ICT @ Mano.

The world that we live and work in is highly digital and requires students to have a range of digital skills. Our school purposefully addresses this reality and this complements our strong focus on Literacy and Numeracy as fundamental skills. A key aspect of our Digital Learning Strategy is our one to one iPad BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Program that is in place from Grades 3 – 6 (Middles and Seniors). This is a voluntary program at Mano, as it is in all other local government schools – this year we have approximately 95% of Seniors and 70% of Middles bringing their own device to school (other students can access a school owned device). Online learning tools are used to support and enhance the educational experiences of all students. Access to a vast array of tools online allows students to develop contemporary skills that are needed for their future in a world where being connected, able to communicate and collaborate, and be creative are integral. It is through the use of online tools that staff give students the opportunity to explore learning beyond the walls of the classroom, and in doing so, also teach them important skills about how to be critical consumers and ethical users of the information and websites that they encounter. Google Apps for Education are used and these provide a fast and easy way to collaborate and learn. The Google Apps for Education website and document creation tools offer real-time editing, powerful sharing controls, and seamless compatibility which benefit students as they are preparing our students for future schooling, work and social environments where this tool, or ones like it, are utilised. It also allows teachers to give quick and easy feedback to students online through the sharing facility, instead of students having to wait for paper-based copies of work to be returned to them once marking has been completed.

Digital Technologies is a significant and compulsory component of the Victorian Curriculum, which we are required to address via classroom programs and to report on to parents. Manifold Heights Primary School is proud of its ICT infrastructure and the way it is used in our teaching and learning programs. We strive to lead the way in contemporary education, in particular with our use of online tools and resources to empower our students and enhance their opportunities for creativity and collaboration. Preparing our students for their futures (secondary school and beyond) is our obvious objective. Our staff are keen professional learners and strive to improve their pedagogy (how we teach), enhance the use of iPads, communicate more effectively with parents, develop workflow efficiency and create tasks that technology makes possible in the 21st century. As a community, we need to work together, to ensure our kids have the skills they need in this highly digital, highly connected world.

Our staff focus daily on the important matter of Cybersafety. We integrate Cybersafety into the curriculum and also explicitly teach it. We have undergone eSmart accreditation and engage external support to assist us in this area. Students are asked to sign a Mano ICT User Agreement, which clearly outlines how ICT can be and will be used at school – whilst this has a preventative and educative approach as its focus it also outlines consequences for misuse.

WHAT IS THE RELIANCE ON THE DEVICE AT MANO IN MIDDES AND SENIORS?

We are working hard to achieve balance. Devices are only used when they are needed. This might be some research for inquiry, to type up a text or to record a video reflection, to complete an assessment, to read online, design a presentation or solve a problem by researching and creating. Students are not on their devices all day. Some days they will use the devices more than others, some days they may not use them at all. It depends on the learning they are doing. Some Specialist classes will see devices used eg: Science.

WHAT ABOUT SECURITY / DAMAGE / LOSS?

We have had very few incidents regarding devices security / damage / loss and all of them have been resolved quite promptly. Students are able to take their bags directly inside when they arrive at school so their devices are not sitting outside classrooms.

IS THIS REPLACING TRADITIONAL LEARNING METHODS?

Not at all. We have worked really hard and are very proud of our teaching and learning program. The devices are a tool to complement and extend our current approach. We must support students to develop skills, but that will not be at the expense of handwriting, reading books, listening to others, etc.

BENEFITS OF 1:1 OVER CLASS SET?

Students having a 1:1 device means they have immediate access to information as required. It also means that students do not have to wait until a particular time of week to access a shared laptop or iPad . This means less delays in getting work started and completed, with significantly greater access than the school's budget can deliver.

SCREEN TIME

With Screen Time, you can access real-time reports about how much time you or your child spend on your iPhone or iPad and set limits for what you want to manage.
Steps to turn on Screen Time:
1. On your iPhone or iPad, go to Settings > Screen Time.
2. Tap Turn On Screen Time.
3. Tap Continue.
4. Select This is My [device] or This is My Child's [device].
For further information on Screen Time go to https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT208982
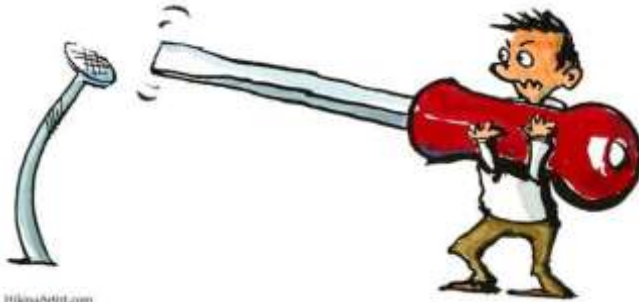
LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Digital Technologies component of the Victorian Curriculum aims to ensure students can:
- design, create, manage and evaluate sustainable and innovative digital solutions to meet and redefine current and future needs
- use computational thinking and the key concepts of abstraction; data collection, representation and interpretation; specification, algorithms and development to create digital solutions
- apply systems thinking to monitor, analyse, predict and shape the interactions within and between information systems and the impact of these systems on individuals, societies, economies and environments

- confidently use digital systems to efficiently and effectively automate the transformation of data into information and to creatively communicate ideas in a range of settings
- apply protocols and legal practices that support safe, ethical and respectful communications and collaboration with known and unknown audiences.

With these curriculum aims and learning outcomes, Grades 3 – 6 have implemented the voluntary BYOD program to ensure when students leave Manifold Heights PS they have the necessary skills needed for secondary school and beyond.

HOW IS IT COMPLEMENTING WHAT IS HAPPENING?

It's all about having the right tool available for the job.

iPads are an amazingly advanced piece of technology, providing access to a world of knowledge and applications. A large proportion of our job as educators is ensuring students have access to the right tools for every job.

While the iTunes store offers a wide variety of 'handwriting' apps, we believe the best way for students to develop their handwriting is with a pencil and lined paper, coupled with modelling and specific feedback from the class teacher.

Though apps like Mathletics and Prodigy are fun, engaging and enjoyed by students both at school and at home, there is certainly also a real need for hands on learning with a variety of materials students can actually hold and manipulate. Class and peer discussion as to the real world application of mathematical concepts is also very highly valued.

While apps such as Epic and Reading Eggs provide students with access to thousands of books and activities, specifically levelled to further develop vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension, there is still a genuine place for printed books in our students' lives. We aim to foster a love of these through the reading of classroom serials, Just Right Reading Texts, and extensive take home libraries in each department.

One of the biggest advantages in having 1:1 device access for each student, is the ability for students to be the recipient of real time feedback. **'Practice really does make Permanent'**, irrespective of whether the skill in question is to be practiced correctly or incorrectly. Gone are the days where you might have spent time completing a worksheet, only to discover, upon checking with a calculator an hour later, that you were making the same mistake over and over again. Thus, cementing those errors into your routine.

With resources like EssentialAssessment, students are instantly provided with learning goals targeted to their specific needs, and in developing and practicing these, are provided with feedback after every single question. Students are equipped with the necessary tools, when they find themselves struggling with a particular concept; opting to seek teacher assistance, utilise the 'learn me' function, or even accessing one of the millions of online tutorials available at their fingertips. Teachers also have the capability of monitoring this in real time with Apple classroom, allowing them to promptly intervene and provide the required support where necessary.

Having access to technology does not mean that it is simply used at every opportunity, but rather, a greater range of tools is available to teachers and students when faced with a particular learning challenge.