GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

At Good Shepherd we design lessons about **digital citizenship** (being good online citizens – making good choices while using the Internet) so that your child can interact safely and responsibly while using their device. We strive to work in partnership with you, as parents to offer the best education for your child. Therefore, it is **strongly recommended** that your child's device use is closely monitored at home. This includes, but is not limited to: screen time and the use of social media.

During class your child will be involved in a variety of lessons, some using the device and some without. Rarely will your child spend large blocks of time on their device. The American Optometric Association suggests adopting a '20-20-20 rule'. This means taking a 20 second break at least every 20 minutes and looking at something 20 feet (6 metres) away. This happens naturally in a classroom where students are working collaboratively, moving around the room and looking at other students work. The closer the screen resolution is to the human eye itself, the better it is in terms of visual comfort. At the normal distances for tablets, the human eye's resolving power is about 240 ppi, the new iPad's retina screen display is 264 ppi. It is important to monitor device use to ensure that there is a balanced approach to screen time and that children are engaging with websites and other people appropriately online. As a result, **we recommend that device use at home is in a common area (eg living room – NOT BEDROOM) and that there are agreed time parameters in place**. This could be in the form of a contract that you create. You may find some ideas here: http://www.e-quipped.com.au/cyberwise-parenting/family-internet-contracts/.

"Social networking forms a part of the social identity of many young people. It describes a variety of services like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, World of Warcraft, Moshi Monsters and Skype. All of these services enable direct interaction between individuals. Users can:

- post information about themselves
- display photos
- provide updates about their activities
- chat
- play games
- comment on other people's photos, posts and profiles."

(https://esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues/social-networking/social-networking-information-for-parents)

Many of these services require their users to be 13 years and over i.e. Instagram, Facebook, Kik, Snapchat, youtube (and iMessage/Facetime). We **strongly support the age restrictions** that these sites impose. *No student under the age of 13* should have an account with these types of social media. "Despite these clearly stated and published age restrictions, large and growing numbers of children 12 and under are using social media networks, often *with* their parent's knowledge and consent" (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/diana-graber/3-reasons-why-social-media-age-restrictions-matter_b_5935924.html?ir=Australia. This is problematic as child identity is at risk and children under 13 are still developing their decision making skills.

Digital citizenship is about interacting safely and appropriately online. It is so important in today's world. The phrase "What sort of digital footprint would you like to leave behind?" is a metaphor we use to convey this concept. With your help we can educate our students about using technology in the right way.

Regards

Luke Mooney
Coordinator
Good Shepherd Primary