



SOUTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, COMPUTER, TELEPHONE AND EQUIPMENT USE

INTENDED USE

This Code is intended for the school's staff to provide directions in their work as to the standards for use of information technology in school systems and provides clear instructions as to what is acceptable use or otherwise. The Code also sets out that there may be consequences impacting on their employment or continued use of IT where the Code has been found to be breached. The Code sets out permitted uses of information technology (business and some personal use) and also prohibited uses among other things.

Code of Conduct

The aim of this *Code* is to outline the standards of behaviour expected of all who enter the premises of Southside Montessori School (the School) or premises hosting the School as an external operational environment.

This *Code* does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of your Information Technology (IT) interactions/ and work. Instead, it sets out general expectations of the standards of behaviour required when using and engaging in information technology and school digital and technological systems.

In practice, deciding on the right course of action will often involve weighing up competing priorities and responsibilities.

The *Code* places an obligation on all to take responsibility for their own conduct and ethical behaviours and to *work/* interact with technology and associated platforms to achieve environment where people are able to *work safely* and productively.

Ethical behaviour is more than following the obligations of this code. Volunteers are expected to act within the spirit of the regulatory laws and the outlined code. It is not sufficient to think your behaviour is ethical, your behaviour must also be seen to be so. The appearance of unethical behaviour can be as unethical as the conduct itself.

This *Code of Conduct* applies to all who enter the School premises and use information technology and platforms including volunteer workers and contactors.

Who has to comply with the Code of Conduct?

By accepting employment with the School, you must be aware of and comply with this *Code*.

Therefore, you must:

- (a) conduct yourself, both personally and professionally in a manner that upholds the ethos, ethics and reputation of the School;
- (b) comply with the School's policies and procedures;
- (c) act ethically and responsibly; and
- (d) be accountable for your actions and decisions.

General

This *Code* is not intended to be contractual in nature and does not impose any contractual obligations on the School. The School reserves the right at its sole discretion to vary or cancel this Code at any time.

Nothing in this Code should be taken to limit the circumstances in respect of which the School may take disciplinary action in respect of an employee.

1. Introduction to this Code

1.1. 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 iphones, Blackberries, 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 **Principal**

1.2. 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 or termination of an employee's employment or contractor's engagement with the School.

2. Responsibilities of Staff

2.1. 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:

- a) damage to the School's equipment caused by your use of School Systems;
- b) costs incurred by your access of internet sites; and/or
- c) legal obligation to any person created by your use of School Systems.
- d) when using internet and electronic communications, you must:
 - e) always identify yourself clearly and honestly;
 - f) not tell anyone your password except as required by the School; and
 - g) never access another person's email or internet account without that person's permission or the permission of the School.

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.

2.2. 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 IT Department.

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

3. Permitted and Prohibited Uses of School Systems

3.1. Permitted uses: Business purposes

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

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

3.2. 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:

- a) contravene other parts of this Code or the School's policies; or
- b) 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.

3.3. Prohibited uses

School Systems must not knowingly be used to:

- a) 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;
- b) 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);
- c) injure the reputation of the School or cause embarrassment to the School;
- d) send or receive material relating to the manufacture, use, sale or purchase of illegal drugs or dangerous materials or to any other illegal activity;
- e) spam or mass mail or to send or receive chain mail;
- f) infringe the copyright or other intellectual property rights of another person;
- g) play games;
- h) game, wage or bet;
- i) contribute to electronic bulletin boards;
- j) perform any activity using an anonymous or misleading identity;
- k) engage in any other illegal or inappropriate activity;
- l) provide services or produce materials for commercial gain; or
- m) 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 Principal** (see Social Networking Policy).

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

3.4. 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 Curriculum Coordinator, Nominated Supervisor or Principal.

4. 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:

- a) accessing your email account or emails;
- b) accessing files;
- c) accessing your work computer, storage devices or communications devices;
- d) accessing records of internet usage by you (including sites and pages visited, files downloaded, video and audio files accessed and data input); and
- e) 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.

Surveillance in accordance with this policy will commence on the Surveillance Date ¹

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.

