



Harrietsham Church of England Primary School

Communications Policy

Policy lead:	Jackie Chambers
Responsibility:	Headteacher
Date approved by Governing Body:	September 2026
Governor signature:	Rebecca Emson (Chair)
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Harrietsham Church of England Primary School

Communications Policy

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School Context:

Harrietsham CEP Vision Statement

We are a warm, welcoming, and inclusive school rooted in our rural community. Like the mustard seed we grew from tiny beginnings and our branches are now spread wide –providing support and taking our values beyond the school gates. All those in our community feel safe and nurtured - able to flourish and grow academically, spiritually, emotionally and physically to achieve their full God-given potential.

“Nurtured we flourish”

We are a nurturing school. As such we believe in, and follow, **The Six Principles of Nurture** in all of our practice.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally.
2. The classroom offers a safe base.
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing.
4. Language is a vital means of communication.
5. All behaviour is communication.
6. The importance of transition in children's lives.

Our Values

The roots of our vision are in the parable of the Mustard Seed.

'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches'.

Matthew 13 31-32

In order to grow and reach our potential, everything that we do in school is driven by our vision and underpinned by our core Christian values of:

Love, Fellowship and Forgiveness

Purpose of Policy

At Harrietsham Church of England Primary School we place great value on the partnership between home and school. In order to ensure that our communication is constructive, manageable and robust we have developed a Communication Policy.

This policy outlines the systems and procedures that we, as a school, follow and in addition outlines our expectations of parents in this area. Through the following transparent mechanisms we aim to work together to ensure effective communication for all, thereby getting it right for each and every child.

Communication from School

We have the following mechanisms for communicating with parents:

- The School Website - which includes information about: School life, Classes, Staffing, Governors, Policies, Events, Online payments, Curriculum overviews etc
- Emails
- Telephone calls
- Face to face meetings

- Virtual meetings
- Weekly Newsletter - located on website and is emailed on the day of publication
- Arbor – Termly Progress Reports (x3 per year) by the class teacher to parents: Short summaries in the Autumn and Spring terms. Longer written reports in the Summer term
- EYFS, KS1 and KS2 standardised testing result reports
- Open classroom sessions x 3 per year
- Information evenings
- Class / Year Group events
- Year Group Worship Assemblies
- Social Media via Facebook for OPAL and Forest School
- Class dojo
- Annual community events: Shows, Sports Day, Hot Dogs and Cool Music etc

Communication from Home to School

There are a number of reasons for parents to communicate with the school including the following: pupil absence, pupil progress, pupil's medical needs, concerns, questions and queries, day to day arrangements and finally complaints.

There are various channels of communication with the school, and for efficiency the majority go through the school office who then disseminate the information to the correct recipient:

- **Absence from School** - Please refer to the school's absence procedures and report any absences via the school office.
- **Day-to-Day Arrangements** - Sharing information, such as medical needs or changes in collection, are to go through the school office during opening hours of 8.30am to 4pm. Outside of these hours messages can be left on the school answer phone or sent to the School Office by email.
- **Class Teachers (including children's social and emotional well-being)** - Appointments can be made with Class Teachers. Appointments can be booked via the school office or with the Class Teacher at end of day pick-up or by a note sent via dojo. Teachers are very busy and so first thing in the morning, at drop off time, may not be possible. Confirmation that a concern has been received will usually be made within 24 hours and no later than 48 hours. Any investigation or follow up will happen within 5 working days depending on the severity of the concern. Parents can also request specific dates with agreement with the class teacher.
- **Senior Leadership Appointments** - If matters cannot be resolved with the Class Teacher, appointments can be made firstly to see the specific leaders responsible for the area of concern (please see the school website for names) and then the Deputy and Headteacher. Appointments should be made via the school office and will be offered as soon as possible but certainly within 5 working days of requesting a meeting.
- **Safeguarding** - Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with via the Designated Safeguarding Leaders and will be a priority.
- **Complaints** - Must follow the complaints policy and processes (available on the school website).

Please see our communications flow-diagram for more information about who to contact and when:

Parent - School Communications Flowchart

At Harrietsham Church of England Primary School, we value the importance of effective communication with our families because of the support it provides our children. The flowchart below is designed to support effective communication and provide clarity when you need to contact the school. This tiered approach aims to support both families and staff to resolve any concerns efficiently and effectively.

Tier 1	
This is the first point of contact between families and the school. The table below clarifies whether the communication requires the attention of your child's class teacher or if the school office is more appropriate. Teachers are available most days before and after school and appointments can be made in person, via the school office (office@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk) or via Dojo.	
Class Teacher	School Office
	Tel: 01622 859261 office@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk
Please contact your child's Class Teacher in the first instance if the query concerns: • Home-learning queries • Behaviour issues/concerns • Learning and academic progress queries • Home/pastoral/friendship concerns • School trips and visits	Please contact the office if your query concerns: • School events information/ changes to usual school day (please check diary dates first) • Reporting an absence / attendance queries • Payment queries • Medication/injuries/appointments • School meal queries

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Tier 2		
If further support is required, the following members of staff are available to support. This can be organised through the school office, or in collaboration with the teacher currently dealing with the query.		
Inclusion Team Mrs Racheal Hancock – Inclusion Assistant rachael.hancock@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk Mrs Rebecca Evans – Inclusion Leader rebecca.evans@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk	Pastoral Team Mrs Amy Smith – FLO amy.smith@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk Mrs Jo Griffin – Pastoral Leader joanne.griffin@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk	Phase Leaders Ms Nicki Pittam – Upper School Leader nicki.pittam@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk Mr Ben Walker – Lower School Leader ben.walker@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk
Please contact the Inclusion Team if your query concerns: - Escalated SEND or Pupil Premium concerns - Initial complaints re. SEND concerns or practice - Ongoing SEND correspondence	Please contact the Pastoral Team if your query concerns: - Escalated parent and family support - Pastoral Care - Safeguarding Concerns - Escalated behaviour concerns	Please contact our Middle Leaders if your query concerns: Specific learning difficulties / queries related to Upper or Lower School.

