Student Owned Laptop Program

St. Francis Xavier’s School believes our children are being educated for the digital age that is constantly changing. We seek to provide a learning environment that is engaging and challenging, building the capacity for students to connect, collaborate and be critical thinkers who can contribute and be responsible citizens in a digital world. We aim to provide a technology rich learning environment in which technologies are used in a variety of ways and spaces, just as they view them authentically in their everyday environments. To help achieve this aim, St Francis Xavier’s has established a Student Owned Laptop Program that will begin in Year 3 and progress to Year 7.

Outline
Our Laptop Program allows students to use school approved and independently sourced laptops in the school that meet minimum specification requirements. SFX has brokered a deal with Harvey Norman, whereby school families are entitled to special VIP pricing on all laptops. For pricing information and laptop specification requirements, please see our ICT staff. This program has the following features:

- Expanded and improved wireless access to allow students to use our network facilities in any location in the school.
- Each laptop is to be configured to have access to resources available through the existing school network. The licensing for this software is paid for and managed by the school at no charge to students.
- Access to a Virtualized Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to give students access to additional facilities normally only available to school owned computers and remote access to the school network from outside the school (eg home).

Our Student Owned Laptop policy outlines the conditions and responsibilities that must be agreed to, before a laptop can be brought into the school. This policy is complimentary to the Acceptable Use Policy already in place covering personal responsibilities in regard to the use of ICTs in the school.

As the Student Laptop Program develops, additional rules regarding the use of personal laptops may be added. If this occurs, any new rule will become a part of this policy.

Benefits:
Laptop computers are essential for the modern day learner. They empower students to push the boundaries of their knowledge and learning.

- It provides students with a personalised learning experience with a greater range of resources that allow students to continue their own learning anywhere.
• Students work more effectively and be more engaged on class assignments and projects.
• Work has shown to be of higher quality and quantity as they become more familiar and skilled with programs, as they show greater pride and ownership of it.
• Students can create digital portfolios and use them to lead conferences with parents and teachers.
• Collaboration will increase as students can use these devices as research tools during projects and group work, particularly at home.
• Students have all digital work with them at all times, and therefore have constant, immediate access to materials.
• Students can extend beyond the world we can physically see and touch by having instantaneous access to the latest news, data, statistics, resources etc., keeping them continually connected with what’s going on around them and ensuring they are always well-informed with the most up-to-date information.
• They help to extend formal learning communities to include parents, siblings and the wider community, encouraging global communication and collaboration.

"In today’s interconnected and technology-driven world, a learning environment can be virtual, online, remote- in other words, it doesn’t have to be a place at all. Such an environment fosters learning tailored to the needs and wants of the individual. This sort of learning occurs anytime and anyplace, when and where the learner desires. (So,) …the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills through learning strategies that are personalised and adapted to the learner’s own learning styles and preferences." (White paper: 21st Century Learning Environments,2009, http://www.p21.org/documents/le_white_paper-1.pdf)

The teachers at St. Francis Xavier’s have been involved in numerous Professional Development sessions around the use of ICTs and will continue to do so as this is an ever-changing environment. Therefore, they have the confidence to integrate Student Laptops into the classroom curriculum, allowing students to engage in a variety of tasks using their laptops computers through the year. Teachers are able to set tasks for students knowing that the right tools for the job are accessible when they are needed, as well as, giving students voice in how they choose use to present information.

Students will be introduced to the devices, given instruction on how to care for the device and how to ensure that they remain in good working order. Students will also be guided through setting up their personal storage and introduced to safe email practices, being guided through good use of the
services provided by the school including guidelines and policies surrounding its use.