Floreat Park Primary School ICT and Digital Technologies Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This FAQ is designed to support parents in their understanding of how technology is used to support student learning and development at Floreat Park Primary School (FPPS). Further questions and answers are included in the slides from the parent presentation of May 2018, which can be found on the school website. At the end of this FAQ is a guide to the terminology used.

Q: **Which apps do you use on the iPads at school?**

A: We believe less is more. There are over 80,000 apps in the Apple App Store with the 'educational' tag; however there is no set standard to guide this label. When selecting apps, we look to those which promote higher order thinking skills such as *analysis*, *evaluation* and *creation*.

We also look to research by organisations such the Association for Psychological Science which suggests that the best educational apps promote *active learning* (minds on as well as hands on), *deep engagement* (the content adapts to the child's responses), *meaningful learning* (engaging with children's interests and prior knowledge) and *social interactions* (encouraging conversation, discussion and joint engagement with parents and peers.

Whilst we cannot recommend specific apps, the ones we use most frequently at school include; Book Creator, Explain Everything, Puppet Pals HD and Popplet.

We also use the iPads to access websites such as Code.org and apps like Mathletics and Language Perfect (Italian).

Q: **Are the teachers getting professional development on the use of iPads etc in the classroom?**

A: Yes. In addition to every teacher having a school iPad, teachers and EA's have had a range of professional learning opportunities which focus on understanding the curriculum and using technology effectively. Teachers are trained in coaching as part of our performance and development culture in school. In addition, we have an ICT committee of teachers who support staff in their practice using ICT. One of the committee members is also involved in an ICT action research project, the results of which will support our networks of schools.

Professional learning is ongoing and also includes teachers sharing good practice with each other and in timetabled, weekly professional learning team meetings. Staff are very open to integrating technology effectively

as part of providing the best possible educational experiences to every student. Their starting point is an existing culture of high expectations and achievement.

Our firm belief is that sustainable improvement occurs when schools have a clear and shared vision and when leaders create the conditions for growth. This culture underpins our Business Planning over the next 3 years.

Q: **It is recommended to have a break from the screen every 20 minutes. Will this be encouraged?**

A: Yes. Our staff are encouraged to use technology only when it supports learning. They also use technology alongside traditional methods, meaning that students will not be using technology, or looking at a screen for extended periods during the day.

Q: **Is 'bring your own device' (BYOD) locked down for school and home use? i.e. what flexibility and level of configuration is allowed?**

A: As stated at the meeting, we are proposing to look at whether BYOD is the best option for Year 5 and 6 in 3 years' time. A lot can change in that time in terms of technology and infrastructure. The level of flexibility and safety of students will be of the highest priority when we begin to discuss BYOD towards the end of the new Business Plan cycle.

Q: **Will BYOD be in line with high school requirements?**

A: Towards the end of the new Business Plan Cycle, when we begin to consider whether to move to a BYOD model. One of the factors that will drive our decision making will be the high school programs that our students will move to.

Q: **Does The Department of Education (DoE) provide extra funding to cater for the increase of technology required?**

A: Independent Public School (IPS) like FPPS, receive a budget from the DoE. This is calculated based on student numbers and their characteristics. IPS schools then make local decisions on how to spend their budget. From time to time, grants become available for specific funding opportunities and the school will apply where appropriate.

At present, the school contributes approximately $100,000 per year to ICT and Digital Technologies. This includes equipment, training, technical support and software.

Q: **Why is technology important at school?**

A: It is widely recognized that students in school today will be entering a workplace which is radically different to the workplaces of the past due to the rapid developments in technology. Many of the jobs that exist today, did not exist 10 years ago. The in addition to being literate and numerate, our students need to develop skills such as critical and creative thinking, problem solving, higher order thinking and empathy.

Additionally, more and more learning and assessment content is moving to an online environment. From 2019, students at Floreat will complete their National Assessment Programs, Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) online. The feedback from schools who have already moved to NAPLAN Online is positive with regards to student engagement with the platform. Currently, many other standardized school assessments are online such as the Progressive Assessment Tasks (PAT) in maths and reading and high school tests such as Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA).

