

Why use an iPad in an education setting?

The most appropriate way to answer this is to pose the question we ask when planning, delivering and reviewing any component of schooling: 'How will this assist the teaching and learning program and have a positive impact on student outcomes?'

Good teaching and learning is our starting point. Our staff challenge themselves to consider the most appropriate pedagogy, with or without technology in their programs. Teachers constantly make changes to their practice in order to leverage the features of any resource. Technology is planned and used to further learning, not the other way around.

We are all, in some way, recognising that we now live in a post-PC environment. The personal computer has served society well and we in schools have harnessed technology through this medium to assist with learning; however, the point has been reached where more flexible and intuitive technology is the better medium for achieving learning outcomes. Mobile devices allow flexibility in and out of class to assist learning – what is often called 'anywhere anytime' access. Tablet devices, such as iPad, take mobile technology a step further in allowing the teacher and student to move seamlessly from one learning activity to the next without the restriction of employing technology only when there is access to a laboratory, class set or pod of computers.

Our students engage with levels of technology in everyday life and they are faced with both the excitement and challenge of living in a networked knowledge world. We teach, model and expect our students to be positive users of technology and good digital citizens. The skills required for a technologically driven society are innovation, creativity, autonomy and both individual and group research capacity. These skills are as prized as traditionally accumulated knowledge and are recognised in the Australian Curriculum.

Yes, there are many tablet devices entering the mobile technology market and all will play their part in the school and wider setting into the future. The iPad, at present, provides the most mature platform with the greatest resource and support for us to deliver rich learning experiences and access to the resources students need both at home and school. Our trial experiences in Primary and Year 9 affirm this position with rich data gathered via survey information from parents, students and teachers.