



Topic:

Information and Communication  
Technology Use by Students

Policy No reference (CECWA):

2 -BB

Policy Area:

Education

Date Of Review:

2021

## 1. Rationale

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been introduced into schools allowing access to email and the internet and other telecommunication devices. The availability of such resources provides the opportunity for schools to help students develop their full potential. ICT provides significant educational value but can pose a risk of exposure to inappropriate and offensive material and personal safety.

In accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the practice of communication must be totally honest and reflect the highest standard of accountability and sensitivity to human rights and relationships.

## 2. Definitions

'Information and Communication Technology (ICT)' at Mel Maria includes all computer hardware, software, systems and technology including the internet, email and social networking (e.g. facebook) and telecommunications devices (e.g. mobile phones) in facilities that may be used or accessed from a school campus or connected to a school's communication network.

Defamation is the publication, declaration or broadcast of material that is capable of lowering a person in the estimation of others.

Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying means unlawful behaviour as defined in the Catholic Education Commission Policy statement 2-C4 'Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying'.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all Catholic schools in Western Australia.

## 4. Principles

- 4.1 Mel Maria student use of ICT shall reflect the teachings and educational goals of the Catholic school. Access to ICT shall be balanced with all elements of the school curriculum.
- 4.2 Mel Maria shall ensure policies and practices are effective in ensuring appropriate access by students to ICT.
- 4.3 All written, graphic, audio and other materials created, produced, communicated, stored or accessed on school ICT, including emails, are the property of the school, and as such, are subject to monitoring by the school.
- 4.4 Access to ICT is provided to students as a privilege and students have a responsibility to use it in accordance with the expectations of the school as set out in this policy.

- 4.5 Mel Maria's use of ICT by students shall reflect the developmental stages of students.
- 4.6 The use of school, student and family owned ICT, including the internet and email, by students shall not be contrary to relevant State and Commonwealth laws (a summary of these laws are an attachment to this policy and form part of this policy), a breach of school rules or policy, or otherwise be inappropriate or offensive (as outlined at procedure 5 of this policy).
- 4.7 As parents are the prime educators of their child, they shall be informed of Mel Maria's policy and encouraged to assist in facilitating its implementation.

## 5. Procedures

Mel Maria's policy identifies acceptable, unacceptable and unlawful use of ICT by students.

5.1. Acceptable use shall include, but is not limited to:

- gathering, organising, creating and sharing appropriate information for educational or related purposes
- encouraging collaborative projects and resource sharing
- any other tasks that are for educational or related purposes or that support and promote the school and its ideals.

5.2 All students and their parents/guardians shall be made aware of the school's policy on student use of ICT. The school's policy shall be available to the school community through appropriate means e.g. the school internet site, or in a hard copy format when requested.

5.3 Emphasis shall be placed on educating students, at a developmentally appropriate level, about ICT, its applications, protocols, safety and digital citizenship. This educative process shall be integrated within all areas of the school curriculum and be available to the school community through various means, for example, information sessions, school website.

5.4 The school's policy identifies inappropriate or offensive material or conduct, such as material or conduct that:

- infringes a person's copyright or other intellectual property rights
- is defamatory of a person or an organisation
- contains sexually explicit, indecent or obscene or pornographic material
- is discriminatory against a person on the basis of, for example, sex, race, religion, disability or age
- deals with a person's personal information in a way that breaches privacy laws
- constitutes racial harassment or incites racial hatred
- constitutes harassment or bullying
- is infected with a computer virus, would result in a breach of school security or disruption to the school's networks, or constitutes a 'cybercrime'
- is otherwise contrary to school rules or policy

- 5.5 The school's policy states that unacceptable use of ICT constitutes a serious breach of school rules and possibly the law and may result in a student losing the right to use ICT resources for a period of time and/or the application of other sanctions.
- 5.6 Unlawful and/or serious misuse of ICT may result in the school involving the Police or other government agencies.
- 5.7 The use of the school, student or family owned ICT at the school site shall be informed by the support documentation published on the School and CEOWA website.

## 6. References

Catholic Education Commission Policy 2-C4 'Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying'  
Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)  
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)  
Censorship Act 1996 (WA)  
Criminal Code (WA)  
Cybercrime Act 2001 (Cth)  
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

## Attachment

### **Important Statutes which are applicable to students use of School ICT include:**

#### *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)*

Students may copy or otherwise deal with copyright material for the purpose of study or education. However, generally only the author of original material has the right to reproduce, copy, publish, perform, communicate to the public and make an adaptation of the copyright material.

#### *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)*

This Act precludes:

- discrimination against persons on grounds of sex, marital status or pregnancy, family responsibility or family status, sexual orientation, race, religious or political conviction, impairment or age in education
- sexual harassment and racial harassment in the workplace and in educational institutions

This Act promotes

- community recognition and acceptance of the equality of all persons regardless of their race, sexual orientation, religious or political convictions, impairments or ages

#### *Censorship Act 1996 (WA)*

Students must not use a computer service to transmit, obtain or request an article knowing that it contains objectionable and restricted material. It is an offence to possess or copy indecent or obscene articles or child pornography. Students should be aware for their own protection that people who deal with such material commit an offence.

#### *Criminal Code (WA)*

Students should be aware that it is illegal to show offensive material to children under 16, and that if someone does show them offensive material that person is committing an offence. Racist harassment and incitement to racial hatred are also criminal offences.

*Cybercrime Act 2001 (Cth)*

Unauthorised access to or modification of data held in a computer and unauthorised impairment of electronic communication eg 'hacking' or infecting computer systems with a virus, are illegal.

*Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*

Students should respect that the personal information of others is private. This Act covers the collection, use and disclosure, quality and security of personal information

<b>Year of Review History</b>	
<b>2003</b>	<b><i>Originally Released</i></b>
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<b>2009</b>	<b><i>Reviewed</i></b>
<b>2012</b>	<b><i>Reformatted</i></b>
<b>2017</b>	<b><i>Reviewed</i></b>
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