COMPUTERS, NETWORK AND INTERNET USE

RATIONALE

The use of Electronic Communications at Salamah College is a privilege, and like any other privilege, carries with it responsibilities.

Publishing, accessing information and communicating electronically can be cost-effective, timely and efficient. It is essential that the use of this valuable resource be managed to ensure that it is used in an appropriate manner.

The internet/ intranet provides students with the opportunity to locate information and liaise with organisations or individuals to support learning and to increase their knowledge and skills in using electronic services.

The Learning Technologies program at Salamah College is an integral part of a student's learning environment. Students will have access to the network computers and thus the Internet possibilities. The use of the school internet will support the education and research programs set by the teachers in line with its educational goals and objectives.

At Salamah College, students will accept personal responsibility for reporting any misuse of the network to the teachers of the school. This would include any message/s sent or received that indicate or suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism and inappropriate language.

It is vital the school community understands the significance of the Internet and also the potential risks. It is essential that families discuss ethical issues related to this policy document. Students need to develop skills of discrimination when dealing with information (and misinformation). These skills will be addressed at school and need to be considered within the context of the family.

The process by which Salamah College seeks to manage use of Electronic Communications is through the development and implementation of this policy. The policy provides specific instructions, which must be followed whenever using Electronic Communications.

AIM

The purpose of Electronic Communications within Salamah College is to conduct the business and functions of Salamah College.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Electronic Communications are properly and efficiently used, and that Salamah College is protected from problems such as error, fraud, defamation, unlawful discrimination, illegal activity, privacy violations and service interruptions.

STAFF USE

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The Principal has the responsibility to ensure that the persons to whom this policy applies are aware of this policy. This should include, but is not limited to:

- Providing a copy of the policy.

- Regular and timely reminders of the need for compliance with the policy.

- Providing updates or developments of the policy, to those affected by the policy.

It is the responsibility of individuals to abide by the policy.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with this policy will be regarded as a serious matter and appropriate action will be taken when a breach of the policy is identified.

Any failure to abide by this policy may result in disciplinary action including revoking or restricting any right to use Electronic Communications, cautioning, or, in appropriate circumstances, may lead to more serious disciplinary action including termination of employment as decided by the board.

Non-compliance with this policy may pose a threat to the security of Salamah College network, the privacy of staff and other persons and may expose the users of the system or other persons to legal liability.

BUSINESS PURPOSES

Salamah College's Electronic Communications network is primarily a business tool to be used for Salamah College purposes.

Electronic Communications must only be used for Salamah College purposes, or where authorised or required by law, or with the express permission of an authorised person, and be used like other business communications and comply with any codes of conduct which apply to the user.

Users of the Salamah College network may use Electronic Communications for limited personal use as long as this does not interfere with their role within Salamah College and is reasonable and not excessive. Unreasonable or excessive personal usage constitutes a failure to abide by this policy and may result in the consequences set out in the non-compliance section.

Subject to limited personal use, electronic communications must generally not be used to conduct private business or private commercial transactions, gamble, or carry out research into non-work related topics.

Subscribing to list servers (LISTSERVS), mailing lists and other like services must be for Salamah College purposes or professional development reasons only.

On-line conferences, discussion groups or other like services must be relevant and used for Salamah College purposes or professional development activities. Such interaction requires that Internet etiquette should be observed along with current societal standards for respect and fairness.

Obtaining unauthorised access to electronic files of others, or to Email or other Electronic Communications of others, is not permitted.

Large downloads or transmissions should be minimised to ensure the performance of Electronic Communications of other users are not adversely affected.

DEPARTMENT PROPERTY

Salamah College is the owner of all electronic communications made by employees as part of their employment and sent through Salamah College's network.

Electronic Communications created, sent or received by the users are the property of Salamah College, and may be accessed as records of evidence in the case of an investigation. Electronic Communications may also be subject to discovery in litigation and criminal investigations. For example, all information produced on computer, including Emails, may be accessible under the Freedom of Information Act.

MONITORING

Electronic Communications will be treated according to the policy set out by Salamah College and may be monitored by authorised persons.

It is not Salamah College's policy to regularly monitor Electronic Communications. However, from time to time authorised persons may examine the records of Electronic Communications including for operational, maintenance, compliance, auditing, security or investigative purposes. For example, random monitoring may occur of web sites visited, the contents of Email may be required by law to be disclosed or Salamah College may investigate a complaint arising from the use of Email.

Electronic Communications are provided to you on condition that you agree to the monitoring in accordance with this policy. Your use of Electronic Communications constitutes your consent to monitoring in accordance with this policy.

