

Strategies for Working Remotely

These strategies were compiled from suggestions made by teaching and non-teaching staff across the state who participated in the webinar “Remote Control” conducted by Ian Hamilton from Genos International in conjunction with the School Leadership Institute in April 2020.

A recording of the webinar can be found on the School Leadership Institute site at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-leadership-institute/supporting-remote-learning---wellbeing>

Boundaries

- As a whole school, establish protocols around appropriate times for parents and students to communicate with teachers.
- Create boundaries around emails by turning notifications off, removing email access from your phone, checking emails only at certain times during the day and setting rules in your inbox to sort emails.
- Turn your phone to flight mode or Do Not Disturb at certain times of the day.
- Go for a walk or sit outside to work and leave your phone inside.

Relationships

- Establish routines for more formal meetings with colleagues but also informal opportunities to catch up and check in on one another using video conferencing.

- Set up systems for checking in on one another such as having a “buddy” or a “wellbeing tree” where each staff member is linked to another colleague.
- Link specialist teachers to a Stage or faculty so that they are connected with the rest of the team.
- Ensure admin staff stay connected with one another for work meetings and group chats via video conferencing.
- Establish a system of regular phone contact with each family in the school to check how they are going, sharing the task among all teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Have recess or lunch together whether at work or working from home, using video conferencing.

Communication

- Use video calls rather than just audio to help give the person you are speaking to your full attention.
- Enhance communication between team members by sharing Outlook calendars and working on shared Google docs.
- Establish agendas and protocols for virtual meetings.
- Use support staff to enhance communication with vulnerable students to aid learning via Google classroom and video conferencing.
- Include specialist teachers such as the Learning and Support Teacher, Librarian and RFF teacher and executive staff in Google Classroom to further enhance communication within and across teams.

- Have a team WHATSAPP open in the bottom of your screen for quick messaging and instant requests and to streamline bulk emails.

Routines

- Track and prioritise tasks using lists or digital apps such as Outlook Tasks or Google Keep or keep a day book, either on paper or digitally in Google Docs.
- Establish a set routine for the day and adhere to it. This might include packing your lunch at the start of the day, getting dressed as if you were going to school and getting changed again when you have finished your working day.
- Establish regular routines for exercise such as replacing your usual commute to school with exercise or starting the day with a family boot camp.
- Set an alarm to remind you to go to bed at a regular time.

Breaks

- Schedule regular breaks into your daily timetable. These could follow the usual school break times or they could align with the break times of others in the family.
- Go for a walk around the block during your break, reward yourself with some reading time or 10 minutes of yoyo.
- Eat your lunch outside for a clear break from work.
- Set an alarm to chime every 30 minutes to remind you to have a stretch and a drink of water.

Exercise

- Take on a dance challenge at home or with your students using an app such as Dance Challenge.
- Learn some ballet exercises online with the Australian Ballet.
- Use fitness apps or online exercise tutorials for inspiration and motivation.
- Walk with friends, family members or dogs.
- Instead of doing playground duty, go for a walk.
- Replace your usual commute to work with exercise such as walking, running or cycling.

Mindfulness

- Use mindfulness apps such as Headspace or Smiling Minds.
- Keep a gratitude journal and a list of 3 achievements for motivation.
- Practice yoga and meditation.

Workspace

- Organise to have a standing desk to ease neck and back pain and keep energised while working.
- Try to organise a space to work that you can then leave at the end of the work day.
- Set up a work space outside to get some fresh air and sun shine while working.
- Change which hand you use on the mouse regularly to avoid fatigue.

We trust you find these suggestions from colleagues useful.

**Joanne Jarvis, Director
and the School Leadership
Institute team**

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