EASTERN CHINESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL INC. 新金山东区中文学校

Digital Technology, Mobile Devices and Photography Policy

Document no.	ECLS-POL-09	**Version**	1.1
Policy owner	Principal (with the Child Safety Officer)	**Approved by**	School Committee
Date approved	25/01/2026 (v1.0)	**Next review**	January 2028
Applies to	Staff, teachers, volunteers, Committee members, students, parents/carers and visitors	**Status**	v1.0 current; v1.1 revision for endorsement

1. Purpose

This policy explains how ECLS manages the use of phones, cameras, tablets, computers, messaging apps and social media by staff, volunteers, students and visitors. It protects children online and from inappropriate photography, and supports safe, effective use of technology in language learning.

2. Principles

- Technology is used for **learning and legitimate school purposes**.
- All communication between adults and students is **open, transparent and through school channels**.
- Images of children are personal information. They are taken, used and stored only with **parent/carer consent** and for school purposes.
- Online safety is part of our duty of care and of Child Safe Standard 9.

3. Staff and volunteers

3.1 Personal devices during class and duty time

- Personal phones are kept on silent and **put away during teaching and supervision**. They may be used for school purposes only: contacting the office, a parent about collection, or emergency services, or using a school-approved teaching app.
- Staff do **not** use personal devices to photograph or film students, except as allowed in section 5.
- Staff on yard duty carry a phone for emergencies.

3.2 Communication with students and families

- Staff communicate with families through **school channels**: the official class WeChat group set up by the school (with the Principal or Operations Manager as an administrator), the school email system, or the student management system.
- Staff **must not** contact individual students privately through personal social media, private messaging or personal email, or add students as "friends" or followers. Messages about learning go to the class group or to parents/carers.
- Class group messages are professional and limited to school matters. Staff do not share students' personal information, results or photos of other children in group chats.
- Online lessons (if used) are run on a school-approved platform, with parents told in advance and at least two adults with access to the session or recording where practicable.

3.3 Social media

Staff must not post images or information about students on personal social media, and must not comment on school matters in ways that identify students or families. School social media and website accounts are managed by authorised staff only.

4. Students

- Students' mobile phones and smart watches must be **switched off and kept in their bags during class** (the "off and away" approach used in Victorian government schools). Tablets and laptops may be used only with the teacher's permission for learning activities.
- Students may use their phone at the end of the session to contact a parent, or during class with a teacher's permission (for example for a medical reason).
- Students must not photograph, film or record other students or staff without permission, and must not share images or messages that bully, harass or embarrass others.
- Students (and parents for younger students) sign the **Cyber Safety Use Agreement** at enrolment. Breaches are managed under the Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying policies.
- ECLS is not responsible for loss of, or damage to, personal devices.

5. Photographing, filming and recording students

1. **Consent:** at enrolment, parents/carers complete the *Photographing and Filming Students Consent Form*, choosing what they agree to (for example class use only, school newsletter/website, school WeChat account). Consent can be changed or withdrawn at any time. The office keeps a **"no photo" list** for each class, and teachers check it before taking photos.
2. **Who may photograph:** photos and videos for school purposes are taken by staff authorised by the Principal, **preferably on a school-owned device**. If a personal device is used, images are uploaded to the school's secure shared drive and **deleted from the personal device on the same day**.
3. **What is appropriate:** images show students fully clothed and in group or learning settings. Students are never photographed while changing, in toilets, upset or in any compromising situation. Captions use first names only, never full names with images.
4. **Publishing:** only images of students whose parents have consented to that use are published, and never with information that could identify where a child can be found.
5. **Events and performances:** at school events where families attend, the host announces that photos may be taken for personal use only and must not be shared on social media if other children can be identified. Families are asked not to photograph other people's children without consent.
6. **Visitors and media:** visitors, contractors and media may not photograph students without the Principal's approval and parental consent.
7. **Storage and deletion:** images are stored in the restricted school drive and deleted when no longer needed for the purpose consented to.

6. Responding to online incidents

Any incident of cyberbullying, inappropriate contact, sharing of images, or exposure to harmful content is reported to the Principal or Child Safety Officer. It is managed under the Child Safety Policy (if a child may be at risk), the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Privacy Policy. Serious matters are reported to the eSafety Commissioner or Victoria Police as appropriate. Staff do not copy or forward explicit images of children. They secure the device and report immediately.

7. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Principal	Approves school channels and authorised photographers; manages breaches
Child Safety Officer	Online safety advice; reviews incidents; includes online safety in staff training
Teachers	Supervise device use in class; follow consent lists; teach safe online behaviour
Operations Manager	Consent records and "no photo" lists; class group administration
Parents/carers	Support the Cyber Safety Use Agreement; respect other families' privacy

8. Basis and references

- CLV, *Student Safety and Staff Welfare Manual* (V5, 2023): Cyber Safety (supervision of digital technology, posting photographs online, responding to online incidents); CLV *Cyber Safety Use Agreement* and *Photographing and Filming Students Consent Form*.
- CLV, *Operational and Administrative Procedures Manual* (V4, 2023): s.2.13 Information and Communications Technology.
- ECLS Child Safety Code of Conduct (Aug 2026); ECLS School Charter 2026: Cyber Safety Policy, Photographing and Filming Students Policy; ECLS Admission Guide (no mobile phones in class; tablets with teacher permission).
- *Policy Guidelines: Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments* (Education and Care Services National Regulations, effective 1 September 2025), published on the ECLS website: service-issued devices for images, written consent, strict storage controls.
- DE (Vic) *Students Using Mobile Phones* policy ("off and away"); *Photographing, Filming and Recording Students* policy.
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic); Child Safe Standard 9.

9. Version history

Version	Date	Change	Approved / endorsed by
1.0	25/01/2026	Policy approved	School Committee, meeting of 25 January 2026 (minute ref. _____)
1.1	October 2026	Revised and reformatted: aligned with the DE CLS Accreditation and Funding Guide, 2026 funding conditions, CLV manuals and current ECLS practice	For endorsement at the next School Committee meeting (date _____)