SECTION O: INTERNET & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

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INTERNET USE POLICY & PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND:
The internet provides students with unprecedented opportunities to obtain information, engage in discussion, and liaise with individuals, organisation and groups world-wide so as to increase skills, knowledge and abilities. Internet use also open students to dangers if used indiscriminately.

AIMS:
To develop skills in discriminate and appropriate internet usage.

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Our school supports age appropriate access by students to a wide variety of information resources available, accompanied by the development of the skills necessary to filter, analyse, interpret and evaluate information encountered.
2. All students at our school will have censorship filtered internet.
3. The school undertakes to ensure that any information published on the Internet by students or the school is of a high standard, and meets legal requirements and standards of general practice within the community in relation to copyright, safety and decency.
4. Students will engage in lessons and exercises which inform and highlight the range of potential risks including cyberbullying, phishing, malware, copyright issues and identity theft.
5. All students shall be responsible for notifying their teacher of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
6. All staff shall be responsible for notifying the coordinator of any inappropriate material so that access can be blocked.
7. Consequences of publishing, accessing or failing to notify the coordinator of inappropriate material shall include the removal of access rights.
8. Signed parent and student consent (see appendix 5) is required to be completed in order to gain access to the internet, or to publish work, photos or videos on the internet.
9. Privacy of students, parents, staff and other users must be recognised and respected at all times. When identifying students, only the student’s first name and last initial will be used.
10. Teachers shall be responsible for making sure all work is screened for accuracy, appropriateness, grammar, spelling prior to publishing.
BACKGROUND:

This Policy specifies the conditions applying to the use of the electronic communication system at our School. Electronic communications include, but are not limited to, all Internet, Intranet and Email activities, Skype, Messenger, Webmail, File sharing, Online Chat, and related applications. Authorised users of the School’s electronic communication systems, both staff and students, are required to comply with the Policy. Failure to observe and abide by this Policy may result in disciplinary action.

AIMS:

To ensure appropriate use of communication technologies by all members of our School Community who use the School’s communication systems.

IMPLEMENTATION:

AUTHORISED USAGE

Authorised persons may use the electronic communication system for School business and educational purposes.

Where necessary, use of the system for personal purposes will be allowed, provided such use does not contravene this Policy or have any foreseen or unforeseen negative ramifications for the School and does not adversely impact upon work productivity and professional standards.

As the School provides access to the electronic communication system, the contents of the system, including email messages, remain the property of the School. Although the School does not make a practice of regularly monitoring this system, it does reserve the right to monitor individual usage and report, where necessary, any indications of misconduct or misuse.

PROHIBITED USE OF THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Email messages are neither private nor secret and can be easily misconstrued by recipients or mistakenly sent to the wrong recipient. In Australia, State and Federal legislation prohibits the transmission of email messages that contain objectionable material. In addition, emails that may appear humorous and innocent can be unlawful and infringe upon the School’s discrimination and harassment policies.

Prohibited use of the School’s electronic communication system includes any conduct that:

1. violates or infringes the rights of any other person, including the right to privacy;
2. Contains real or potentially defamatory, false, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, violent, pornographic, profane, sexually-explicit, sexually-oriented, threatening, racially-offensive or otherwise biased, discriminatory or illegal or any other inappropriate material.
3. violates any other School policy, including prohibitions against harassment of any kind;
4. Forwards confidential messages to persons to whom transmission was never authorised by the School, including persons within the School community and persons/organisations outside the School community.
5. broadcasts unsolicited personal views on any matter;
6. fails to use the system as prescribed, thus permitting infection by computer malware or deliberate infection by computer malware;
7. Involves the establishment or conduct of personal or private commercial or business transactions.
8. Propagates chain emails or forwarding messages to groups or lists without consent of the user.
9. results in unauthorised external access to the School’s electronic communication system;
10. Inhibits the user’s ability to perform their duties productively and without unnecessary interruption.
11. interferes with the ability of others to conduct the business of the School; or
12. Offends or potentially offends the ethos, principles and/or foundations of the School.
13. involves the unauthorised installation and/or downloading of non-School endorsed software.

**CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE AND/OR PROHIBITED USE**

The School will take disciplinary action against any person found to have engaged in an unacceptable or prohibited use of the School’s electronic communication system. Authorised users of the School’s electronic communication system are advised that unacceptable and/or prohibited use may contravene State and/or Federal legislation. Legal action may be taken against any person in breach of, or allegedly in breach of, these statutes.

**PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School and Kindergarten will not be liable for any loss incurred by a person who provides personal information (including bank and credit card details) over the Internet or via email.

**PRIVACY**

Email should not be used to disclose personal information of another except in accordance with the School’s Privacy Policy or with proper authorisation. The Privacy Act requires the School to take reasonable steps to protect the personal information that is held by the School from misuse and unauthorised access. The school has the ability to retrieve sent, received and deleted emails. Students must take responsibility for the security of their computer and not allow it to be used by unauthorised persons.

**GROUP EMAILS:**

When sending an email to more than one person, it may be necessary, depending on the nature of the email, to protect the privacy of each recipient. To do this, students should place the individual addresses in the ‘Bcc’ (Blind Carbon Copy) field rather than the ‘To’ field. Computer Services can be contacted for assistance if necessary.

**DISCLAIMER**

Mansfield Rudolf Steiner School makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, in relation to the electronic communication system. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user’s own risk. The School will not be responsible for any damage, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-delivery, etc suffered by any user of the School’s electronic communication facilities.