



Information and Communications Technology Policy

Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia – Victorian Schools Limited (EREA-VSL), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA-VSL schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students*.

*Student includes any person enrolled in the College, either as a day pupil or as a boarder.

The Hazard - Information and Communication Technology

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) includes any electronic device or application used to communicate, create, disseminate, store or manage information such as text, images, audio or video.

Examples include:

- Personal computers and laptops;
- Mobile devices such as mobile phones and tablets;
- Applications such as email and the internet;
- Web-based tools such as social networking sites, chat rooms, blogs, podcasts and instant messaging systems;
- Imaging tools such as video, still or web cameras and related software;
- Audio tools such as audio recording devices, iPods, mp3 players and related software; and
- Fax, scanning and copying machines.

ICTs can create potentially hazardous situations in the event they are used inappropriately and/or illegally.

St Patrick's College's Policy

Students have the right to learn in a safe environment, including when they have access to ICTs to enhance their learning. St Patrick's College is committed to the responsible and educational use of ICTs and to the protection of students by providing secure access to these services as part of their

learning experience.

It is our policy that:

- The use of ICTs be managed through a 'whole of College community' approach involving students, staff and parents/carers;
- ICT education strategies be implemented within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/carers to ensure appropriate use;
- Staff establish positive role models in use of ICTs;
- Appropriate use of ICTs; and
- Our ICT policy is reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

ICT Misuse Prevention Strategies

St Patrick's College recognises that the implementation of whole of College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of misuse of ICTs within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall ICT strategy:

- A structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age appropriate information and skills relating to ICT use to students over the course of the academic year;
- Education, training and professional development of staff in appropriate ICT use;
- The regular provision of information to parents/carers to raise awareness of inappropriate use of ICTs as a College community issue;
- The promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/carers;
- All student login details and passwords are to be kept confidential to prevent others accessing their accounts;
- Access to College networks is provided through a filtered service. The filter is designed to restrict access of inappropriate material as well as providing spam and virus protection;
- Students are required to sign and abide by St Patrick's College's **Information and Communication Technology Use Agreements** which specify details of inappropriate usage. No student may use College owned ICT equipment and devices unless the agreement has been signed and returned to the College. All signed agreements will be kept on file at the College;
- Inappropriate usage by students will include any contravention of the protocols set out in the relevant ICT Handbook and Agreement.
- Any inappropriate internet sites accidentally accessed, incidents where students are offended by another person's use of ICTs and suspected technical security breaches must be immediately reported for investigation;
- Appropriate copyright clearance is sought and the source of any information used or published is acknowledged, to avoid plagiarism;
- The College reserves the right to monitor, traffic and review all content sent and received on the College systems;
- Breaches of acceptable usage of ICTs will result in disciplinary action;
- Regular risk assessments of inappropriate ICT use within the College;

- Records of reported incidents of ICT misuse are maintained and analysed in order to identify persistent offenders and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate;
- Statements supporting appropriate ICT use are included in students' College diaries; and
- Posters promoting appropriate ICT use are displayed strategically within the College.

Workers' Responsibility

All workers are responsible to:

- Model appropriate behaviour at all times;
- Ensure all students are provided with ICT Agreements, that they understand them, and that they understand they will face disciplinary action in the event they misuse ICT equipment and devices;
- Ensure that students who do not return their ICT Agreements do not use ICT equipment and devices;
- Be vigilant in monitoring students when using ICT equipment and devices;
- Reinforce to students the importance of privacy and safeguarding their login details, personal information and the personal information of others;
- Assist students in the event that they have inadvertently accessed inappropriate material, received inappropriate messages or if they have been offended by another person's use of ICTs;
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of inappropriate ICT use in accordance with this policy; and
- Ensure that any incident of inappropriate ICT use that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training;
- Student and parent/carer education and information;
- Student ICT Agreements;
- Signage promoting appropriate ICT usage;
- Effective student supervision;
- Effective supervision and monitoring of College networks;
- Regular inspection of ICT equipment;
- Effective incident reporting procedures;
- Effective management of incidents of inappropriate ICT usage when reported and/or observed;
- Regular risk assessments with respect to inappropriate ICT usage;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Discipline for Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this policy St Patrick's College may take disciplinary action.

Status of Policy

This policy has been downloaded from CompliSpace, is endorsed by EREA-VSL and is reviewed annually.

Policy owner	St Patrick's College - Ballarat
Approving authority	Principal
Approval date	Sept 2025
Risk rating	HIGH
Date of next review	Jan 2027
Publication details	School website

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION

Assigned TERE Board Framework	Child Safety
Related policies	Cyber Safety Policy ICT Acceptable Use Policy Personal Electronic Device Policy