DEFAMATION

Electronic Communications must not be used to send material that defames an individual, organisation, association, company or business. The consequences of a defamatory comment may be severe and give rise to personal and/or Salamah College liability. Electronic Communications may be easily copied, forwarded, saved, intercepted or archived. The audience of an electronic message may be unexpected and extremely widespread.

ILLEGAL/AND OFFENSIVE MATERIAL

Electronic Communications must not be used in any manner contrary to law or likely to contravene the law. Any offender will be referred to the police or other relevant authority and their employment may be terminated.

Offensive material must not be accessed or distributed in any manner contrary to law. This includes defamatory, racially vilifying, pornographic or unlawfully discriminatory material.

In particular, Salamah College is an institution charged with the safety and education of children, and child pornography is both abhorrent and represents the antithesis of our responsibilities to children. Any offender will be referred to the police and their employment may be terminated.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Electronic Communication is not a secure means of communication. While every attempt is made to ensure the security of Salamah College computer network, users must be aware that this security is not guaranteed, particularly when communicated to an external party. The sender should consider the confidentiality of the material they intend to send when choosing the appropriate means of communication.

Users are required to control the use and release of personal information and restrict access to **personal information** in order to protect privacy. Collecting, using and disclosing personal information by email may put the privacy of personal information at risk. Personal information and **sensitive information** should be treated as confidential information. The sender should consider the potential risks of inadvertent or unauthorised disclosure when sending personal information by email. Only the minimum amount of personal information necessary to accomplish the purpose for which it is required should be transferred by email.

VIRUSES

Electronic Communications are potential delivery systems for computer viruses. All data, programs and files which are downloaded electronically or attached to messages should be run through a virus scan program before being launched, or opened or accessed.

Viruses have the potential to seriously damage Salamah College's network. Do not open any downloaded files or Emails or attachments that you are not expecting or that look suspicious. In the event that you receive any files that you suspect contain a virus it should be reported immediately to your manager.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The author and/or Salamah College may be liable for what is conveyed in electronic communications. Electronic Communications, whether sent internally or externally, must only contain content that is appropriate to a work place environment.

Electronic Communications must not be used to publish, send or distribute material that is harassing, obscene or threatening, nor may it contain content that may be considered unlawfully discriminatory,

offensive or disruptive. This includes sexually oriented messages or images and sexual harassment messages.

ATTRIBUTION

There is always a risk of false attribution of Electronic Communications. It is possible that communications may be modified to reflect a false message, sender or recipient. In these instances an individual may be unaware that he or she is communicating with an impostor or receiving fraudulent information. At any stage if a user has a concern with the contents of a message received or the identity of the publisher of the electronic information, action should be taken to verify their identity by other means. If a user believes an Electronic Communication has been intercepted or modified, the IT manager or principal should be informed.

Users are accountable for all use of Salamah College systems performed with their user-ID. User-ID's and password must be kept secure and confidential. Active connections are to be terminated when access is no longer required and PCs secured by password when not in use.

MASS DISTRIBUTION

The use of Electronic Communications for sending 'junk mail', for-profit messages, or chain letters is strictly prohibited.

Mass Electronic Communications should only be sent in accordance with normal Salamah College procedures.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Electronic Communications are public records and subject to the provisions of the Public Records Act 1973.

Email messages that are routine or of a short term facilitative nature should be deleted when reference ceases, as distinct from ongoing business records such as policy or operational records.

Retention of messages fills up large amounts of storage space on the network and can slow down performance. As few messages as possible should be maintained in a user's Email account.

DISCLAIMER

All Emails sent **externally** from Salamah College email service must have a notice attached to them. The proposed notice is as follows.

'IMPORTANT - Any personal or sensitive information herein is intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. The recipient is responsible for maintaining the privacy of such information herein, and not to disclose such information to any other party except in accordance with information privacy legislation. The above are in addition to any matter of confidentiality that may apply. If received in error, please contact us and delete all copies. Before opening or using attachments, check them for viruses and defects.

This notice must not be altered or interfered with in any way, except by authorised persons. The use of this notice may not necessarily prevent Salamah College or the sender of the Email from being held liable for its contents.

COMPLAINTS

If you receive an internal or external Electronic Communication which is offensive or inappropriate, raise it appropriately, or with the Salamah College ICT.

STUDENT USE

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- Class teachers will instruct students to the correct use and their responsibilities when using the Internet.

- Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of Internet etiquette.

- Be polite. Never send or encourage sending abusive messages.

- Use appropriate language.

- Illegal activities of any kind are strictly forbidden. Remember that you are a member of the school and thus represent all members.

