**ICT @ Forrest Primary – Forrest ICT Plan**

**Rationale:**
At Forrest Primary School we seek to deliver contemporary education in a traditional building. We see computer technology as an integral part of learning and teaching. We believe technology to be an exciting and essential tool with which to engage, motivate and support our students in their learning.

Technology changes rapidly and it is challenging to keep up with limited budgets. ETD supports learning with technology by providing funds each year to upgrade technology and cull computers that are over the age of four years and no longer meet the needs of students and teachers.

Over the past two years ETD has also made progress in deciding upon platforms and programmes it will support as a system. Two of these are the Google platform which includes Google Classroom and Google Docs which work best with Chromebooks.  ETD also supports and encourages 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD). Ipads have been promoted to provide assistive technology to children with disabilities (including dyslexia). Ipads are also used widely by groups of children for programmes such as guided reading, co-writer, Reading Eggs and Mathletics.

Forrest Primary School has prepared a Discussion Paper , outlining the Educational benefits of a refurbished library which would provide flexible learning in agile spaces, an environment where many different devices can and will be used. The P&C supports this project and has committed $105,000 to it. We expect to hear of a formal acceptance of our project by ETD in the near future.

**Resource Distribution:**
Our aim is to provide access to Google Classroom to all students K-6 in time (as long as ETD supports this initiative). We will develop incrementally because of limited funding and the need to equip teachers with the skills and confidence to support student learning.

In term 3 and 4 2015 the ICT plan is to:
> **Replace the superseded computers in the computer lab with the Year 6 6 laptops and laptop trolley**
>
> **Years 5 and 6** are / will be using Chromebooks  (one between two students) and are being educated in using the Google Platform. The Chromebooks were purchased from the departmental funding for 2015. (see newsletter item **ICT @ Forrest Primary** 6.8.15)
>
> **Year 4** will inherit the Year 5 laptops and laptop trolley.
>
> **Preschool to Year 3** are using ipads for small group work.  Currently , 18 i-pads are shared between two classes (with the housing set up in one of the classrooms.)
>
> **Some Children with Special Needs** have ipads for their dedicated use. These ipads have specialised applications which assist their learning.

**Needs of the school:**
Over the next year our aim is to provide access to all Google Platforms for all children. Currently we are focused on Google access for our Year 5 and 6 students. To successfully achieve this priority we suggest that funds be placed in the area of purchasing more Chromebooks to be used with the Year 5 and 6 plus to be used in any area of the school to introduce children and teachers  to the Google Platform.

**Pedagogical Approach to Cloud Based Computing and Google Apps for Education (GAFE) at Forrest Primary School**
A key part of our ICT strategic plan for the next 2 Years at Forrest Primary School is investigating cloud based storage systems using Google Apps for Education **(GAFE)**.

Cloud computing refers to on-demand services and tools that are served to the user via the Internet and consume almost no local processing or storage resources. Schools are deploying cloud-based strategies across the ACT to boost collaboration, productivity, and mobility in teaching and learning.

Google Apps for education widely known as **GAFE** has become a popular choice for schools across the world, and schools like Harrison and Alfred Deakin High School in the ACT have successfully moved their email infrastructure to Gmail and adopted **GAFE** for document sharing, creating virtual classroom environments and collaboration.

As the mobile Internet has expanded, an increasing number of devices have been designed to expressly operate in the cloud and have entered the market at price points that make them competitive for 1:1 computing and BYOD in schools. Google Chromebooks are an excellent and affordable example of these products. The estimated cost of a Chromebook is $320 compared to an iPad which costs close to $500.

As more people use cloud-based services such as Google Drive in their personal lives, at work, or in school, cloud computing has become widely recognised as a means of expanding collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and communication in our schools.

Cloud computing and GAFE  allow learning to take place wherever a student happens to be, whether they are at home, in their classroom, on school grounds or in transit. Nearly every student who uses cloud computing can access and share their learning, collaborate on group and class projects and communicate more easily with teachers and peers in any location.

A recent SafeGov.org study has revealed that the use of cloud services has grown rapidly over the past five years, making digital strategies such as BYOD, the flipped classroom, and personalised learning environments fairly straightforward to deliver from a technology standpoint.

Moving to cloud based computing and GAFE have the potential to offer our students and staff at Forrest Primary school improved access to learning whether at home or school, increased opportunities to collaborate with peers and community experts, progress their teaching and learning and increase their engagement with learning inside and outside of school.

**Factors we considered before investing in Chromebook Devices**

**Processing speed:** Processing power was one of the important factors. The greater the processing power, the better the performance will be.

**Memory:** Memory also impacts the overall performance. It is recommended the device should have at least 2GB memory or higher.

**Disk Space:** Chromebooks don't require large disk space as all files created through this device are stored into cloud based storage called Google Drive. We will also provide Wi-Fi access to connect these devices to the internet.

**End of Life (EOL)**:  This is also another important factor. Recommended chromebooks should have at least 4 years EOL. When a device reaches EOL, it means that the product model is considered obsolete and automatic software updates from Google are no longer guaranteed.

**Other Factors:** Other factors that we took into consideration are weight, battery life and screen size.

**Nicole Richardson and the ICT Committee  6 August 2015**          G:L&M/IT/2015/ICT Plan for P&C