



Google Apps for Education

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Last year, we decided to move students and staff to Google Apps for Education (GAFE) to enhance the way we use technology and share information within and beyond our school community. Essentially, GAFE is a cloud based learning platform allowing teachers and students to create documents online, email, share calendars and use 30 gigabytes of data to be accessed at home and school on any device. GAFE allows us to collaborate and learn more effectively through the use of technology, and offer a range of new learning opportunities for teachers and students. Further information about GAFE can be found here <http://www.google.com/enterprise/apps/education/benefits.html>

Facts about Google Apps for Education

- GAFE is used by many of the worlds leading educational institutions, including universities, secondary and primary schools. Many public, Catholic and independent schools are using GAFE right now.
- GAFE is completely free for schools and does not contain advertising anywhere within it.
- Many of GAFE apps such as Google Docs and Gmail are familiar to many students and parents.

How will Google Apps for Education enhance my child's learning opportunities?

- GAFE allows up to 100 teachers and students the ability to collaborate on documents simultaneously. This type of collaboration has been impossible in the past.
- GAFE works on any device. This allows our students to continue learning beyond the classroom and the ability to access their content at any time.
- Students and teachers can work in teams, sharing calendars, documents and collaborating ideas to learn more effectively.

What should I be aware of?

- GAFE allows students to communicate and store information in both public and private spaces online.
- Unlike many other web services GAFE acknowledges its users as the owners of content they produce and store.
- GAFE does not share any data or user information with any other party unlike other Google products such as Gmail.
- Your child will be provided an email address as part of the GAFE package.
- GAFE terms of service can be read here.

http://www.google.com/apps/intl/enGB/terms/education_terms.html

St. Mary Catholic School feels that Google Apps for Education will support a Blended Learning environment and allow students the flexibility to engage in learning beyond the classroom walls. Many of our students are enrolling in high schools that have already adopted Google as their preferred Learning Management System. I wanted to give our students a glimpse of what will be expected of them in their future high school years.

There are several different protections in place when it comes to your child's safety such as CIPA and COPA.

As you can see, GAFE abides by these federal guidelines that are set in place, <https://www.google.com/edu/trust/#can-google-apps-for-edu-be-used-in-compliance-with-coppa>

Here is another resource from Google; it should help with your questions.

<https://www.google.com/edu/trust/>

GAFE is a private/protected work environment. Being private means that their username is protected in the SMS environment. SMS controls all the user account settings. There is no profile history on our students.

We will be working with students to educate them around using GAFE in a productive and responsible manner. We also feel it necessary for parents to be aware of new technologies such as GAFE and encourage you to be proactive discussing and exploring it with your child.

Regards,
Andrew Carner, Principal