INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ST ROSE

Since 2006 the school has strategically implemented a plan to ensure that the students have access to the latest technology tools to support and enrich learning. Underpinned by our Beliefs about Learning; technology is a tool, just like any other in the school, that enables the learner to develop independence, creativity and discover new learnings, and promote the students as 21st Century leaners.

Critically analysing the use of technology in the form of Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs), Laptops and iPads, we have gathered data from staff and students to ascertain how this tool can improve student outcomes and enhance learning and teaching.

The school has taken an incremental approach to implementing Interactive Whiteboards, ensuring that all staff have had adequate Professional Learning to use the IWBs to their full capacity. Updating professional learning to keep staff current with new tools associated with the use of IWBs. The school now boasts a full complement of IWBs, one in each classroom and the IT room. This tool is a prominent feature of the classroom contributing to the learning environment.

As a result of staff consultation the use of laptops over PCs has been selected to ensure flexible options for learning, both in the classroom and IT room. Each room now has a laptop assigned to the IWB and 6 laptops for student access. In addition to this the IT room is stocked with a further 15 laptops. This configuration enables learning to be in pairs, groups and in some classes at an individual level.

In 2014 ten iPads were purchased, aligned with the incremental approach to implementation. These iPads have been accessible to all staff, who have had training in the best use for educational purposes. As with the laptops and IWB, staff are expected to show in their programs how this tool will contribute to the learning.

The access to a wireless network ensures that laptops and iPads are portable and students are given opportunities to learn in any chosen space in the school.

St Rose is a ‘soft copy’ school. This means that all forms of communication, including newsletters, homework, permission notes and all information pertinent to the school is communicated via the school website, email or app. The school does not support email for students in Years Kinder to Year 4, however in order to prepare students for high school Year 5 and 6 students have access to weeblys, blogs and email.

Evaluation of the benefit of technology, online communications and apps is ongoing, and as with any resource it is critically analysed to ascertain whether it is being used to the best of its capacity in ensuring learning experiences are relevant to students’ needs.