



## COMPUTER USE POLICY

### Staff

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#### Introduction

The Pontifical Council for Social Communications (2002) has acknowledged the powerful contribution that the Internet<sup>1</sup> can make to the development of human life and culture. The world wide web, e-mail and other emerging technologies are transforming the worlds of work and commerce. The internet can foster prosperity and understanding among peoples and nations. The responsible use of freedom and democracy can be expanded by the emerging information and communication technologies. The internet is broadening educational and cultural horizons, breaking down divisions and promoting human development in a multitude of ways.

Whilst the potential for good in the internet has been acknowledged, so too has the potential for harm. Pope John Paul II (1999) has made the following observation in regard to the internet: "Yet, paradoxically, the very forces, which can lead to better communication, can also lead to increasing self-centredness and alienation."

We find ourselves therefore in a time of both threat and promise. ... [We need to] rise to the challenge of new discoveries and technologies by bringing to them a moral vision rooted in our religious faith (John Paul II, 1999).

Catholic schools in South Australia are called to enter into a partnership with parents, in union with Christ's saving mission, to educate young people for active participation in the communities of Church and world (SACCS, 1991).

The responsible use of the internet has an important role to play in establishing characteristics like these in the Christian learning community. The use that educators make of the internet in their professional practice provides a very contemporary opportunity to witness to Christian values for students. Those who work in Catholic schools exercise a public ministry and, as such, are called to the highest professional standards of behaviour (see *Integrity in Ministry*, 1999).

This document sets out the security, administration and internal rules which should be observed when communicating electronically or using the Information Communication and Technology facilities provided by the School. Users should be familiar with the terms of this Policy in order to minimise potential damage to your colleagues, students and the School, which may arise as a result of misuse of email or Internet facilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Accessing the internet may include but not limited to Web surfing, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), discussion and chat facilities, Telnet and email.

## Policy Statement

All staff and other authorised users<sup>a</sup> of the school's information and communications technology are to use the technology only in a way that enhances student and staff learning and contributes to the betterment and well-being of the community. The technology is to be used in harmony with the Catholic ethos of the school.

The school's information and communications technology includes the utilisation of any employer equipment, property or resource at any time, whether during working hours or not, and includes the use of remote access facilities.

**This Policy applies to all staff and other authorised users in the school.**

## PRINCIPLES

This policy rests upon a number of principles which stem from Sacred Heart College's mission as a Catholic school in the tradition of Marcellin Champagnat.

- That all of creation, including modern and developing technology, can be embraced and utilised in the preaching of the Good News and the transmission of truth in the professional work of schools and the education of student;
- That as stewards of the resources made available, there is a responsibility to use those resources responsibly, productively and in a manner which observes the code of civil and criminal law;
- That staff work on behalf of the Church and the Marist Brothers, and through their work aim to reflect the ethos of those communities;
- That through their work, staff give witness to the Christian virtues;
- That staff are treated with respect as responsible professionals, and are the primary arbiters of their own conduct.

## PROCEDURES

### Introduction

All staff and other authorised users of the school's information and communications technology are to use the technology only in a way that enhances student and staff learning and contributes to the betterment and well-being of the community. The technology is to be used in harmony with the Catholic ethos of the school.

The school's information and communications technology includes the utilisation of any Sacred Heart College equipment, property or resource at any time, whether during working hours or not, and includes the use of remote access facilities.

**This Policy applies to all staff and other authorised users at Sacred Heart College.**

### The Policy in Practice

**To give effect to this Policy the following understandings and procedures apply:**

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<sup>a</sup> Authorised users, for the purpose of this document, includes anyone who has authorised access to the school's communications equipment. Such authorisation may extend to staff, parents, volunteers and contractors and is given by the principal, or delegate of the principal.

## 1. A Workplace Facility

- 1.1 Sacred Heart College's computer network and other communication facilities are educational and business facilities provided by the school to be used primarily for educational or business purposes. Staff and other authorised users, therefore, have a responsibility to use these resources in an appropriate, ethical, professional and lawful manner.
- 1.2 All email and Internet based message systems on the School's system will be treated as education or business related messages. Accordingly, one should not expect that any information or document transmitted or stored on the School's computer network is private.
- 1.3 Staff and other authorised users are permitted to use the Internet and email and other communication facilities to send and receive personal messages, provided that such use is kept to a minimum and does not interfere with users' responsibilities and duties in the school, or with the functions of Sacred Heart College.
- 1.4 However, any use of the Internet or email or other communication facilities for personal purposes is still subject to the same terms and conditions as otherwise described in this Policy.

