EMAIL AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY OF ST AUGUSTINE COLLEGE FOR STUDENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

St Augustine College [herewith referred to College] views the internet and the use of email as an increasingly important and essential educational tool. The purpose of this policy is to promote a better use **of our student's electronic communications and to provide students with standards of behaviour when using them**. This document sets out guidelines for email use by all students to encourage the correct use of email in an educational environment. **Any breach of this policy or misuse of electronic communications may constitute a serious disciplinary matter.** This College Email and Internet Acceptable Use Policy is based on the respective policy of the Archdiocese of Malta.

2 POLICY

It is the policy of the College to encourage the use of its email to improve communication and **to prohibit unauthorised and improper use of these means of communication**. Use of the email facility is permitted and encouraged where such use is suitable for educational purposes and supports the goals and objectives of the College and is **to be used in a manner that is consistent with the College's stance to promote further the 21st Century Skills in our College's community. Those who use the College's email service are expected to do so responsibly and must comply with this policy.**

3   GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The principles outlined in this policy apply to all electronic communications sent by the students and all use of the internet if using the College's access accounts or equipment.

4   ACCESS

4.1   The College reserves the right to designate those students to whom it will provide access to its email services and **may revoke access at any time to persons who misuse the system.** Unauthorised use, intentional interference with the normal operation of the network or failure to comply with this policy will be regarded as gross misconduct and may lead to serious disciplinary actions and possible criminal prosecution.

4.2   Internet access is controlled, and **the College reserves the right to prevent access to any sites it deems unacceptable**. Any student attempting to evade the controls instituted will be suitably disciplined.

5   SECURITY

5.1   Students **must not download software or electronic files without implementing virus protection**. All files attached to external email as well as files downloaded from the internet must be scanned. Users must report suspected incidents of software viruses or similar contaminants from email attachments and/or downloads from the internet immediately to a member of staff responsible for IT systems.

5.2   **Passwords, encryption keys and other confidential information relating to the College's email must not be transmitted over the internet or by email.**

5.3   Students should use password protection, not share their password, and sign out of the email account or educational applications when away from them.

6   MONITORING

The College respects the privacy of internet and email users and will not monitor email or internet access activities without a student's knowledge or without good cause. Any such monitoring will comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

7   PROHIBITED USE

7.1   Students must not view, store, transmit, upload, download or intentionally receive communications, web pages, files or documents **on their College's email account** that are or could be interpreted as intimidating, harassing or illegal or containing hostile, degrading, sexually explicit, pornographic, discriminatory or otherwise offensive material.

7.2   Students must not use their College's email account for personal use other than those related to educational purposes.

7.3   **It is prohibited to use the College's email account for online subscriptions other than educational-related subscriptions** directly related to the student's educational needs for which written authorisation has been given by the College. **It is also prohibited to use the College's email to create or express one's view on a public blog.**

8   OTHER ISSUES TO KEEP IN MIND

As well as the many benefits of email, it is essential that all students realise the following potential pitfalls:

8.1   it is not an informal communication tool, any communication done using the College's email account will partially impinge on the student's personal as well as the College's reputation.

8.2   emails are not confidential and can be read by anyone given sufficient levels of expertise.

8.3   binding contracts may be inadvertently created.

8.4   harassment or defamation of school peers or other parties (deliberate or otherwise) will not be tolerated. One must not breach anti-harassment, defamation or discrimination legislation (age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief) in his communication.

8.5   abrupt, inappropriate and unthinking use of language can lead to a bullying tone and possible offence to others, even harassment, for example, capitals are often interpreted as shouting. Therefore, one should reflect before sending a written message.

8.6   consider whether a phone call may be a better way of discussing a complex or confidential matter.

9 CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1   Email can be inadvertently sent to the wrong address. It may also be read by someone other than the intended recipient. Caution must be exercised when communicating proprietary, confidentially sensitive information or information relating to the College when using email systems and users should ensure that such information is properly encrypted and that they have the authority to send it.

9.2   No student or educator or College related information should be sent over any public computer system without the prior written consent of the College.

10 COPYRIGHT

Students must adhere to all intellectual property and copyright law. Students must not upload, download or otherwise transmit any copyrighted materials belonging to parties inside and outside the College without the copyright holder's or educators' or College's written permission.

11 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion and criminal prosecution.

12   CONTACT PERSON

12.1 Students should immediately contact the Assistant Head responsible for their year group should they receive any disturbing or inappropriate messages on their College email address.

12.2 Students should contact the College's Administration if they have any queries about any aspect of the policy.

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