STHS Community Communication Policy (July 2024)
student version

Sydney Technical High School
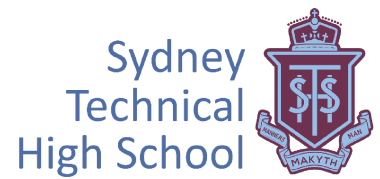
Purpose, scope and principles

The purpose of this document is to outline communication protocols at Sydney Technical High School, emphasising the importance of respectful and timely interactions via telephone, email, and social media. Adherence to these protocols aims to create a harmonious and productive environment for students, parents, staff and visitors. The scope includes all members of the school community, and the general principles focus on respect, professionalism, privacy, confidentiality, accuracy, responsiveness, and transparency.

Acceptable Email Use for Students Communicating with Staff

To ensure effective and respectful communication between students and teachers, Sydney Technical High School has established the following guidelines for acceptable email use.

Adhering to these guidelines will help maintain a professional and supportive educational environment:

- Subject Line Clarity: Clearly state the purpose of your email in the subject line (e.g., "Question About Homework Assignment in Maths Class - [Your Name]").
- Proper Salutations: Begin your email with an appropriate greeting (e.g., "Dear Sir," or "Hello Ms. Johnson,").
- Identify Yourself: Always include your full name, class, and section at the beginning of the email if it's not obvious from your email address. This is particularly important if your email address does not clearly state your name.
- Purpose of the Email: Clearly and concisely state the reason for your email. Be specific about your question or concern to enable your teacher to respond more effectively.
- Polite and Respectful Tone: Maintain a respectful and polite tone throughout your email. Remember that tone can be easily misunderstood in written communication, so choose your words carefully.
- Use of Proper Language: Use formal English and avoid slang, text speech (e.g., "u" instead of "you"), and emojis. Ensure your email is well-written, with proper grammar and punctuation.
- Attachments: When attaching files, mention what you are attaching and why. Ensure any attachments are relevant to the subject of your email and are safe to open.
- Confidentiality and Sensitivity: Avoid sharing sensitive or personal information over email. If you need to discuss a sensitive issue, request a meeting or a parent phone call instead.
- Checking for Previous Communications: Before sending an email, check if your question has already been answered in class materials, assignments, or previous communications.
- Acknowledging Receipt: If a teacher replies to your email, acknowledge the receipt of their response, especially if it resolves your query or requires a follow-up action from you (e.g., Dear Sir/Miss, Thank you very much for your response...)

- Privacy Respect: Do not forward emails from teachers to other students or parties without the explicit permission of the teacher. Respect the privacy and confidentiality of your communication.
- Timeliness: Avoid sending emails late at night or during weekends and holidays in respect of teachers' personal time. Understand that while teachers will strive to respond as quickly as possible, they may not be able to provide immediate responses outside of school hours. Feedback is an important part of the learning process and can be a labour-intensive part of teaching - in particular at peak times on the academic calendar. If a reasonable amount of time (more than three school days) has elapsed without a response from your teacher, use a moment in class to politely remind them or see them after class.

Acceptable Google Classroom Use for Students

- Be Respectful and Courteous: Always treat your classmates and teachers with respect. Avoid using language that could be considered disrespectful or offensive.
- Stay On Topic (NO SPAM): Ensure your posts and comments are relevant to the subject being discussed. This helps keep the class focused and makes it easier for everyone to follow along.
- Use Proper Grammar and Spelling: Write clearly and proofread your posts for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This makes your contributions easier to understand and more professional.
- No Bullying or Harassment: Bullying, harassment, or any other form of intimidation is strictly prohibited. Treat everyone in the classroom as you would like to be treated.
- Protect Privacy: Do not share personal information about yourself or others. This includes addresses, phone numbers, or private details that should not be public.
- Cite Your Sources: If you are sharing information from other sources, be sure to properly cite them to give credit where it's due.
- Think Before You Post: Remember that once something is posted, it can be seen by others and may be difficult to completely remove. Take a moment to consider how your post or comment might be perceived by others. If unsure, do not post.
- Report Problems: If you see something concerning, don't ignore it. Let your teacher know so they can address the issue.
- Participate Positively: Try to contribute positively to discussions and engage constructively with your classmates' posts and comments.

Remember - not all teachers use Google Classroom. Some may prefer contact via email. Adhere to their preferences to ensure effective communication.

By following these guidelines, students can ensure their email communications are effective, respectful, and conducive to a positive learning environment. If in doubt about how to communicate on a particular matter, students are encouraged to seek advice from their teachers or deputy principal.