



Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Policy

(New Policy)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Church embraces all that is good in new technologies and seeks to engage with people in ever newer and more creative ways as a means of inviting them into deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, within the Christian community.

Pope Benedict XVI¹ has talked of the “extraordinary potential of the new technologies, if they are used to promote human understanding and solidarity”.

“ These technologies are truly a gift to humanity and we must endeavour to ensure that the benefits they offer are put at the service of all human individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable,”

and

“Young people, in particular, have grasped the enormous capacity of the new media to foster connectedness, communication and understanding between individuals and communities, and they are turning to them as means of communicating with existing friends, of meeting new friends, of forming communities and networks, of seeking information and news, and of sharing their ideas and opinions. Many benefits flow from this new culture of communication: families are able to maintain contact across great distances; students and researchers have more immediate and easier access to documents, sources and scientific discoveries, hence they can work collaboratively from different locations; moreover, the interactive nature of many of the new media facilitates more dynamic forms of learning and communication, thereby contributing to social progress”.

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools celebrates the capacity of the new technologies to foster and support good and healthy relationships and various forms of harmony through the promotion of a culture where there is respect for all and where all are invited to search for truth in dialogue. At the same time it is important to be mindful that sometimes, in order to maintain virtual connectedness, people become isolated from social interaction with family, friends and colleagues. There is also recognition that the pervasive nature of modern communications practices could be disruptive of the patterns of rest, silence and reflection that are necessary for our well-being.

This policy is designed for school and Catholic Education Office leadership, teachers, staff (CEO and school), parents, care givers and students as stakeholders of Catholic Education SA.

2. ICT POLICY STATEMENT

Catholic Education South Australia is committed within it's available resources to the provision of contemporary ICT infrastructure and resources equitably and in a safe learning environment to enhance teaching and the learning outcomes and wellbeing of it's students.

¹ Pope Benedict XVI, “*Message for the 43rd World Communications Day*”, May 2009, accessed at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/communications/documents/hf_benxvi_mes_20090124_43rd-world-communications-day_en.html.

3. ICT AS A TRANSFORMING TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Communication enabled by the use of ICT can facilitate the relationship between the family, the school, and the community, and provide new opportunities for parents and care givers to engage with teachers, learning programs, and their children's or young person's progress.

21st century education integrates information and communication technologies, engaging students in ways not previously possible, creating new learning and teaching possibilities, enhancing achievement and extending interactions with local, national and global communities. Networked tools and worksites connect school, home and community learning, increasing flexibility and supporting learning outside the boundaries of school buildings and the conventional school day. Best practice now requires unified connectivity, reliable systems with sustainable and adaptable software and hardware, seamless access to content and services, and quality technical support. The effective use of digital, mobile, interactive technologies has the capacity to improve and accelerate learning and the potential to transform teaching.²

Teachers can use ICT to:

- empower students to purposefully select creative activities, applications and modes of communication using visually appealing presentation tools
- provide communication and collaboration tools such as chat, email, messaging, discussion forums, online meetings and video conferencing
- present opportunities for students to be part of broader communities
- make learning activities, information, courses and feedback available online anywhere - anytime
- offer students immediate feedback on their learning queries and progress
- increase parent access to student work and achievement.

Effective integration of ICT can transform pedagogies by empowering teachers to:

- connect with and learn from colleagues and students and participate in professional learning programs and collaborative projects
- evaluate, create and share online learning resources with colleagues and shape the development of resources and products.

Teachers can discover a new potential for their work as they exploit the opportunities for using ICT in learning. To capitalise on the significant expenditure on ICT infrastructure, it is important that teachers are adequately trained in current and emerging technologies, especially new social networking applications. Schools also need to plan within their available resources for ongoing professional development.

² Ideas contained from this paragraph are drawn from the MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs), "Contemporary Learning: learning in an online world", Victoria 2008, p4

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The new digital technologies seem inevitably to be bringing about fundamental shifts in patterns of communication and human relationships. The overriding principle for teachers and other staff of Catholic Education SA, parents, care givers and students is *“that their behaviour online should reflect the standard of appropriate behaviour which is expected in all person to person interaction. Such behaviour should at all times demonstrate a Christcentred respect for the dignity of each person. Appropriate boundaries should always be observed, especially in communication with young people. The child protection protocols and policies of the Catholic Church in Australia and civil authorities must always be observed”*³.

In Catholic schools guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people require honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults, young people and children.

4.1. SACCS

It is the responsibility of SACCS to provide oversight of policy, procedure and practices that enhance the quality of learning and the wellbeing of all within our Catholic schools community.

SACCS should strive to provide adequate resourcing to all schools and individuals, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable.

4.2. CEO Responsibilities

The Catholic Education Office is to implement SACCS policies and procedures and to provide the appropriate consultancy services, technical advice and infrastructure support to enable Principals to make available the best teaching and learning environment possible for the wellbeing of students.

