

Mentone Girls' Grammar School (VIC)

Embracing eSmart practices during remote learning to benefit all.



A wellbeing focus

Mentone Girls' Grammar is an independent, Anglican school for girls.

With most staff and students working from home since the end of March, we made the decision to prioritise the health and wellbeing of our community above all else during this time to ensure optimal conditions for both teaching and learning.

An important aspect of this was monitoring the risks with remote learning and putting measures in place to record and appropriately follow up on any identified risks.

"we made the decision to prioritise the health and wellbeing of our community"

Our starting point

To ensure we were optimising the teaching and learning conditions to benefit our school community, we set about collecting information and

resources, including those from the eSmart resource library and the office of the eSafety Commissioner.



The eSafety message

This resulted in a number of different opportunities that we were able to provide the community of Mentone Girls' Grammar.

By benchmarking our practices and processes related to cyber safety and using our eLearning platforms, we were able to identify areas of strength and opportunity across the school, and this in turn, enabled us to build meaningful resources and programs.

These took the form of weekly and or fortnightly programs and information pieces for students and staff that incorporated eSafety messaging.

Students were also provided with the opportunities to create posters, stories and videos to reinforce their understandings of how to stay safe online.

To support a unit on eSafety with our Years 3, 4 and 5 students, Mr Owen, our Junior School Librarian used the fairy tale, Little Red Riding Hood to link the morals of the story around sharing information with strangers, namely the wolf, and the importance of keeping personal information private online.

"to build meaningful resources and programs."

By conducting polls and surveys, we were able to gain valuable information in relation to the technologies that our students were using.

This information was used to inform the units of inquiry and our cyber safety sessions for students, parents and teachers.

National eSmart Week

National eSmart Week was a prominent event at Mentone Girls' Grammar. One of our IT Student Leaders promoted the School's involvement in a short video created on an Adobe webpage. Students were provided with several challenges that included: creating posters around daily provocations, writing an awareness raising story about social media and the creation of a mental health song. We also hosted Junior and Senior School discussion panels, highlighting how COVID-19 has heightened the importance of behaving safely online.



Supporting parents

To provide support for our parent community during these challenging times we offered webinar opportunities, including a community panel on the topic of navigating COVID-19. This webinar was led by our Year 12 Deputy School Captain and included four healthcare professionals who were either past students or parents of current students.

The focus of the webinar was exploring the challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19 and their implications for healthcare in the future. The webinar was well-attended by our School community and provoked students to take the initiative to lead future community panels and to create podcasts of their own, remote learning experiences. It also prompted open discussions and actions around digital technologies and the importance of keeping safe online.

"COVID - 19 has heightened the importance of behaving safely online"

The final word

Throughout the period of remote learning, we have addressed how COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of smart, safe and responsible use of digital technologies. By being authentic and encouraging all members of our community to share their reflections and learnings, Mentone Girls' Grammar has been able to continue providing an eSmart environment that is both supportive and connected.

School profile

Mentone Girls' Grammar School is an independent, Anglican day school for girls, located in Mentone, a bayside suburb of Melbourne, Victoria.

The school has an enrolment of 700 students from their Early Learning Centre to Year 12.

They have been a registered eSmart School since 2011.