Term 4 2018

Embrace   Equip   Engage   Empower

The Learning Quarterly (LQ) is published during Fallow Week each term. The purpose is to highlight and explore current practices in education within the St Kieran's context. It is one of the many ways we keep you engaged in your child's learning.

In this term's LQ, the focus is on the safe and responsible use of technology by our children and the role parents have in ensuring that they are doing this. Social media and online gaming have become issues that schools have to deal with. Teaching our children how to be responsible online citizens is something that will go towards protecting them from the inappropriate online behaviour of others as well as knowing what behaviours and skills are expected of them.

The last section of the LQ explains how assessment is used in determining student grades at this time of the year. While the context is about Religious Education, it is applicable to all subject areas.

Technology holiday guide for parents

As holidays approach, the role that screens and devices will play becomes an increasing concern for parents. Days when kids are usually tied up with school and activities make way for many an idle hour and, as such, parents fear those hours will be spent largely engaged with a screen or gaming console. While there is certainly no harm in some well-balanced screen time and develop mentally appropriate online activities, we must remember that, as parents, we have an important role in helping our kids manage and balance that screen time. Here are a few things we can do:

Understand the battle

It is important parents know the beast they are dealing with. It is easy to shout from another room to get off a screen or whinge to our friends that 'kids of today' are all addicted to their phones, but we need to recognise the pull that many of these devices have. The social networks are designed to keep us liking, commenting and sharing. The games cajole us into having 'just one more' turn at being the last man standing. These technologies tempt us to reach just one more level, or to scroll for

just a few minutes more. Our brains experience a dopamine release and a sense of insufficiency when we use a device. There is always something else to do or something else to scroll through, or one more YouTube video to watch. So our kids are up against it when trying to control their time on a device. We need to help them with that.

Get outside

We can complain that kids never go outside and play anymore, but sometimes we have to physically get out there with them or offer opportunities in which being outside and active play are appealing. We have to work a little harder at this today because we are competing with a device that answers many of our kids' perceived needs. We need them to know that their needs are greater and more varied than what their screens can offer.

Have some rules

Despite their apparent dislike of rules around technology, kids will (one day) appreciate having boundaries to help them manage their screen time. Rules can be established regarding time limits, devices in bedrooms, device-free meal times, etc. Whatever you decide is important, be sure that you have those discussions with your kids. And any discussion around rules or consequences should happen away from the screens so they are clear on the expectations. (Talking about their screen-time habits while they are just about to be the last man standing on Fortnite is probably not going to make for engaging conversation.)

One console on one television…outside the bedroom

Having only one television that is connected to a gaming console or to Netflix is a good way of ensuring that the device gets shared and one child doesn't monopolise the screen. And leave consoles out of bedrooms where the appeal of just one more quick game can very quickly rob them of important sleep time.

Role model

Make sure you are showing your kids how you want them to be. Have times when the devices are put away and you give full attention to the people around you. Don't answer calls or emails at the dinner table. Don't fall asleep with a device landing on your forehead. Take time to get outside and do things active and in nature. Don't ever use a phone while driving. Use the Screen Time feature on iOS products to monitor just how you are using your technology and whether you could be making some changes. Kids learn more from what we do than what we say.

We know the technology isn't going anywhere, and we know there are many wonderful benefits that screens provide. But ensure that holidays and downtime hours can be filled with many different experiences and in ways that leave your kids in control, even if you have to work a little harder to give them that.

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Principles of responsible digital citizenship.

The office of the esafety Commissioner was established in 2015 with a mandate to coordinate and lead the online safety efforts across government, industry and the not-for profit community. Julie Inman Grant is the esafety Commissioner and she has listed three principles that develop responsible digital citizenship. They are:

1. Engage positively
2. Know your online world
3. Choose consciously

Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, who is one of Australia's highest profile psychologists, author of 11 books and a specialist in parenting, has taken these three principles and explained further how they can be implemented. These principles form a strong basis for guidance from parents attempting to monitor their child's online behaviour.

