br>• We may access and monitor messages and files sent or saved our network, if necessary and appropriate. |
| | **We appropriately manage and respond to online incidents**<br>• 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.<br>• We refer suspected illegal online acts to the police. |

# Digital technology at Merriang School

MERRIANG SCHOOL

## How parents and carers can help

Below are our suggestions for ways you can support your children to responsibly use digital technology.

| | |
|---|---|
| | **Establish clear routines**<br>• 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:<br>  ○ Requiring devices to be used in a common area, such as a living room or kitchen<br>  ○ Setting up a specific area for charging devices overnight, away from bedrooms, to promote better sleep hygiene.<br>• Be present when your child is using digital devices, especially for younger children who may not yet understand online risks. |
| | **Restrict inappropriate content**<br>• 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.<br>• Consider restricting the use of non-educational apps and apps with addictive game mechanics (e.g. rewards, badges, limited exit options). |
| | **Talk about online safety**<br>• Talk with your child about the importance of protecting personal information and recognising online scams.<br>• Talk with your child about age restrictions on social media and explore other ways they can connect with their friends online and offline.<br>• Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult if they feel unsafe online. |
| | **Model responsible and balanced technology use**<br>• Encourage a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities, especially outdoor unstructured play and time with friends and family, face-to-face. *<br>• Demonstrate responsible and balanced tech use in your own daily routine to set a good example for your child. |
| | **Work with us**<br>• Let your child's teacher know about concerns you have regarding their technology use<br>• 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.

**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.

# Digital technology at Merriang School

MERRIANG SCHOOL

## For students

## What we expect

Below are our expectations of students at our school when using digital technologies.

### Be safe

**We protect personal information and keep safe online.**

We do this by:

- 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.

### Be respectful

**We are kind and show respect to others when using technology.**

We do this by:

- 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.

### Be responsible

**We are honest, handle technology with care and follow the school rules.**

We do this by:

- 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.
- Not using age-restricted social media, ex to access appropriate content that is available without an account.
- Ensuring a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities at school.

### Ask for help

**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.

**Support for students:**

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