

IT @ NELSON COLLEGE

The world of IT and education is one of infinite possibilities and a similar number of distractions. The same intersection is littered with opinions, often strongly held and the random application of facts and research.

OUR VISION

It seems vitally important for a school or college to have and share a vision then to be open minded and flexible in fulfilling that vision. In the classroom our vision is clearly focused on how we can **use and integrate technology to complement quality teaching and in turn afford students better learning opportunities.**

"Knowledge is available on every Internet-connected device, what you know matters far less than what you can do with what you know. The capacity to innovate ...to solve problems creatively or bring new possibilities to life — and skills like critical thinking, communication and collaboration are far more important"

- Tony Wagner, Harvard Education Specialist

The key attribute of our vision within and beyond the classroom is that IT is not being used for its own sake or for ulterior purposes. We believe that by keeping true to our vision and being open to development and change we can use IT to best meet the needs of our students.

INVESTMENT IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Staff are building an increasingly clear idea of how to use these powerful tools into the future and how they can add to their practice as teachers. IT in the Classroom has been one of our key professional learning areas for three years and will continue to

do so for some time. The staff professional development has specially allocated IT support teachers and funds for further professional development.

Nelson College has first class IT infrastructure. It has an outstanding fibre internet connection, four full time IT staff and technicians, and a fully wireless campus capable of coping with heavy demand. We have two dedicated IT Computer Suites and specialist suites for Technology, Art (2), Media Studies, Commerce, Music and Mathematics. Every staff member has a laptop and every classroom a data projector. We view infrastructure as a case of continual improvement to keep in touch with the fast evolving environment.

BYOD 2018

We have decided to make the use of devices **compulsory for our students in Years 9, 10 and 11 in 2018.** Our motivation is to enable their use in class and an increasingly smooth transition between school and home. It is also true that devices are becoming very powerful tools for work at home regardless of their usefulness at school. Collaborative work is regarded as one of the vital skills for the future and is one which is integral to our use of IT in the classroom and beyond. The IT department is continuing to find ways to improve connectivity and access to our networks.

We would **strongly encourage senior students to bring their own devices to school** as they wish and most importantly as it benefits their learning. Staff will increasingly encourage senior students to bring devices to school to fulfil specific purposes. For example, a unit of work may lend itself particularly well to the use of a device and so it would be beneficial for a student to bring a device to school for that unit. It is also possible that use of devices will vary widely.



WHAT DEVICE?

Choosing a device is not easy however we offer the following thoughts. Laptops and similar are generally better tools than toys, and tablets would seem to be better toys than tools. In general we would consider smartphones to be largely impractical in an academic setting. The strength and design of the actual chassis is an important consideration in being transported and subject to heavy use. Battery life varies wildly but has a massive impact on the device effectiveness in the class. In making decisions it is important to be aware that our core software is Windows/ Microsoft based. Older hand me down devices present issues with connectivity and usually battery life. The school is considering how best to provide charging facilities as well as having devices to loan to those that cannot access their own. Some key considerations therefore are:

-  Battery life
-  Strong chassis
-  Connectivity
-  A high quality screen
-  Microsoft operability

OFFICE 365, ULTRANET & KAMAR

Beyond the classroom our IT focus centres on enhancing our connection with the community and in using technology to make life easier. Nelson College has three cloud or internet-based services: Ultraset, KAMAR and Office 365. These programs allow for work of many sorts to be shared between home and school. In this situation devices at home will become increasingly useful and important.

Install Office 2016 on your PC



As a Nelson College student your son can **download and run Office ProPlus for free** on up to five computers and run Office Mobile for on their mobile device. All they need to do is login to their Office 365 account using their school email and password on their device and then follow the simple instructions.

Email:
firstname.lastname@nc.school.nz

Password: