1:1 IPAD PROGRAM 2017

Dear Parents and Caregivers

At Dalkeith Primary School we strive to provide the best learning opportunities possible for our students. We are always seeking new and innovative ways to help our students achieve as ‘Together, we shape the future’.

The Australian Curriculum mandates the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) across all learning areas. With this in mind, teachers at Dalkeith Primary School have been undertaking extensive research and trials over the past four years with some of Australia’s leading experts in technology use to ascertain whether it adds value to student learning.

What did our research identify?

- Effective technology integration allows teachers to provide an educational program that prepares students for later learning, at high school and beyond.
- Teachers are better able to cater for the wide range of learning abilities from Gifted and Talented to Students with Special Needs using strategies supported by a range of applications and programs.
- The use of technology fosters creativity, the development of higher order thinking, content creation and problem solving skills as students complete assigned tasks in ways not possible without access to the technology.
- Technology use further engages students in learning and has improved learning outcomes.
- Access to technology allows students to comprehend the world beyond Dalkeith Primary School, make global connections and provide students with a wider audience for their work.
- A high level of technology access allows teachers to implement Western Australian Curriculum requirements with greater ease.

With these findings, I am confident that significant benefits are gained from the effective integration of technology into teaching and learning programs.

The Dalkeith Primary School ICT vision states, "ICT will be a fundamental component of teaching and learning, where state of the art technology and professional learning will equip teachers with transformative skills and develop students that are innovative, responsible and confident users of ICT in an ever changing digital world." With this in mind and in keeping with our long term plan for technology use and integration across the school, I am very pleased to confirm that the 1:1 iPad program at Dalkeith Primary School will continue to include students starting Year 3 in 2017. I believe this program enhances their learning even further than was possible without this technology. This initiative was successfully introduced in 2015 with students in Year 4 and 5 with the full support of the School Board before being extended to Year 3 students in 2016.

During 2015 and 2016, students in Year 3 to 6 have engaged in a technology-enhanced curriculum using the iPad as a tool to collaborate, create and reflect upon their learning. Teachers have created personalised digital courses using iTunes U to provide students with anytime access to their sequence of learning. This has been one of the most successful aspects of the 1:1 iPad program so far. In an ongoing video case study, student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. When asked how the iPad had changed the way they learned at school, students’ said they valued the opportunity to express their understanding in a range of ways using creative apps and being able to access resources to review their learning on their own device.

By continuing to provide this opportunity for Year 3 students in 2017 we will ensure every child is equipped with the skills they need to engage in the curriculum effectively and participate in NAPLAN
Online with confidence, which will be completed in a digital format from 2018. The Western Australian Curriculum states that students should be able to investigate, create, generate solutions and confidently apply their learning using technology. This applies across all core learning areas including literacy and numeracy. For example, in Year 3 Western Australian Curriculum English, students need to create digital multimodal texts with print, visual and audio elements. In Year 3 and 4 Mathematics and Science, students are required to collate and present data using digital technologies.

In 2017, the Digital Technologies curriculum is also being introduced. With an emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) this new aspect of the curriculum requires students to use technology in unique ways. For example, coding is a key skill students are now expected to learn. The 1:1 iPad program allows our teachers to develop innovative sequences of learning that incorporate these new skills such as coding and robotics to consolidate key concepts in areas such as science and mathematics. Students at Dalkeith are also beginning to learn 3D design using their iPads to take advantage of the 3D printer at the school. It is important to note that Dalkeith is considered to be a leading school in this aspect of the Western Australian Curriculum.

The 1:1 program will require students to own their own iPad for use at school and home. Parents will have the option to purchase or lease an iPad in a comprehensive package that includes insurance, technical support and peripheral items from Winthrop Australia. Alternatively they can bring the device in from home. All iPad’s must have a robust cover, insurance and be an iPad Air or Mini (minimum iPad 5 or iPad mini 2 – due to the release of iOS 10, models released previous to this will no longer receive iOS updates meaning many apps will not function correctly). All year 3 students will need a device by the start of the 2017 school year. The purchase options are detailed in Appendix 1. Students can also bring in a previously owned device that meets the minimum requirements.

The School Board and I understand that you will have many questions about your child’s involvement in this program and want to reassure you that a comprehensive informative and consultative approach will be undertaken both this year and in 2017 to ensure any concerns are addressed. On Thursday 22nd September 2016, an iPad Showcase night is being held between 6-7pm at the school. I extend an invitation to you to attend this evening with your child to see the type of learning that is happening with the iPad in our senior school. Following this showcase evening, I will be consulting year 2 parents to gain an expression of interest in an additional information session.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the exciting learning opportunities made possible by the 1:1 iPad Program.

Alternatively please contact myself or Deputy Principal, Tamara Doig should you wish to discuss this program further.

Yours sincerely

SUZANNE PEKIN
Principal
15 September 2016