EMAIL POLICY

Applicable to: Teachers, links, parents.

This email policy concerns the promotion of efficient school communication and the adequate protection of personal information as required by South Africa's Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act (see summary in Annexure).

Efficient and compliant email systems

As email constitutes a vital part of the school's communication processes and is an important interface in school-parent and class-parent communication, it important to both comply with the law and to promote practices that lead to communication that supports the functioning of the school and promotes a culture of community among teachers, staff, parents, and, by extension, learners.

Communication from the school's centralised functions (administration, communication etc.) are sent to the class links, which are the contact points between the school and teachers, on one hand, and parents, on the other. This is the primary mechanism through which school communication flows to parents.

Furthermore, in order to protect parents' personal information and to ensure that email communication channels are not misused, the following email policy guidelines apply.

- Links will send parents **relevant information** only, as approved by the school, college of teachers, trustees, administrative staff and/or the class teacher.
- Parents are not to receive communication for which they have not opted in, e.g. information that falls outside the business of the school.
- Emails sent to parents through this channel must be set up so that their email addresses are inserted into the blind carbon copy (BCC) field. This doesn't apply to the email addresses of teachers and links. Useful resources on how to BCC across different email clients are provided below.
- Parents receiving communication through this channel should not attempt to respond to the whole group, but rather use the appropriate channels (as outlined in the communications handbook or, if it applies, the grievance procedure).

How to blind carbon copy (BCC)

This link provides instruction on how to use the BCC field across different email clients:
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-BCC-in-an-Email

For ease of use, links may prefer to use distribution lists in conjunction with BCC, so that they do not need to add email contacts individually with every email sent. Here are resources to assist with creating distribution lists in various clients:

http://email.answers.com/distribution-list/how-to-create-and-use-distribution-lists
http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Mailing-List-in-Gmail
http://www.wikihow.com/Add-a-Mailing-List-in-Outlook

Alternatively, the link may choose to use Google Groups to manage email communication within the class. In this instance, refer to the following guidelines on setting up a Google Group:

http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Google-Group

ANNEXURE

(Summary of POPI courtesy of www.popi-compliance.co.za)

Email and the Protection of Personal Information Act

South Africa's **Protection of Personal Information Bill** seeks to regulate the Processing of Personal Information. **Personal Information** broadly means any information relating to an identifiable, living natural person or juristic person (companies, CC's etc.) and includes, but is not limited to:

- **Contact details:** email, telephone, address etc.

- **Demographic information:** age, sex, race, birth date, ethnicity etc.

- **History:** employment, financial, educational, criminal, medical history

- **Biometric information:** blood type etc.

- **Opinions** of and about the person

- Private **correspondence** etc.

Processing means broadly anything done with the Personal Information, including collection, usage, storage, dissemination, modification or destruction (whether such processing is automated or not).

Some of the **obligations** under POPI are to:

- only collect information that you need for a specific purpose

- apply reasonable security measures to protect it

- ensure it is relevant and up to date

- only hold as much as you need, and only for as long as you need it

- allow the subject of the information to see it upon request