

Strategies for leading remotely



These strategies were compiled from suggestions made by teaching and non-teaching staff across the NSW who participated in the webinar “Boosting Psychological Wellbeing” conducted by Dr Ben Palmer 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>

Unplugging

- Schedule regular breaks when working from home and set an alarm to remind you to take them. During your break go for a short walk, do some stretching or sit in the sun.
- Use only set times to check emails and set your phone to Do Not Disturb or Airplane mode at particular times.
- Communicate with others the times you are working.
- Change out of work clothes to signal an end to the working day.

Managing distractions

- Let others know the best times to contact you.
- Adhere to your plan for taking breaks and scheduling emails and phone calls and guide staff to do the same.
- Write a ‘to do’ list of what you want to achieve either in a journal or digitally and highlight each item as you complete it.
- Be mindful and intentional as you complete even the smallest tasks.

Staying motivated

- Support the wellbeing of all staff through fun days and activities and the use of mindfulness apps such as Smiling Mind.
- Create frequent opportunities for staff to laugh together.
- Use staff members' strengths but also provide opportunities for stretch.
- Take small steps, monitor impact and gauge wellbeing and productivity.

Communication

- Use video conferencing platforms to hold formal whole staff, Stage and Faculty meetings as well as informal check ins and catch ups. Celebrate together what is going well.
- Provide opportunities for constructive feedback about what's working well.
- Establish a space at school with tripods and camera facilities already set up so that staff can come in and record explicit lessons onsite.
- Give team members time to reflect on any new information before seeking responses.
- Provide online professional learning on new technology skills and establish a structure for colleagues to mentor one another.
- Delegate effectively to those staff with specific skills. These times enable identification of staff with the attributes for future leadership.
- Take the time to ask questions and listen without judgement. Ask staff how they are doing, not what they are doing.

Relationships

- Humour is so powerful. It is so important to laugh with your team.
- Organise a buddy system for colleagues to check in with one another and make an extra effort to check in on staff who live alone.

- Establish a roster for a staff member to choose a 'bell song' to start the day and someone to set an exercise challenge.
- Use video conferencing to hold social events for staff to meet informally.
- Acknowledge and share the strengths and different styles of each member of the team.
- Maintain connection with vulnerable students by having support staff check in with them and complete individualised activities via video conference with supervision.

We trust you find these suggestions from colleagues useful.

Joanne Jarvis, Director and the School Leadership Institute team

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