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Right to Disconnect Policy

The Fair Work Act recently introduced a new **'right to disconnect'** that applies to school employees. The details are listed below:

- Employees now have the right to refuse contact or attempted contact outside their working hours unless that refusal is unreasonable. This means an employee can refuse to monitor, read, or respond to contact from an employer or a third party (including parents/ caregivers). In emergency situations, an employer can still reasonably contact an employee after-hours.
- For communication purposes from families, staff can be contacted via Seesaw or email between the hours of 8am - 5pm.
- Noting our staff spend a significant amount of their workday focusing on teaching or other activities applicable to their roles, staff will endeavor to respond to parent/ caregiver communications requesting a response within 48 hours, noting staff will discern whether an urgent matter requires a shorter response timeframe (please note that this may not be possible for part-time teachers, such as our Specialist staff).
- The reasonableness of out of hours contact will differ depending on the nature and seniority of the position the employee occupies.
- Senior staff will be expected to be available more readily than less senior staff.
- In ascertaining the reasonableness of 'out of hours contact', the personal circumstances of a given employee, for example any caring responsibilities, will be relevant.
- Applicable work hours will vary for school employees depending on the nature of their position.
- We value and respect the right to disconnect as a positive addition to the Fair Work Act. We recognise the breadth of digital communication options can create availability creep where employees become more accessible in locations and at times of the day, weekends and during periods of leave when they should be able to disconnect from work.