- Privacy. Do not reveal your home address or personal phone number and address of students or colleagues.

- Electronic mail. Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.

- Disruptions. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt use of the network by others.

- The use of the Internet at Salamah College is a privilege, not a right and inappropriate use will result in temporary or permanent cancellation of those privileges.

- Teachers will take appropriate measures in cases of misuse and a letter will be sent home to inform parents. Teachers will counsel offending students.

WHY A POLICY AND NOT FILTERS

Most of the work on filtering information on the internet is aimed at restricting pornography, and much of that work has only limited success in achieving its aims. Very few of the programs have any

worthwhile success in restricting access to materials such as racist, extremist, political or violent material. In these circumstances it becomes of greater importance for us to treat the topic as an issue for education and parental involvement.

Staff are responsible for what students access and their on-line behaviour. Students will only be able to access the Internet for specific purposes. Students will not be allowed access to the Internet in an unsupervised situation.

Although we are able to filter some inappropriate material on the internet people with a desire to do so may be able to gain access to these sites. It comes down to providing the students with the skills to discriminate.

The college encourages the students to use this rich source of information available to them, together with developing their skills to analyse and evaluate the information. These skills will be fundamental to all students as they progress through school into society at large.

Salamah College students and parents are also required to sign and agree to the acceptable use policy. Please refer to Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C.

Acceptable Use– Computers, Internet and Email

Salamah College is pleased to offer access to the Internet and email to all students. The school will make every effort to protect students from any misuses or abuses using telecommunications. We recognise that some materials found on the Internet may contain items that are unsuitable, but believe that the opportunities the Internet creates in student learning will exceed any disadvantages students may face in using the Internet or accessing email.

The responsibility for setting and conveying standards and dealing with inappropriate material is a joint responsibility with students, families and the school. Internet and email access is a privilege – not a right as access involves responsibility. Please discuss the following guidelines for using the Internet and email with your child and sign where indicated.

Guidelines

Rules for Student Safety when using the Internet and E-mail

1) Students will follow teacher instructions regarding the use of the **Internet**.

2) Students will use all computer equipment with care.

3) Students will behave in a responsible and courteous manner when using the **Internet**.
4) Students will only work on the sites that are relevant to their work and specified by the teacher. If they find themselves in inappropriate locations they **will immediately click the HOME button and call the teacher for help**. Failure to do so will result in the removal of access to the Internet and disciplinary action.

5) Students will only use first names on the **Internet** and **E-mail** communications and not reveal their personal addresses or phone numbers or those of others.

7) Students will respect the privacy of others by not giving out details of fellow students and teachers or reading their **e-mails**.

8) Students will ensure that any e-mail they send does not contain inappropriate language or information.

9) All video conferencing will be directly monitored by a member of staff.

- **Be Polite – Netiquette** – Always send messages that are polite. When you are online you are representing Salamah College

- **Be Responsible** – Don't deliberately access undesirable sights. Discuss any concerns you have about any information accessed with a teacher.

- **Privacy** – Don't include any personal information like your full name, home address or phone numbers. Let your teachers know if you are asked for any personal information

- **Information** – Information accessed through the Internet may not be accurate.
Every effort will be made to ensure children develop skills to assist them to validate information and access reputable Internet sites.

The Internet At Home

Use of the **Internet** at home is a valuable research tool. Use appropriately it can enhance and develop student learning.

Safe Internet Use For Students at Home

At school the students will be taught how to use the **Internet** and how to use search engines for research relevant to class studies as well as for personal use. These are valuable and important research skills, and parents need to be aware that their children will quickly become proficient at using the

Internet and will be able to use these skills on the home computer if it is connected to the **Internet**. Parents need to be aware that the skills the students acquire at school may be used to access material on the home computer.

It should be noted that the **Internet** is an adult network, which is not subject to control or censorship, and although it contains vast amounts of extremely valuable information, **some of it is inappropriate and misleading**. So parents need to be vigilant in supervising children at home and may wish to consider the following:

♦ Ensure that children do not give personal details (eg. Full name, address etc.).

♦ Discuss with children what is inappropriate material.

♦ Provide children with a plan of action should they come across inappropriate material accidentally. (eg. call for adult help or click on the home button).

♦ Install filtering programs such as NetNanny, CyberSitter, Internet Sheriff.

♦ Install security on home computers such as passwords, or means of racking sites visited.

♦ Only allow children to use the Internet when parents are at home.

♦ Set up rules about going online.

♦ Set up the computer that has Internet access in the family room where anyone can see what is on the screen.