

# The GameAware School Starter Kit



## Why a Gaming Club Adds Value To Your Student Programs

Watch the [Demystifying Esports](#) video for parents and schools. Distribute as you see fit.

## Where The Trepidation To Support Gaming And Esports Comes From

- Many student-aged gamers across the world play games excessively.
- Gaming excessively can cause family conflict and potential apathy toward school if there is no structure or purpose.
- A misunderstanding of gaming/gamer motivations can cause a rift between students and their parents/caretakers which can make it difficult to communicate because of the existing knowledge gap.

## Key Intended Outcomes Of The Starter Kit

- [According to recent research](#), "...school esports programs have the potential to bring about positive psychological development and/or health behaviour change" with the right kinds of structure and culture. Michael G. Trotter, Tristan J. Coulter, Paul A. Davis, Dylan R. Poulus and Remco Polman
- To create an inclusive, social gaming culture where a variety of competitive or non-competitive games are offered.
- To support neurodivergent students as well as students with various barriers to school engagement by using a passion for gaming as a common ground to build engagement in a safe space.
- To offer the opportunity to compete and represent the school through esports.
  - Esports clubs open up the ability to compete for students who don't have the confidence or natural ability to compete in traditional sports, but don't exclude those who also enjoy competing through sports.
  - Student-led esports teams grant students an opportunity to learn agency and responsibility.
- To have a platform to make a positive impact on students and their families. In particular, we want to role model and explicitly teach healthy gaming habits to students who might overindulge in video games. Schools can take control of the narrative by supporting quality over quantity using the [GameAware school resources](#). The parent and student online courses have demos available to view on our schools page.

# How To Set Up Your School Gaming Club Safely And Sustainably

Please [reach out to us](#) with any questions on how to optimise your gaming club or help your school community build a healthier relationship with gaming.

## Step 1: Find a teacher champion

## Step 2: Find a space at your school that is suitable to host your club and has access to the appropriate technology.

## Step 3: Ask your IT Manager for Support

Your school IT manager will be an important support for your gaming club. They understand the specifics of how to manage the equipment that can bring the best engagement for students. The next page includes the IT recommendations to help streamline the process, not dictate what to do. Different schools will also have different policies on what casual games and esports competitions they are willing to support.

## Step 4: Survey Your Students

By surveying your students you can not only set up your gaming club in an engaging way, but you can set your esports program up for success by gathering the necessary information for team formation and communication to optimise the registration process.

- [Gaming Club and Esports Survey as a Google Form.](#)
- [Gaming Club and Esports Survey as a PDF](#)
- [Contact us](#) if you need any help with setting up your survey.
- [Recommended games list for PC and Nintendo Switch](#)

## Step 5: Structure Your Club for Positive Outcomes

There is a real opportunity for individual growth if you take advantage of the resources that we have created. For healthy gaming resources you can check out the [student demo](#) and [parent demo](#). Student Courses are a good fit for gaming clubs, health units and pastoral care, and are mapped to the Australian Curriculum. We also offer the [Esports Performance course](#), bringing a high performance mindset to esports and bringing a much needed dose of discipline to this form of competition.

## Step 6: Find a League to play in

1. Export your survey results to a spreadsheet.
2. Organise your students according to the games that are on offer from Esports Leagues
3. Find a League to compete in using our "[Find A League](#)" tool. It has a filter that helps you sort the list of games offered by the scholastic esports leagues.
4. Check out the league calendar to see all the competition dates in one place.
5. Find out if the interested students are available to play at the same time for the "play from home" competitions.
6. Send out parent permission forms **EARLY** and make sure to keep them in the loop.
7. Sign up your team on the league website based on parent permission responses, or you might have to forfeit if you don't have enough players.
8. Try to organise a sub where possible.
9. [Contact Us](#) for help if needed. **Good luck!**

# The IT Checklist



## Getting Started

- **Please check out** our list of [recommended PC and Nintendo Switch games \(with age ratings\)](#).
- Discord is the gamer's communication tool of choice, but often the first tool schools will ban. As some esports competitions take place after school, it's good to know that there is a comprehensive [Discord Safety Hub](#) for parents and educators that we recommend reading.

## Offline Gaming Options:

- **Nintendo Switch and other console games**
- **BYO Laptops** - WAN or LAN gaming without internet
- **Computer lab** - LAN gaming
- **Board games**

## Suggested Equipment List:

- Talk to your IT department to see what you've already got at school.
- 24 port Switch to enable LAN connection with BYO laptops
  - In a limited access environment(see chart below) PC gaming will need to be LAN ready. Our recommended games list can show you which games are a good fit for LAN.
    - For example, this enables a Rocket League team to practice, as well allow an offline Minecraft server using student devices as long as a network switch is provided.
  - Ethernet cables
- Projectors or TV's to connect to gaming consoles.
  - HDMI cables
- If the school has the budget for the gaming club, it's good to invest in some new or used [Nintendo Switches](#) and purchase the games that are used in esports competitions as well as some of the games from our recommended games list that are casual.
- If the school doesn't have a budget for the club, you could consider a BYO Nintendo Switch policy, and support them by providing the following:
  - [Nintendo Switch dock](#) - 3rd party
  - [Nintendo Switch USB-C charger or compatible](#) (**must be 39 watts**)

# The IT Checklist



## Internet Access Levels

### Full Access

(Independent / Private Schools)

- This level of access will allow you to connect to the internet and download whatever you need to set your club up properly.
- The IT department has a lot of autonomy in this scenario, but it's best to check the school policy on how you proceed.
- Using a separate access point that is turned on only for gaming club is the simplest way to accomplish this.
- Set custom wifi access for the gaming club on a schedule or attached to specific access points or VLAN that can be turned on or off.

### Limited Access

(Public Schools using department of education firewalls)

- This scenario essentially requires an offline solution.
- We suggest the Switch/Switch solution.
  - A 24 port switch and matching number of ethernet cables for the BYO laptop solution
  - Providing Nintendo Switches or have a BYO Nintendo Switch policy but provide the screens and docks.

**Please feel free to reach out to us for any support and to discuss our 3 school partnerships!**