Digital Resources FAQ’s (Frequently Asked Questions)

Q If my child has a state of the art laptop, can we ‘opt out’ and allow them to bring their own to school?
A Laptops provided are set up for direct access to the school’s network involving a specific network card and this involves a level of security to protect our network. The technical support provided at the school level is provided to support the school network, School, Staff and Student laptops. It is problematic and expensive to set up a personal machine to access the network.

Q Will there be set times for students to use the Laptop?
A The time students will access the laptop will vary, and is dependent on the learning task students are engaged in. As a tool to support learning, the Laptop will be available for student’s access and will be balanced as are all learning resources. In the introduction phase we will monitor the times students use of Laptops.

Q Will a Year 6 Student keep the laptop for Year 7, or do they give it back each year?
A Students will be issued with a laptop that is clearly marked with their name on it. They will keep the same machine for the life of the scheme, which is three years, or until they leave St Therese School.

Q Will students be allowed to personalize their laptop?
A Students will be allowed to personalize their folders on the computer in line with the acceptable user agreement. Student’s names will be on each unit to identify it and colour coded key tags will identify class groups. It would be advisable for students to have their own identifiable feature on their laptop bag, as they do now for their school bag.

Q Are we able to purchase the laptop?
A School is sourcing a finance lease and this does not have a clause to purchase the laptop separately. The School has a per unit operating system and software licenses and this only applies with school ownership.
Q: **How much training and development will occur to prepare teachers?**

A: Staff continuously engage in professional learning activities at an individual and whole staff level. As learners we take advantage of a wide variety of experiences that prepare us to be competent at our work. We have engaged in a number of workshops, both theoretical and practical to prepare us for greater use of digital resources into the future. We will continue to develop our skills in the use of digital resources.

Q: **Will Laptops be available for use during break times?**

A: A wide variety of activities are available for students to engage in during break times. We actively encourage students to participate in physical activities during their break times and have wonderful outdoor facilities, as well as Mortlock Park for students to use. We do provide access to indoor activities, three times per week, within the Library for students, and would want to develop an appropriate area for students to use Laptops should they choose. As always, we would monitor the activities students engage in and encourage them to find a suitable balance in break time activities.

Q: **Why does each student Yrs 3-7 have their own laptop, why not have a hub as many primary schools do?**

A: We recognize that students learn at different rates so having individual access to a digital resource will enhance the learning process. Having access to laptops in the classroom ensures availability allowing students to use them in a variety of ways, including specialist lessons. Having digital resources in a traditional hub is a restriction and does not allow students to utilize digital resources as a learning tool at any time or place. Previously, Primary Years classes have had to book the use of the computers and wait in turn to use the resource.

Q: **Why is there no opt-out for families that may not be able to afford it?**

A: It is incorporated in the mandatory curriculum of the school approved by the School Board. There is no opportunity to provide concessions for Resource fee items that include ICT however we do provide financial support for Tuition fees in circumstances where families are finding it difficult in meeting their financial commitments.

Q: **Do you anticipate the student’s physical activity to decrease? How will you measure this, and what steps will the school take to ensure it doesn’t happen?**

A: No. A wide variety of activities are available for students to engage in during break times and during the day. Sporting equipment is available for students to use and staff actively encourages students to participate in physical activities during these times. The Physical Education, Drama and Music programs and daily fitness activities are an important part of the development of each child. We see this as an essential part of each day and students engage in a variety of activities each week. Teachers continually update their skills to provide the best possible fitness and skills development programs. With the wonderful outdoor facilities and Mortlock Park students are exposed to many physical activities throughout their school day that assist in their personal development. As with all school programs regular reviews are conducted to ensure we continually meet the needs of students.
Q  Will the cost for families be incurred each year?

A  The cost of the computers are incorporated in the annual ICT levy irrespective of the term of the lease therefore a cost recovery fee is required each year.

Q  If the cost is each year, will it be a reduced cost for the following years as the initial hardware has been leased?

A.  The fee structure of the lease is based on three years requiring equal monthly instalments for the completion of the lease. Catholic Education office recommends leasing as the more viable option.

Q  What is the research regarding screen based technology and its effect on children.

A  Schools that have greater access to digital resources have demonstrated increased student engagement in the learning process. ICTs are a part of the current Australian Curriculum and students are required to meet specific standards. For students to meet these standards they need to have access to a range of digital resources. The Australian Government is currently working with school communities to improve access for students.

In our decision making we explored technologies that demonstrated an increase in student learning. Local research highlighted that students with greater access to digital resources have greater options for research skills and presentation of their learning. It allows students to explore their creativity in learning allowing them to be more self-directed in their learning. Contemporary student learning is based more around inquiry rather than a traditional instructional model.

Schools that have increased student access to technology identify no detrimental impact on students’ creativity and social skills. In fact their research demonstrates a greater level of social interaction and learning opportunities including creativity.

As a school we will continually monitor and review the effectiveness of our programs in line with the schools review cycle.