## 2. Appropriate Use

- 2.1 Individuals and/or the School may be liable for what is written or said in an email message. Email is neither private nor secret. It may be easily copied, forwarded, saved, intercepted, archived and may be subject to discovery in litigation. The audience of an inappropriate comment in an email may be unexpected and extremely widespread.
- 2.2 The Internet, email or messaging should never be used for the following purposes:
  - (a) to abuse, vilify, defame, harass, degrade or discriminate (on the grounds of, for example, sex, race, or disability et cetera);
  - (b) to send, assent to receive or store obscene, offensive or pornographic material;
  - (c) to discuss or comment on the physical appearance of other persons (whether they receive the message or not);
  - (d) to harass any person whether through language, frequency or size of messages;
  - (e) to injure the reputation of the School and or the Church in a manner that may cause embarrassment to the employer or the Church;
  - (f) to offend the ethos and values of Catholic teachings;
  - (g) to spam, spoof or mass mail or to send chain mail;
  - (h) to infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of another person;
  - (i) to perform any other unlawful or inappropriate act.
- 2.3 Any inappropriate material received by email should be deleted immediately and not stored or sent to anyone else. When such material is received it is prudent to draw it to the attention of a person in a position of responsibility and have its unsolicited nature and deletion noted. The recipient should retain this noting for future reference if necessary. It is particularly important to respond to inappropriate emails from a known sender with an indication to the sender that such emails should not be sent in the future into, or within, the School's domain.
- 2.4 The school's facilities and communication technology should not be used by staff or other authorised user for the conduct of a private business. Likewise, excessive use of email, messaging or Internet facilities for personal reasons or inappropriate use may lead to disciplinary action including counseling, formal warnings and termination of employment or engagement. Any investigation would be carried out in accordance with the "Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct".

- 2.5 Staff and other authorised users must not post messages to any Internet bulletin board, discussion group or any other accessible discussion forum unless the message is strictly work-related or has been authorised by the principal.
- 2.6 From time to time when accessing the World Wide Web users may be redirected to, or accidentally access, inappropriate material. These sites should be brought to the attention of the Principal or delegate in order for them to be blocked by the school's filtering software and to ensure that it is noted that the material was not accessed purposely.

### 3. Monitoring

- 3.1 The contents and usage of email and Internet access may be subject to regular random monitoring by the School or by a third party on the School's behalf. This will include electronic communications which are sent or received, both internally or externally. Where inappropriate use is suspected through this means, or by other incidents, the Principal may authorise ICT personnel to examine the web access logs and or email accounts. No monitoring will occur without the Principal's permission except for normal logging of system usage to manage the network. Any investigation would be carried out in accordance with the "Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Misconduct".

### 4. Privacy

- 4.1 In the course of carrying out duties on behalf of the School, staff may have access to, or handle personal information relating to others, including students, colleagues, contractors, parents and suppliers. Email should not be used to disclose personal information of another person except in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy or with proper authorisation.
- 4.2 The Privacy Act requires individuals and the School to take reasonable steps to protect the personal information that is held from misuse and unauthorised access. When logged on, each person is responsible for the security of the computer and should not allow it to be used by an unauthorised party.
- 4.3 In order to comply with the School's obligations under the Privacy Act, the blind copy option should be used when sending emails to multiple recipients where disclosure of those persons' email addresses will impinge upon their privacy.
- 4.4 In addition to the above, users should be familiar with the National Privacy Principles ('NPPs') and ensure that the use of email does not breach the Privacy Act or the NPPs. More information on the Privacy Act and how to comply with it, can be gained from the School Principal.
- 4.5 Because of the risk of false attribution of email, a reasonable degree of caution should be maintained regarding the identity of the sender of incoming email. The identity of the sender should be verified by other means if there are reasons for concern.
- 4.6 Intentionally seeking information, obtaining copies or modifying files, tapes or passwords belonging to other persons, or representing others without express authority is prohibited.
- 4.7 Any deliberate attempt to subvert the security facilities may incur criminal or civil liability. Staff and other authorised are prohibited from infiltrating the system, damaging or altering software or data components of the system. Alteration to any system or network software or data component must only be undertaken if authorised by the Principal.

### 5. Distribution and Copyright

- 5.1 When distributing information over the School's computer network or to third parties outside the School, users must ensure that they and the School have the right to do so, and that there is no violation of the intellectual property rights of any third party.

5.2 Software must not be copied without the express permission of the copyright owner. Copyright and other laws, together with licenses, protect most software. Staff and other authorised users must respect and abide by the terms and conditions of software use and licenses.

## 6. Policy Updates

6.1 This policy will be revised no later than May 2013.

## 7. Conclusion

7.1 The terms of this Policy are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they anticipate every possible use of the School's email and Internet facilities. Staff and other authorised users are encouraged to act with caution and take into account the underlying principles intended by this Policy. Advice should be sought from the Principal where there is lack of clarity regarding appropriate action related to email or Internet use.

## References

John Paul II. (1999). *World Communications Day*.

National Committee for Professional Standards. (1999). *Integrity in Ministry*.

Pontifical Council for Social Communications. (2002). *Ethics in Internet*.

South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools [SACCS]. (1991). *A Vision for South Australia*.

The following documents are useful resources and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

- Privacy Compliance Manual <http://online.cesane.adl.catholic.edu.au>
- Using the Internet Legally <http://online.cesane.adl.catholic.edu.au>
- Ethics in Internet [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)
- The Church and Internet [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

This policy has been informed by documentation provided by Minter Ellison and the Industrial Relations Commission.

Approved on May 2010

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