POLICY: COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

1 & 2 Rationale and Aims

At St Michael’s we believe computers are powerful tools for information seeking and communication. They have the capacity to stimulate and motivate student learning in all areas of the curriculum and should form an integral part of each classroom. In order to promote effective use of and respect for the computers in our classrooms, the following guidelines are to be observed in all classrooms.

3 Implementation

3.1 A specifically designated area is to be set aside in each classroom exclusively for Computer use. The school will work towards providing suitable workstations and adjustable chairs for each classroom.

3.2 Computers need to be positioned so that a direct light source does not fall on the screen. They also need to be visible to the class teacher to facilitate supervision.

3.3 There should be sufficient room on the table for students to work comfortably and have space for their required working materials.

3.4 A sample ‘Healthy Computer Users’ checklist could be displayed in the Computer Area to develop student awareness of ergonomic guidelines for computer use.

3.5 Computer areas should be kept tidy, clean and dust free. Screens also need to be clean and free from fingermarks etc. Cleaning materials are available in each module for this purpose. Dust covers should be used at all times when the computer is not in use.

3.6 Power cords and computer cables need to be tucked away to ensure that they do not create a safety hazard.

3.7 CD’s and disks should be stored in a suitable container and placed in a secure area when not in use. A catalogue of available resources could be made available to the students.

3.8 All students will need to be given specific instruction in the correct handling of disks, CDs, print cartridges etc. Students will also need to be trained in correct procedures for startup and shut down, launching and closing programs etc. This will be particularly important as we move into a network environment.

3.9 Ensure that the computer area is attractive with suitable displays and examples of published work, Task sheets, Rosters or Booking Sheets. Students will be very much motivated to assume responsibility for maintaining the Computer Area in your classroom.

3.10 In keeping with the Pastoral Care Policy which emphasises respect for others and respect for school property, each child is given a Acceptable Use of Information Technologies Student Policy at the beginning of the school year. Attached to this is a ‘Student Letter of Agreement’ which needs to be read and signed by both student and parent and returned to the class teacher.

3.11 All students who wish to use the Internet must have read the Acceptable Use of Information Technologies Student Policy and have signed the ‘Student Letter of Agreement.

3.12 A Network Maintenance Book is located in the Library. Please use this for reporting difficulties with hardware or the network.
3.13 It is acknowledged that computer games may have a role to play as a motivational and confidence building tool for students. However, a clear understanding of the relationship between the game to a specific learning area must be established before any game is installed.

3.14 As a general rule, games will not be played during scheduled class lesson times, unless related to the curriculum.

3.15 Skill sharing between staff members is encouraged. Each module will be provided with a contact person who will be willing to assist colleagues with hardware use or software familiarisation. Student expertise may also be a valuable resource, but caution needs to be exercised.

3.16 Teachers are encouraged to pursue their own Professional Development in the use of technology. Informal workshops will also be offered each term at school.

3.17 Some Teachers are currently upgrading their skills by doing the ICDL course.

4 Evaluation
The policy to be reviewed annually by the Computer Coordinator.