INTERNET USAGE POLICY

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide positive strategies that will help minimise risk to students while using informational technology.

This includes, but is not limited to:

♦ Age-appropriate Codes of Practice for students, teachers and parent/caregivers;
♦ Ensuring students understand their responsibilities whilst using the internet;
♦ Establishing techniques and safeguards for allowing safe access to the internet;
♦ Establishing publishing protocols to ensure student safety from personal disclosure;
♦ Establishing publishing protocols to ensure teacher and student privacy is maintained;
♦ Establishing publishing protocols to ensure that relevant copyright issues are addressed.

Roxby Downs Area School recognises that electronic information research skills are an essential part of our students’ learning and are a required life skill as members of a technological society and as future employees.

We also recognise that student learning will change as emerging technologies alter the ways in which information is accessed.

RDAS is committed to actively responding to these changes and providing support for students to safely access the widest variety of informational resources possible, and to develop within the students, their skills to analyse and evaluate such resources.

Access to informational resources will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, museums, databases, the Internet and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with other people throughout the world. The use of the internet as an informational medium allows students not only to be passive users but also to actively participate.

We believe that the benefits to students in being able to access and retrieve information from these resources, and the opportunities this provides for collaboration exceed the disadvantages.

The very nature of the internet which opens their classrooms to the world also involves some risks. The main areas of risks to the students are:

♦ The exposure of students to unsuitable or harmful materials
♦ Exposure to harm resulting from disclosure of personal information
  - Legal liability – for breach of copyright;
  - Circulation of defamatory information; or
  - Invasion of privacy.

The Role of Students

It is presumed that users will comply with both school standards and public etiquette. Students will be presented with a Code of Conduct agreement stating their responsibilities.
and will be expected to fully honour the agreements they have signed. Parents/caregivers will be asked to give their consent for younger students to have the opportunity to also access the internet.

Students who fail to honour their Code of Conduct agreement may incur the withdrawal of their access to the internet and/or the school network.

Should an internet issue arise, it will be handled promptly by the school. Parents/caregivers will only be informed if their child is directly involved.

**Student access**

The school network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. A student may only access the internet when all the following occur:

The student must have:

- A signed internet Code of Conduct agreement
- A network logon password
- Teacher permission
- A suitable supervising adult (Teacher, SSO, Parent)

**The role of Parents/Caregivers**

RDAS is strongly committed to working in partnership with parents/caregivers to convey the standards that their children should follow when using media and information.

Parents will be asked to sign and return an Internet Code of Conduct agreement which will be sent out at the beginning of the year and with each new enrolment.

It is important that parents/caregivers understand that due to the public nature of the internet no system can be totally secure; however, we have many safeguards in place and have done everything possible to ensure the safety of students.

Parents should contact the school in the event of any breach of internet use that affects their child(ren).

**The Role of Staff**

Any teacher wanting to let their class have access to the internet is responsible for:

- Checking that each child has an active Internet Code of Conduct agreement;
- Ensuring that they fully understand the use of all monitoring software;
- Ensuring that all monitoring software is running;
- Actively monitoring students at all times that the internet is in use;
- Being fully prepared as to what information is appropriate for their lesson.
Teachers using the computer network will be prepared to provide guidance and instruction to students in the appropriate use of all such resources; and be aware of what steps to take in the case of inappropriate access.

E-mail Usage

Student’s e-mails should not be considered private and RDAS reserves the right to monitor all e-mails.

Students will not be allowed to access external e-mail accounts, such as the web based Hotmail.

Spamming is an illegal activity, and as such, students will be taught what constitutes spamming and they will be held accountable.

Students are encouraged to tell a teacher if they receive offensive e-mails.

Students must not reveal details of themselves or others in e-mail communication, (eg. Addresses or telephone numbers) or arrange to meet anyone.

Expectation of students who contact objectionable or questionable material or persons via the internet:

- students are not to reply to offensive or threatening messages via e-mail, discussion groups, or other forums;
- if students receive inappropriate messages they should keep copies of the messages and inform their teacher at school or parent/caregiver at home;
- if students encounter inappropriate web pages at school they should immediately turn off the monitor and inform their teacher;
- Parents/caregivers should discuss an appropriate strategy in the event of such an occurrence at home.

The school will monitor the use of all computer systems, including access to web-sites and the interception of e-mail. A teacher may delete files if he or she believes that they are for unauthorised use.

Guidelines for student and staff safety on the internet

- Students/staff must never give out their log-in information or passwords;
- Students/staff must always logout after use;
- Students/staff must never load non-approved software;
- Students should never agree to request for “real life” contact (face-to-face or telephone) with people met via the Internet. All requests should be reported to the teacher.