Q: **What will my child be learning? What is expected for their year level?**

A: In terms of ICT, we follow the Western Australian Curriculum ICT Capability. This outlines the importance of teaching students to; use social and ethical protocols and practices, conduct investigations, create content, communicate ideas and information and manage and operate ICT. In teaching technologies, our teaching programs are designed to meet the requirements of the Western Australian Curriculum, Technologies learning area. This learning are is split into Design and Technologies and Digital Technologies.

Q: **Why does the school need more devices?**

A: Increasing the ratio of devices to students allows teachers to plan for and use technology in a far more flexible way to support student learning. Currently, each classroom has a bank of 6 to 8 iPads and Years 4 to 6 share a trolley of 15 laptops. More devices will allow students the flexibility to use a device when appropriate without the need to borrow from other classrooms. Our aim over the next 3 years is to achieve a 1:3 ratio of iPads from Pre-primary to Year 3 and 2 class sets of laptops to share between Years 4 to 6.

Q: **What are you doing with the devices you have?**

A: Currently we have a bank of 6 to 8 iPads in each classroom from Pre-primary to Year 6. We have 15 laptops shared between Year 4 to 6. Our Digital Technologies program has 35 laptops and iPads and our specialist teachers have 35 iPads which they share. In addition, each teacher has an iPad to ensure they are proficient with its use.

Q: **What is happening with the computer lab?**

A: One of the principles of the Grounds and Facilities Improvement Committee (GAFIC), a sub-committee of the School Board, was to ensure that all of our specialist teachers had a designated teaching space. Music is taught in the specialist music room and Art lessons have been taught from the specialist art room since the start of 2017. 2018 saw the Italian teacher begin in a dedicated room and more recently, the final specialist, our Digital Technologies teacher moved in to a purpose built, 'STEM makerspace', supported by P&C funding.

Q: **What are the schools plans for BYOD?**

A: We are currently not planning a BYOD program as we believe that the current model of school owned devices is providing our students with flexible access to technology in a balanced and managed way. Towards the end of this Business Plan, we will review our use of laptops in the upper school and consider whether a BYOD laptop program is the appropriate direction going forwards.

Q: **How often does my child use a screen during the day?**

A: The notion of setting a set amount of screen time comes from American Academy of Pediatrics advice which was first published in the late 90's. It was published amid concerns over the amount of television children and adolescents were watching. 20 years on, screens are far more ubiquitous and the amount of pixels, and therefore image quality is far better. We prefer to consider the quality of 'screen time' rather than the time. For example, an hour spent playing a shooting game on a console is very different to an hour spent creating an interactive multimedia text or programing a robot.

Nevertheless, on an 'average' day students will spend up to an hour using a device with a screen. In addition, for 1 semester per year children will be taught Digital Technologies by our specialist teacher. For older students, these lessons will often involve interacting with a screen. This would total 90 minutes per week.

Terminology Explained

ICT (Information and Communications Technology) refers to using ICT for tasks associated with information access and management, information creation and presentation, problem solving, decision making, communication, creative expression, and empirical reasoning.

Digital Technologies refers to opportunities which provide students with authentic learning challenges that foster curiosity, confidence, persistence, innovation, creativity, respect and cooperation. These attributes are necessary when using and developing solutions to make sense of complex ideas and relationships in all areas of learning. Technologies helps students to be regional and global citizens, capable of actively and ethically communicating and collaborating.

STEM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Through STEM, children learn to: ask questions, work together, think creatively, solve problems, explore, take calculated risks, test solutions and discover new ways of doing things. Sometimes STEM is referred to as STEAM to recognise that artistic and creative thought are also important in problem solving.

Differentiation is the process of adapting instruction to ensure students of all abilities are able to access the learning at an appropriate level. Teachers may adapt the task, use different levels of questioning or ask for students to produce different outcomes to demonstrate assess their learning.

Personalised learning is generally seen as an alternative to so-called "one-size-fits-all" approaches to schooling in which teachers may, for example, provide all students in a given course with the same type of instruction, the same assignments, and the same assessments with little variation or modification from student to student.