17 March 2014

Dear Parents and Carers

As you would be aware, back in August last year, the School Management Team made a decision to go with Dell Latitude 10 Tablets as our 1:1 device for both teachers and Year 7 2014. At almost the same time Dell made the decision to stop making Latitude 10’s. That sent us back to the drawing board. In the end, I am glad we did not go with our original plan. I think the plan we have come with after much research and discussion is a better, more sustainable 1:1 computer plan for all concerned.

The school has decided on a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) plan. A variety of Windows Tablet devices has been sourced across a wide price range. Each of these tablets will enable students to use the device in class for almost all of what we would ask students to do on a computer. Some high-end software applications will be accessible on computers in our computer labs.

A Parent/Carer Information Meeting will be held on Monday March 31 at 7.00pm in the Factory Wing of the school. Either the Theatre or Theatrette will be used as the venue depending on numbers attending. To assist us in planning please return the slip at the end of this letter to your son’s or daughter’s Care Class Teacher ASAP. If you cannot attend this evening, an alternate meeting presenting the same information will be held on Wednesday 30 April at 7.00pm in the same location.

Parents will be asked to purchase a Windows Tablet for students in Years 9 and 7 this year. This will happen again in 2015, early in the year, so that the entire student population will have such a device. Teachers will be receiving tablets in the next couple of weeks.

Please note that Apple and Android devices are not to be used at school as an alternative to a Windows tablet. Such devices will not connect to the school network and will not be able to access the school’s internet service.

We would like all Year 9 students ready to bring tablets to school and use them in class by Week 7 of Term 2. We would like all Year 7 students ready to bring tablets to school and use them in class by Week 3 of Term 3.

Rather than selecting one single device that the school will administer, as in the past, we are asking parents to purchase and manage their own tablet. The school will provide basic help from a technical standpoint but the responsibility of repairs and warranty claims will rest with the student and their family.

Parents will need to select their preferred level of extended warranty and accidental damage protection. Parents will need to maintain an adequate level of cover to minimise disruption to the use of the devices.
The main reason for this is that we do not have the resources to cover the potential problems that may arise. Our two IT Technicians were able to maintain a reasonable level of care for approximately 250 Year 10 laptops in each of the last two years but it is not possible to maintain this when raising the number of devices to 500+ in 2014 and 1000+ in 2015 and beyond.

We will almost certainly at some stage this year or next have to increase our Internet bandwidth from 20Mbps to 50Mbps at a cost to the school of an extra $520 per month. This will be required to cope with the increase in use of our internet connection when possibly 1000 students are using it all at once.

Please be assured that classes in Years 8 and 10 will be given precedence of use of our Computer Rooms after Years 9 & 7 begin using their tablets at school.

Families who are in a financial position where they may find it difficult to provide their child with a tablet are asked to contact me to discuss their situation.

You will receive a hard-copy of this letter and an attached information sheet very soon this week. You may find the information sheet helpful in making the decision on which device to purchase for your child.

Yours sincerely

Mr Robert Emery
Principal

robert.emery@mn.catholic.edu.au

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Name: __________________ will be attending the meeting indicated by the tick in the box below.

- [ ] Monday 31 March at 7.00pm
- [ ] Wednesday 30 April at 7.00pm