

4.7 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, COMPUTER, TELEPHONE & EQUIPMENT CODE OF USE

INTRODUCTION TO THIS CODE

Application

This Code applies to the use of all School telephones, computers and equipment (including use of the local or hard drive, public network, internet, e-mail, voice mail, personal digital assistants such as smart phones, iPads and other electronic communication technologies as well as equipment and machinery (School Systems).

All employees and contractors using School Systems must comply with this Code. Departure from compliance with this Code may only be authorised by the Nominated Supervisor.

Consequences of breach of this Code

Use of School Systems in a manner inconsistent with this Code or in any other inappropriate manner may result in the School taking whatever disciplinary action it considers appropriate. Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, limitation or removal of access to School Systems, notification to Police and/or termination of an employee's employment or contractor's engagement with the School.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Accountability and Care of Equipment

You must use the School's equipment carefully, and follow all instructions about how to use it and how to take care of it.

All users are issued with a unique username and password. You are solely accountable for all actions performed under your username and password.

The School may hold you responsible for any:

- damage to the School's equipment caused by your use of School Systems;
- costs incurred by your access of internet sites; and/or
- legal obligation to any person created by your use of School Systems.

When using internet and electronic communications, you must:

- always identify yourself clearly and honestly;
- not tell anyone your password except as required by the School; and
- never access another person's email or internet account without that person's permission or the permission of the School.

Viruses

All external files and attachments must be virus checked using installed scanning software before they are accessed. Virus checking is done automatically through the software installed on the mail server. If you are concerned about an e-mail attachment or believe that it has not been automatically scanned for viruses, you should contact the Administrator.

You must not knowingly introduce a virus to the School Systems.

PERMITTED AND PROHIBITED USES OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Permitted uses: Business purposes

School Systems are a business tool, and must only be used:

- for the School's business purposes, except as otherwise set out in this Code; and
- in a professional, appropriate and lawful manner.

Personal and other uses

The School may, as a matter of discretion, allow use of School Systems for other purposes including personal use, so long as this does not:

- contravene other parts of this Code or the School's policies; or
- adversely impact on the performance of work duties.

The School may cease to allow such other uses at any time. Excessive use of the telephone, e-mail, internet facilities or computer systems for personal reasons may result in disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, limitation or removal of access to School Systems or termination of an employee's employment or contractor's engagement with the School.

Prohibited uses

School Systems must not knowingly be used to:

- Send or receive material that is, or may be construed to be, obscene, derogatory, defamatory, harassing, threatening, vilifying, racist, sexist, sexually explicit, pornographic, or otherwise offensive or excessively personal.
- Send or receive material which harasses or promotes hatred or discrimination based on any unlawful grounds against any person (refer to the School's Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement).
- Injure the reputation of the School or cause embarrassment to the School.
- Send or receive material relating to the manufacture, use, sale or purchase of illegal drugs or dangerous materials or to any other illegal activity.
- Spam or mass mail or to send or receive chain mail.
- Infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of another person
- Play games.
- Game, wage or bet.

- Perform any activity using an anonymous or misleading identity.
- Engage in any other illegal or inappropriate activity.
- Provide services or produce materials for commercial gain.
- Access social networking sites including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn unless you have been specifically authorised to do so by the Nominated Supervisor (see Social Networking Policy).

DOWNLOADING OF SOFTWARE

Software (licensed, shareware, freeware, evaluation or otherwise) including system, application or data files may only be downloaded using procedures approved by the Nominated Supervisor.

LOGGING AND MONITORING

The School notifies you that it will carry out ongoing, intermittent surveillance of your use of the School Systems – including emails, internet and files (including files stored on your work computer).

The surveillance is carried out by all means available to the School which may include:

- Accessing your email account or emails.
- Accessing files.
- Accessing your work computer, storage devices or communications devices.
- Accessing records of internet usage by you (including sites and pages visited, files downloaded, video and audio files accessed and data input).
- Use of monitoring and logging software.
- The School may conduct the surveillance for any purpose – including to determine if you or any other person has, or may have, breached their obligations to the School or should be subject to disciplinary action.

The School may copy, access or disclose any information or files that are stored, processed or transmitted using the School's Systems.

You should not have any expectation of privacy for any actions performed using School Systems, including personal e-mails or documents. You should also be aware that e-mails or documents might be archived by the School's management as it considers appropriate. In addition, files which you have deleted may still exist in the School's backup systems.

USE OF SCHOOL EMAIL

Each staff member will have access to a Gmail account which is to only be used for school purposes. Disciplinary action may follow if abuse of the email system is apparent.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School is the owner of copyright over all e-mail messages created by its employees as part of their employment.

