



Christian Brothers' High School

(PATRON: ST JOSEPH)

13th June 2014

If we teach today as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow
John Dewey 1859-1952

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you with reference to a significant initiative that Christian Brothers' High School Lewisham plans to undertake, in partnership with our Year 7 families, from the start of Term 3 2014.

It is widely recognised that many aspects of our society are changing under the impact of advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). We access information, communicate, collaborate and carry out the business of daily lives in ways that were simply unimaginable a few years ago. The new Australian Curriculum explicitly identifies digital literacy as a core focus and while the implications for education are still being explored, a few points are clear.

ICT provides us with powerful tools for learning. The Internet provides access to the best part of the sum of human knowledge; our approach to learning must recognise this. We must strive to empower our boys with the skills to appropriately access, utilise and think critically about the information available to them. In addition, ICT provides new opportunities and capabilities for collaboration, feedback and connections in the learning community via the cloud, with the potential for teaching and learning to become more efficient, powerful and creative.

In light of these points, Christian Brothers' High School Lewisham is adopting a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) approach for students in Years 5-12 from the start of 2015. Term 3, 2014 will mark the commencement of a BYOD Trial for all Year 7 students at the school.

The basic premise of this model is that the students use their own technology in the service of their learning at school. We believe that learning is personal. Our approach to the use of technology in the classroom should reflect that belief.

The BYOD policy will allow and encourage the use of internet-capable devices that can connect to the school's wireless network and that are suitable for: researching and accessing information; collaborating and communicating with others; and creating a wide and sophisticated range of products that demonstrate their learning. Through the hard work of our I.T. Department and the generous and active support of Br Conn, the school has upgraded both its wired and wireless networks so that they are able to now provide a fast, filtered and robust connection to the network and our broadband Internet facility.

The changes that will ensue an initiative such as this are complex and raise many questions and concerns. Some obvious issues include: the influence of ICT on the behaviour of our boys; the cost of BYOD to parents; the potential for inequity amongst and families; the impact on teaching and learning practices; the need for clear and consistent policies; the necessity of supporting teachers to help the students use ICT responsibly and effectively; the physical safety and security of the devices; and the list goes on.

These issues and challenges must be overcome. We are committed to making sure that this initiative is adequately supported and resourced for students and teachers alike. As we continue our journey along the BYOD path, we will need to critically reflect on our policies and refine our practices. We will continue to focus on quality teaching and learning at CBHS Lewisham and utilise technology as a tool to achieve this goal

I have established a website that provides a number of resources to help parents understand this initiative.

The website may be accessed here: <http://elearningatcbhslewisham.weebly.com>

The web site explains and comments on the move to BYOD here at CBHS Lewisham and in the broader sense. There is a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section that may anticipate and answer many of your questions. There is also a Technology Information Sheet that outlines recommended devices as well as the strengths and weaknesses of various device types.

In addition to this, we have scheduled an information session for parents in Week 9 of Term 2, on Thursday 26th June in the Treacy Centre at 7:00 pm. PLEASE NOTE THIS INFORMATION SESSION IS AIMED AT ADDRESSING THE QUERIES AND CONCERNS OF PARENTS ONLY.

As more resources are developed and guidelines published, I will make them known to the parent community. I encourage you to explore the links and resources from the School's eLearning website regarding BYOD and to begin to discuss this initiative with your sons.

We value and look forward to your support. Yours in good faith,

Vince Papa
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL – LEARNING INNOVATION