Tier 3
Having followed Tier 1 and 2, if a matter needs further attention, it can be brought to the Deputy Headteacher. This can be organised through the school office or in collaboration with the member of the leadership team currently dealing with the query.
Deputy Headteacher Mrs Samantha Fenner samantha.fenner@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk
Any escalated concerns can be raised with the DHT. Before requesting an appointment, please ensure that you have followed the steps in this flowchart.

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Tier 4

**Having followed Tier 1-3, if a matter needs further attention, it can be brought to the Headteacher.
This can be organised through the school office or in collaboration with the member of the leadership team dealing with the query.**

Headteacher

Mrs Jackie Chambers

headteacher@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

In addition to concerns escalated through Tiers 1 -3, the following queries can be raised directly with the Headteacher.
Before requesting an appointment, please ensure that you have followed the steps in this flowchart.

- Issues which relate to serious Safeguarding concerns.
- Issues which relate to the conduct of a staff member.
- Requests for school appeals or reference requests can be made directly to the Headteacher.

Tier 5

Having followed Tiers 1-4, if the unlikely situation arises where you are still not satisfied that your concerns have been successfully resolved, our Chair of Governors is available to offer further support.

Chair of Governors

Mrs Rebecca Emson

rebecca.emson@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

To contact Mrs Emson directly, please access our school's complaint policy via the school website.
Alternatively, a printed copy can be obtained from the school office.

Written Communication

All written communication to staff, including the Headteacher, should be made via the school office, either by letter or email. Written communication will be acknowledged usually within 24 hours and no later than 48 hours and responded to in full within 5 working days of receipt.

Telephone Communication

All telephone communication to staff, including the Headteacher, should be made via the school office. Telephone messages will be acknowledged usually within 24 hours and no later than 48 hours and responded to in full within 5 working days of receipt.

Emergency communication

All parents/carers should ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including but not limited to: their address, telephone number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency.

An additional emergency contact **must** also be given to the school.

If a pupil is seriously ill or injured, the school will attempt to contact the pupil's parents/carers via telephone.

Where an incident affects the whole school community, such as power failure, the school will post a message on the school website, email and text parents.

We will also use the KCC School Closure website.

If the school is closed due to adverse weather or a similar problem, updates will be posted on the website, via email or text.

The local radio stations will broadcast a closure announcement in the event of the school closing due to adverse weather or another emergency situation.

Governor communication

Requests to speak to a school Governor should be made via the Clerk to the Governors through the school office.

Our Chair of Governors can be contacted via the following email address: rebecca.emson@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk. Please allow 5 working days for receipt of your email.

Guidelines for Parent and Staff Communication

We aim for all of our communication to be effective and purposeful. Communication refers to both the sending and receiving of information, such as email and notes, and verbal communications such as telephone conversations and face – to – face meetings.

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In order to ensure a successful exchange of information, it is important that all parties follow a few key principles.

These principles are in line with our school rules and have been outlined below:

- **Ready:**
 - Request a meeting – please don't demand.
 - Be ready not just to provide information, but to listen to the other parties observations and perspectives.
 - Enter the exchange with an open mind and assume a shared best interest for our children.
 - Be prepared to work collaboratively to solve problems.
- **Respectful:**
 - Maintain respectful and open communication.
 - Always use a respectful and polite tone.
- **Safe:**
 - Threats, raised voices and / or inappropriate language will not be tolerated toward staff members and may result in a ban from the school site.
 - Recognise that confidentiality may limit information that can be shared from school to parents, including support offered for other pupils' behaviours.

Please follow the steps outlined in above when raising concerns with the school and do not direct complaints or grievances towards other parents.

Time to Respond to Communication

School staff will make every effort to respond as soon as possible to parent communications, with the understanding that the teaching day sometimes precludes immediate responses. We aim to respond to all concerns within 2 working days; most will be responded to within 24 hours. Be mindful that teachers and staff may need some time to collect needed information before responding in full. All concerns should be responded to in full within 5 working days.

Contact details

In order to assist us with efficient communication, up-to-date contact details must be shared with school via Arbor.

Social Media

We ask that parents refrain from discussing school issues, members of staff or pupils on social media. We are always willing to talk to parents regarding any concerns they have.

Monitoring and review

The efficiency of this policy will be continuously monitored throughout the year by the Head Teacher and governing body.

Contact Information

www.harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

office@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Key Contacts

Headteacher: Mrs Jackie Chambers

headteacher@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Samantha Fenner

samantha.fenner@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Inclusion Leader: Mrs Rebecca Evans

rebecca.evans@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Pastoral Leader and Lead DSL: Mrs Jo Griffin

joanne.griffin@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Business Leader: Mrs Vikki Reeves

vikki.reeves@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk

Chair of Governors: Rebecca Emson

rebecca.emson@harrietsham.kent.sch.uk