4.3. Principals' Responsibilities

Principals should:

- make adequate provision for teacher training and professional learning, covering the general use of ICT across all learning areas, effective pedagogies integrating ICT, training on specific applications, familiarisation with emerging technologies
- make available the best teaching and learning environment possible
- make appropriate appointments and take necessary measures to manage the school's technology resources
- budget resources for ongoing maintenance and technology refresh, and ensure the school's ICT infrastructure records are current
- lead in the development and review of, adhere to and enforce an Acceptable Use Policy for the school.

³ The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference “Social Networking Protocol for the Catholic Church in Australia”, December 2009, page 4.

http://www.catholic.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=52

4.4. Teachers' Responsibilities

Teachers should:

- undertake appropriate training and professional learning activities in ICT from time to time and as made available
- plan for and integrate the use of ICT in their pedagogy and students' learning experiences
- be attentive to the content they are generating, sharing or drawing to the notice of others
- ensure adherence to professional boundaries in all use of ICT, including social networking sites and other means of electronic communication
- develop in their students the skills and a knowledge base that contribute to their safety and wellbeing
- assist in the development and review of, adhere to and enforce an Acceptable Use Policy for the school.

4.5. School and CEO Staff Responsibilities

School and CEO Staff should:

- undertake appropriate training and professional learning activities in ICT from time to time and as made available
- be attentive to the content they are generating, sharing or drawing to the notice of others
- ensure adherence to appropriate boundaries in all use of ICT, including social networking sites and other means of electronic communication
- assist in the development and review of, adhere to and enforce an Acceptable Use Policy for the school/CEO.

4.6. Students' Responsibilities

Students should:

- use appropriate ICTs to enhance their learning being respectful of the content they are generating, sharing or drawing to the attention of others
- participate in all dimensions of life and develop skills and a knowledge base to contribute to their own safety and wellbeing
- assist in the development and review of, adhere to and enforce an Acceptable Use Policy for the school.

4.7. Parental and Care Giver Responsibilities

Parents and Caregivers should:

- encourage learning through the appropriate use of ICTs

- be attentive to the content that they and their children and young people are generating, sharing or drawing to the attention of others
- encourage their children to participate in all dimensions of life and develop skills and a knowledge base to contribute to their own safety and wellbeing
- assist in the development and review of, adhere to and enforce an Acceptable Use Policy for the school.

5. ASSOCIATED SACCS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Vision Statement 1991 and reprinted 1996
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-8376/SACCS+Vision+Statement.pdf>
- Communications Technology Policy (containing acceptable use section)
[Home](#) ➤ [CESA Services](#) ➤ [Policies, Procedures & Guidelines](#)
- CESA Strategic Plan
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-13434>
- CESA ICT Strategic Plan Template
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-2536>
- SACCS ICT Security Policy 2007
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-8998/ICT+Security+Policy+1-00.pdf>
- South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Charter
<http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ProfessionalStandards/media/files/985.pdf>
- South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People, 2006
<http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ProfessionalStandards/media/files/1031.pdf>
- South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Implementation Guidelines for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People (Contact the CEO for further details 83016600)
- Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People 2009
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-13163/Policy+for+the+Care+Wellbeing+and+Protection+of+Children+and+Young+People+18+November+final.pdf>
- South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, Duty of Care Policy 2004
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-3015/DutyofCare.pdf>
- Charter for Teachers in Catholic Schools SA
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6554/Charter+for+Teachers+BROCHURE+.pdf>
- Child Protection Curriculum, Teacher Support Module for SA Catholic Schools, CEO 2009 (Contact the CEO for further details 83016600)
- *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum*, DECS, 2008
<http://decs.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/childProtectionCurric/?reFlag=1>
- 'Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Students - Guidelines for Schools, Preschools and Out of School Hours Care' DECS, CEO and AISSA 2009
<http://online.cesamet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6076/Protective+Practices+edited+April+2009+version.pdf>

- Information Sharing: Guidelines for Promoting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, Young People and their Families, Govt of SA
<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/InformationSharingGuideli.pdf>
- National Safe Schools Framework,
http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/natsafeschools_file.pdf
- Child Wise, Choose with Care, Building Safe Organisations
<http://childwise.net/downloads/12Steps.pdf>

6. REFERENCES

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools wishes to acknowledge the use of material from the following publications:

- Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Website <http://www.catholic.org.au/>
- The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference "Social Networking Protocol for the Catholic Church in Australia", December 2009.
http://www.catholic.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=52
- MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs), "Contemporary Learning: learning in an online world", Victoria 2008
http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/ICT_LearningOnlineWorld-ContemporaryLearning.pdf
- MCEETYA (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs), "Learning Spaces Framework: learning in an online world", Victoria 2008
http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/ICT_LearningOnlineWorld-LearningSpacesFWork.pdf

This document will be reviewed as regulatory or other matters associated with the procedures arise.

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