As part of its monitoring and logging of School Systems, the School may:

- a. stop e-mails from entering or leaving its e-mail system if it believes it is appropriate to do so, e.g. if they are offensive or otherwise inappropriate, not work-related or wasteful of electronic resources (such as mass e-mailings); and/or
- b. block your access to particular internet websites

5. Dealing with E-mails

5.1. School Property

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

¹ **Surveillance Date** means: if you are a new employee, the commencement date of your employment; or otherwise 14 days from the commencement date of this policy.

5.2. 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 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.

5.3. Confidentiality and security

When an e-mail is sent from the School to the network server/ cloud based service and then on to the internet, the e-mail message may become public information. You should encrypt e-mail messages which contain sensitive information before sending.

Items of a highly confidential or sensitive nature should *not* be sent via e-mail, even with encryption.

On occasion, e-mail 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 e-mail. Software is widely available by which e-mail 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.

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

5.4. Representing the School

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

- a) any representations made are those of the School; and
- b) 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 e-mail. As noted above, e-mail messages can easily be misconstrued. Accordingly, words and attached documents should be carefully chosen and expressed in a clear, professional manner.

5.5. Disclaimer

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

The information in this e-mail is confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual to whom it was addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, please be advised that if you have received this e-mail in error then any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing or copying of this e-mail is strictly prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please inform the sender by using the reply facility in your e-mail software and then delete from your system. Although Southside Montessori Society Pty. Ltd. takes precautions to minimise the risk of transmitting computer viruses, it is your responsibility to carry out your own virus checks on this e-mail and any attachments. Please note that neither Southside Montessori Society Pty. Ltd. nor the sender accepts any responsibility for viruses. Internet communications are not secure and therefore Southside Montessori Society Pty. Ltd. does not accept legal responsibility for the contents of this e-mail. Any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Southside Montessori Society Pty. Ltd

This message is set to appear automatically on each outgoing e-mail. Please contact the Principal if this feature is not working. You must not delete or amend this disclaimer

5.6. Absences

If you are likely to be absent from work for any lengthy period of time, you should make arrangements for your e-mails to be accessible by the School or ensure that an 'out of office reply' is automatically set.

- a) Employees must, at least 24 hours prior to the cessation of their employment, return to the

School's Administration all ICT hardware issued to such employee.

- b) Unless granted specific exemption by the School's Principal, employees must return all assigned ICT hardware to School's Administration immediately prior to the commencement of any period of annual, long service, maternity, paternity, sick, carers and/or unpaid leave in excess of one week in duration. Generally, consideration to grant an exemption will only be possible if a replacement
- c) employee is not being engaged during the period of leave in question.
- d) Subject to the provisions of d), periods of annual leave referred to in clause b) do not include the fixed period of annual leave that applies to teaching staff occurring each January.
- e) If specifically requested by the Principal employees must, within the timeframe specified, return all assigned ICT hardware to the School's Administration for the purpose of replacement, repair or upgrade. In order to minimise the impact upon student learning, the replacement, repair and upgrade of ICT hardware will generally be scheduled during school vacation periods.

6. 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 e-mail 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 particular information, you should contact **the Principal**.

7. 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. E-mail 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 HR Department.

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

8. General

8.1. 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 take into account the underlying principles of this Code. If you feel unsure about what to do in particular circumstances, you should contact **the Principal**

8.2. 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, up to and including termination of your employment or engagement.

8.3. User acceptance

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

9.4 Accountability

Southside Montessori School's primary responsibility is to adhere to the legislated roles and responsibilities of an independent school and serve the community by abiding by these responsibilities. This means that our staff and contractors must provide the same level of professionalism in the administration and delivery of government policies and services, irrespective of the political persuasion of the government. Staff and Contractors to the School are responsive to the government, legislation and the needs of the public by:

- a) respecting the rule of law and our system of democracy by upholding:
- b) Commonwealth and State laws and regulations - government and Departmental policies
- c) relevant professional codes of practice
- d) relevant industrial agreements
- e) being familiar with legislation, regulations, and professional codes that are relevant to their employment.

Related Policies

Code of Conduct for Staff
Code of Conduct for employees, contractors and Volunteers
Discrimination, harassment and bullying policy for employees
Complaints Policy
Grievance Policy
Social Networking Policy