1   Engage positively

When you engage positively, you are exercising your rights and responsibilities as a digital citizen, while respecting the rights of others. When students are online they can engage positively by:

- Respecting **the rights of others** to participate and have an opinion.
- **Asking before tagging** other people or posting photos.
- **Reporting** offensive or illegal content.
- **Standing up and speaking out** about cyberbullying — protect your friends.
- Don't respond to hurtful or nasty comments — **block and report**.
- **Speaking to their parents** or a trusted adult about upsetting online experiences.
- **Reporting threats of violence** to the police (collect the evidence to show them).

2   Know your online world

Students have the **skills and knowledge** to participate in the online world with confidence, although this confidence doesn't necessarily mean they really know the risks of the online world. Students can better understand the online world by:

- Learning new skills will help explore the online world.
- **Recognising online risks** and how to manage them.
- Looking out for **suspicious emails** and scams.
- Using **secure websites** for financial and retail services.
- Keeping **passwords secret**, strong, and unique.
- Knowing how **to report bullying** behaviour on social media sites.

3   Choose consciously

Students should be aware that they are in control of the decisions they make online. They can choose consciously by:
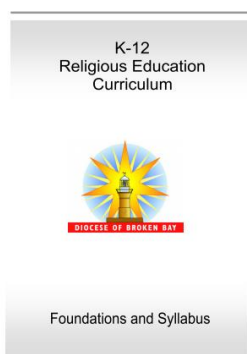
- **Thinking before sharing** personal information and understanding the choices you make impulsively can last forever on the internet.

- Choosing **privacy and security settings** carefully and reviewing them regularly.
- **Choosing friends** wisely online — not everybody online is who they claim to be. Regularly review your connections and remove people.
- If you have made a mistake, **apologise** and take down offensive material as soon as possible.
- **Asking for permission** before uploading pictures of your friends.

Religious Education Assessments

Religious Education is assessed against an outcome based **Religious Education syllabus**. The K- 12 Religious Education syllabus can be found at: http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/mission/Religious-Education.

The K-12 Religious Education Syllabus is a standards-referenced syllabus that describes, with the support of other documents, the expected **learning outcomes for students in Religious Education**. Parents at St Kieran's and indeed all Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools, receive a report outlining their child's achievement of the outcomes. Each Semester teacher's grade students on the outcomes they have covered in that Semester. Different outcomes are assessed in different terms depending on what is being taught, however over a year all outcomes are addressed.

Standards in the framework consist of two interrelated elements: **outcomes and content** in syllabuses showing what is to be learned and **descriptions** of levels of achievement of that learning. Students are therefore assessed on what they have learnt and how well they can do it. They are not assessed on their faith or if they go to Church or not. **Students are assessed on how well they demonstrate the content, understand the concepts and displays the skills in the syllabus.**

Syllabus outcomes in Religious Education contribute to a **developmental sequence** in which students are challenged to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills. The standards are typically **written for two years** of schooling and set high, but realistic, expectations of the quality of learning **to be achieved by the end of Years 2, 4, 6**, 8, 10 and 12. *Thus a student in Year One is half way through a two year Program of Religious Education covering Years One and Two.* Similarly a student in Year Four is at the end of a two year program which has been taught in Year Three and Four. Early Stage one has their own set of outcomes to be achieved.

Assessment for learning and for assessment involves teachers using evidence collected in a range of contexts to make on-balance professional judgements of the achievements and progress of students. Assessment tasks in Religious Education include tasks with a specified time limit and tasks to be accomplished over a longer period. They include: impromptu conversations/role-plays, prepared oral presentations, written or spoken, short or extended responses, including presenting points of view, listening and responding tasks, for example: responding to news reports and television programs, songs, research tasks, participating in liturgical

celebrations, planning and initiating school and community projects, reflective tasks, completing a written text and self-assessing the text, extended research and presentation (for example, development of multimedia texts and presentations) and anecdotal observations made of students in class.

Progress of a student's achievement is conveyed to parents in 'a-e scale' or in our case an **'outstanding to basic scale'.** Teachers compare work samples with descriptions of outcomes and with work samples from both classes in a grade in order to ensure continuity across a cohort. Further information is conveyed to parents through a written comment which may or may not use the language of the syllabus. Assessment of Religious Education is both for learning, so teachers know what to teach and of learning, so teachers know how a child is progressing. Parents are also welcome to arrange an appointment with your child's teacher to discuss the student's progress.