Internet & Digital Safety Statement

At Washington International School in Taichung (WIST), we are dedicated to ensuring the safe and responsible use of technology by our students. We acknowledge the significant role of technology in education and emphasize its use in a manner that prioritizes the well-being and safety of all individuals within our community. To this end, we have established the following guidelines to promote the secure use of computers, internet services, and mobile devices on our campus.

Acceptable Use of Personal Devices (BYOD - Bring Your Own Device)

At WIST, we embrace the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy, which allows students to bring their personal mobile technology devices to school. This policy grants students who own such devices the opportunity to use them for educational purposes, subject to approval from their classroom teacher. BYOD enhances the availability of technology in our classrooms, providing students with hands-on access to support their learning experiences.

Use of Mobile Devices in School:

a. Students are required to obtain explicit permission from their teachers before using any mobile devices. These devices may be used for research, special projects, or learning activities with access to Wi-Fi internet services within the school premises.

b. Mobile devices should not be used during class hours or noon nap time unless explicitly authorized by the teacher for educational purposes.

c. Students are strictly prohibited from accessing or viewing violent, explicit, or inappropriate content on school computers and mobile devices. We uphold high standards for appropriate online behavior.

d. The Health Promotion Administration of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, in their annual report, recommends, '...no more than 1 hour of screen time per day for children above 2 years, less excessive near-work activity, and 10 minutes of rest after every 30 minutes of eye usage...' (p. 27, 2022).

e. The WIST digital continuous screen time usage recommendation is no more than 30 minutes per class period.

f. For students residing in the dormitory, carrying computers and mobile devices to their rooms is not allowed. These devices can be securely stored in designated classroom lockers or under the supervision of the dormitory superintendent after night classes.

Student "Mobile Device" Management Regulations:

a. The use of mobile phones and other related electronic devices is prohibited on campus between the hours of 08:10 to 17:10 (for night classes, 17:40 to 20:40), except when specifically approved by a teacher or a school administrator.
b. Students must power off and deposit their mobile phones into designated storage boxes during school hours.
c. Mobile devices should primarily be used for learning or communication with parents, avoiding gaming or browsing inappropriate websites.
d. Mobile device usage should not disrupt students' learning or daily routines, and violations will be handled in accordance with the school's disciplinary regulations.
e. Students are strictly prohibited from videotaping, recording, or taking photos without the permission of the teacher.
f. Students must abide by copyright and personal information laws. Students may not publish, browse, or distribute illegal material, such as harassment, intimidation, threats, personal attacks, obscenity, profanity, and vulgar language.
g. The school will retain all rights to supervise, inspect, and access devices for the purpose of school network security prevention.

Borrowing School E-Learning Devices:
a. Students have the option to borrow e-learning devices from the school office for in-class use.
b. Students are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the safekeeping of these devices.
c. If any non-warranty-related damages occur due to student actions, the student is responsible for arranging repairs or providing compensation.

Consequences:
a. Failure to comply with the Student "Mobile Device" Management Regulations results in a warning, as per school regulations.
b. Using electronic devices during class hours without permission will result in two written warnings on students' records.
c. Students who both fail to submit their mobile phones and violate usage regulations will face disciplinary action, receiving minor demerits.

Protecting Our Children's Privacy and Safety:
The WIST community, we all play an important role in safeguarding our children's online well-being. Here are some tips to assist you in protecting a child's privacy and safety when using digital devices:
a. Maintain digital literacy and actively engage with children about the websites they explore and their online experiences.
b. Encourage children to strike a balance between screen time and offline activities, promoting a healthy equilibrium between the virtual and real worlds.
c. Educate our children about the potential risks of interacting with unknown individuals online and emphasize the importance of online safety and privacy.

d. Foster open lines of communication with children and encourage them to confide in us regarding anything that seems strange, uncomfortable, or troubling in their online interactions. Ensure they understand the importance of immediately reporting any requests for personal information or in-person meetings.

e. Contribute to a safer online environment by enabling "Safe Searching Preferences" on popular search engines like Google to filter out explicit content.

f. Advocate for responsible screen time usage.

By adhering to these guidelines and fostering a sense of responsibility and awareness among our students and their families, we can collectively create a safer and more productive digital learning environment at WIST. The well-being and security of our students remain our top priority, and we appreciate your cooperation in achieving these objectives. Together, we can ensure the safe use of technology, the internet, and mobile devices for all members of our school community.