INAPPROPRIATE E-MAILS

You and/or the School may be liable for what you say in an e-mail message.

An e-mail that may seem harmless to you may be highly offensive to someone else. The audience of an inappropriate comment in an e-mail may be unexpected and extremely widespread; e-mail is neither private nor secret. It may easily be copied, forwarded, saved, intercepted, archived and may be subject to discovery in litigation.

If you receive e-mail which you think may be inappropriate, delete it immediately, notify the Nominated Supervisor and Administrator and do not forward it to anyone else.

Avoid using overly expressive punctuation and text formatting that can be construed in a negative way. Exclamation marks, capitals, underlining and font size are all examples that can be received negatively if used inappropriately. Sarcasm is also often misconstrued in emails and should be avoided. A phone call or face-to-face meeting is often the best form of communication.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

When an email is sent from the School to the network server and then on to the internet, the email message may become public information. Items of a highly confidential or sensitive nature should not be sent via e-mail, even with encryption.

On occasion, email may be used to correspond with recipients who are unknown or cannot be identified. You should ensure that you are able to identify the intended recipient, and you should take care when sending or responding to such e-mail messages.

There is also a risk of false attribution of email. Software is widely available by which email messages may be edited or 'doctored' to reflect an erroneous message or sender name. The recipient may therefore be unaware that he or she is communicating with an impostor.

Accordingly, you should maintain a reasonable degree of caution regarding the identity of the sender by other means if you have concerns.

Email may be truncated, scrambled, delayed, sent to the wrong address or not arrive at all. If outgoing email is important or urgent, you should verify that the recipient has received the email in its entirety.

REPRESENTING THE SCHOOL

When sending email messages for the School's business purposes, you must ensure that:

- any representations made are those of the School; and
- the manner of expression used in the e-mail is consistent with the relevant business purpose.

Comments that are not appropriate in the workplace will also be inappropriate when sent by email. As noted above, email messages can easily be misconstrued. Accordingly, words and attached documents should be carefully chosen and expressed in a clear, professional manner.

DISCLAIMER

In light of these issues, you must ensure that all emails that are sent from your email address contain the School's standard disclaimer message, which reads as follows:

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVILEGE NOTICE

This email is intended only to be read or used by the addressee. It is confidential and may contain legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any use, distribution, disclosure or copying of this e-mail or any attachment is strictly prohibited. Confidentiality and legal privilege attached to this communication are now waived or lost by reason of the mistaken delivery to you. If you have received this email in error, please delete it and notify us immediately by telephone or email.

This message is set to appear automatically on each outgoing email. Please contact the Administrator if this feature is not working. You must not delete or amend this disclaimer. Doing so will result in disciplinary action.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

When distributing information over the School Systems or to third parties outside the School, you must ensure that you and the School have the right to do so and that you are not violating the intellectual property rights of any third party.

This applies in the same way when copying information or downloading software.

In particular, copyright law may apply to the information you intend to distribute or copy and must always be observed. The copyright material of third parties (for example, software, database files, documentation, cartoons, articles, graphic files and downloaded information) must not be distributed through email without specific authorisation to do so. This material may be able to be used and copied in a limited way for research or educational purposes.

If you are unsure whether you are permitted to distribute or copy information, you should contact the Nominated Supervisor.

PRIVACY

In the course of carrying out your duties as an employee or contractor of the School, you may have access to or handle personal information relating to others, including other co-workers, suppliers and contractors. Email should not be used to disclose personal information of another person except in accordance with the School's Privacy Statement or with authorisation from the Administrator.

In order to comply with the School's obligations under privacy law, you are encouraged to use the blind copy option when sending emails to multiple recipients, because disclosure of those persons' email addresses may impinge upon their privacy.

GENERAL

Please take care

The terms and prescribed conduct described in this Code are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they anticipate every possible use of School Systems. You are encouraged to act with caution and to consider the underlying principles of this Code. If you feel unsure about what to do in particular circumstances, you should contact the Nominated Supervisor or Administrator.

This Code is a direction

This Code sets out the rules which must be complied with when using School Systems. This Code is a direction to you by the School as an employee or contractor of the School. You must comply with this Code. If you do not comply with this Code, the School may take disciplinary action or legal action up to and including termination of your employment or engagement.

User acceptance

Use of School Systems indicates agreement to comply with this code.

Related Policies	Social Networking Privacy Confidentiality Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement Ethical conduct Code of Ethics
Sources & Further Reading	The Association of Independent Schools NSW 2010

POLICY REVIEWED	MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
February 2022	Checked regulations, updated copy	2024