



Allambie Heights Public School

RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

RESILIENCE

165 Allambie Road, Allambie Heights NSW 2100 P:9451 5440 F:9975 5046
E: allambieht-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au W: www.allambieht-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

Providing time for staff to switch off Procedures

Rationale

Teaching is a unique profession that involves work inside and outside of school operating hours. This has always been the case. However, the digital technologies that were key to success during lock downs and continue to provide amazing learning opportunities have also made it hard to establish boundaries. To give our staff the opportunity to recharge, spend time with their families and bring their best creative selves to work, the Department of Education are setting clear expectations for when and how staff respond to communication outside school operating hours.

Principals and school leadership teams play a critical role in establishing and driving expectations for digital communication with all staff who work in our schools. This initiative is an opportunity to reset boundaries and lead a positive, impactful cultural change to protect the wellbeing of staff and help avoid burnout.

Parents and carers are an important part of our school community. We know that they play a crucial role in helping their child become a motivated learner. Communication between our school and our community is critical for us to partner together.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that:

1. Ensure all stakeholders in our school community know and understand the digital communication timeframes and protocols for our school.
2. Instil a culture of kindness and respect between all stakeholders within our school community as we all work together to help our students achieve their best.

Responsibility

- The Allambie Heights Public School Principal will be responsible for communicating this procedure to all members of our school community and provide any additional information, should this be required.
- All students, parents, carers and staff will follow the protocols detailed in this procedure to support the wellbeing of all staff in our school and to help avoid staff burnout.

Protocols for digital communication at Allambie Heights PS:

- Digital communication refers to phone calls, emails, Google Docs, What's App, Compass and any other platform of digital communication that different stakeholders in our school community choose to utilise.
- All general school communications will be sent via Compass email on a Tuesday, including the 'notes for Tuesday' and the fortnightly school newsletter, 'The Grapevine'. Only in the event of an emergency or for a reportable communicable disease will communication via Compass email be sent on any other school day.
- Our school office is open from 8.30am – 3.30pm each Monday to Friday of the school term. Office staff take phone calls and respond to emails between these working hours only. The night switch on the school phone is turned onto 'night mode' from 3.30pm each afternoon until 8.30am the following morning. The school phone is also in 'night mode' over the weekend and during the school holiday periods.
- All parents and carers are to communicate using the digital communication platforms of email and phone calls through the school office. Staff do not provide their Department of Education email address to parents and carers. This is a recommendation by the NSW Teachers Federation. Emails sent to the allambieht-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au email address during office hours will be forwarded by the office staff to the appropriate staff member. Parents and carers will receive a response to their email from the school office and this email will detail which staff member has received the email. Parents and carers need to

communicate through the school channels of communication only. Staff will not respond to communication from parents or carers to their personal social media accounts or to their personal mobile phones.

- Our staff will respond to non-urgent emails and phone calls within two working days. For longer discussions or more complex matters, parents and carers are asked to make an appointment to speak to the relevant staff member directly, at a time that works for everyone.
- Our staff will always stay in touch because open communication is what's best for your child and their education. We don't want you to stop communicating with our staff – we still want to hear from you if you have any questions or need to discuss a matter about your child. We know it's often easier for our parents and carers to send electronic communication after work, therefore, although the school office hours are 8.30am to 3.30pm, staff may communicate with stakeholders from the school community between 8.00am and 5.00pm on school days only. Only in the case of an emergency will staff communicate outside of these hours. This includes staff-to-staff communication across all platforms of digital communication.