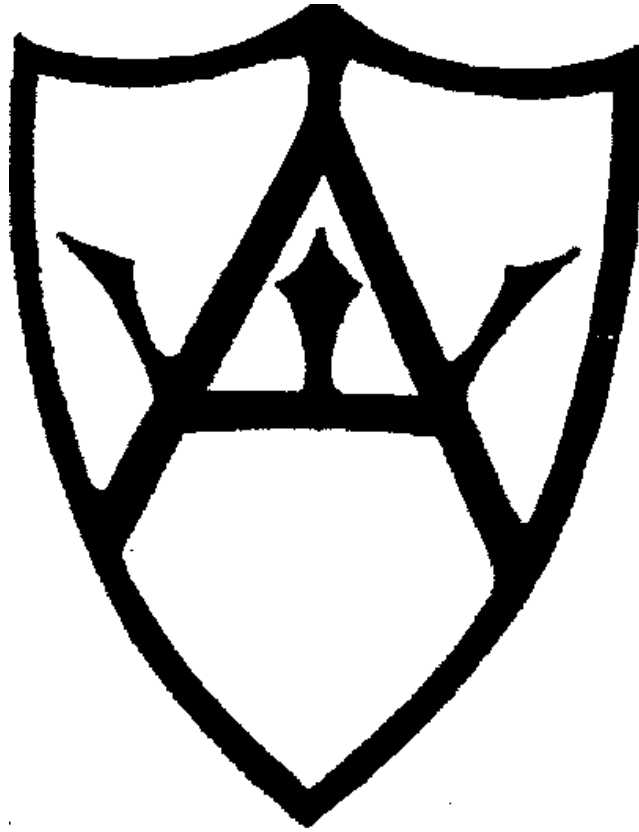


Alfriston School



Home-School Communication Policy

Approved by Governors: July 2024
Date of next review: July 2025

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1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on children's' learning because it:

- Gives parents/carers the information they need to support their child's education
- Helps the school improve, through feedback and consultation with parents/carers
- Builds trust between home and school, which helps the school better support each child's educational and pastoral needs

The aim of this policy is to promote clear and open communication by:

- Explaining how the school communicates with parents/carers
- Setting clear standards and expectations for responding to communication from parents/carers
- Helping parents/carers reach the member of school staff who is best placed to address their specific query or concern so they can get a response as quickly as possible

In the following sections, we will use 'parents' to refer to both parents and carers.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that communications with parents are effective, timely and appropriate
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Regularly reviewing this policy

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's online safety policy & ICT acceptable use agreement
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents get timely information (if they cannot address a query or send the information themselves)

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during core school hours (8.30am – 3.30pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time). In line with promoting staff wellbeing and helping our staff find a suitable work-life balance, staff may work around other responsibilities and commitments and respond outside of these hours, but they are **not expected** to do so.

We have an online safety and acceptable use policy, which can be found on our website.

2.3 Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring that communication with the school is respectful at all times
- Making every reasonable effort to address communications to the appropriate member of staff in the first instance
- Responding to communications from the school (such as requests for meetings) in a timely manner
- Checking all communications from the school

Any communication that is considered disrespectful, abusive or threatening will be treated in line with our parent code of conduct.

Parents should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of core school hours (8.30am – 3.30pm), or during school holidays.

Please see our parent/carer code of conduct, which can be found on our website.

3. How we communicate with parents and carers

The sections below explain how we keep parents up-to-date with their child's education and what is happening in school.

Parents should monitor all of the following regularly to make sure they do not miss important communications or announcements that may affect their child.

3.1 Email

We use email to keep parents informed about the following things:

- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests

3.2 Text messages

We will text parents about:

- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)
- Any first aid required that involves the head or face of their child

3.3 School calendar

Our school website includes a full school calendar for the year; we will also keep parents/carers updated about events or special occasions through the school newsletter.

Where possible, we try to give parents at least 2 weeks' notice of any events or special occasions (including non-uniform days, special assemblies or visitors, or requests for pupils to bring in special items or materials).

3.4 Phone calls

The school office is open to answer phone calls from 8.30am to 3.30pm. If we are unable to answer the phone there is the option to leave a message, we will then return the call as soon as we can.

3.5 Letters

We send the following letters home regularly:

Letters about trips and visits, including requests for consent when necessary
Termly clubs letter
Our school newsletter

3.6 Homework

We set homework on Google Classroom. We issue all children with a login. Any parent/carer who needs a reminder of their child's login details should contact the school office.

3.7 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning, including:

- A mid-year report, which contains a summary of progress and next steps/areas to practice at home.
- An end-of-year report covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance.
- A report on KS2 SATs results

We also arrange regular parent/teacher consultations meetings where parents can speak to their child's teacher(s) about their achievement and progress (see the section below).

3.8 Meetings

We hold two parent/teacher consultation meetings per year. During these meetings, parents can talk with teachers about their child's achievement and progress, the curriculum or schemes of work, their child's wellbeing, or any other updates.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parent/teacher consultation meetings if there are concerns about a child's achievement, progress, or wellbeing.

Parents of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or who have other additional needs, may also be invited to attend further meetings.

3.9 School website

Key information about the school is posted on our website, including:

- School times and term dates
- A calendar of events
- Curriculum information
- Class pages
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information

Parents should check the website before contacting the school.

3.10 Home-school communications app

We use eSchools for our communication system. This system has the option of an app for smart phones, which can help you keep up to date with notices and communications from the school as well as being able to monitor your child's attendance.

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Parents should use the list in appendix 1 to identify the most appropriate person to contact about a query or issue, including the school office number and email address.

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or relevant class, about non-urgent issues in the first instance.

We aim to acknowledge all emails within 2 working days, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within 4 working days.

If a query or concern is urgent, and parents need a response sooner than this, they should call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If parents need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, they should email the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact them within 2 working days.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will respond to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure parents have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within 4 days of your request.

If the issue is urgent, parents should call the school office.

Urgent issues might include things like:

- Family emergencies
- Safeguarding or welfare issues

For more general enquiries please call the school office.

4.3 Meetings

If parents would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, they should email or call the school office to book an appointment.

We try to schedule all meetings within 5 working days of the request.

While teachers are available at the end of the school day if parents need to speak to them urgently, we recommend they book appointments to discuss:

- Any concerns they have about their child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, their child's home environment, or their wellbeing.

5. Inclusion

It is important to us that everyone in our community can communicate easily with the school.

Parents who need help communicating with the school can request the following support:

- School announcements and communications translated into additional languages
- Interpreters for meetings or phone calls

We can make additional arrangements if necessary. Please contact the school office to discuss these.

6. Monitoring and review

The headteacher monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every 2 years.

The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:
Online Safety Policy & ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
Open Door Policy

Parent, Carers and Visitors' Code of Conduct
Staff Code of Conduct
Complaints Policy & Procedure
Managing Serial & Unreasonable Complaints
Equality Policy

Appendix 1: school contact list

Who should I contact?

If you have questions about any of the topics in the table below, or would like to speak to a member of staff:

- Email or call the school office on 01323 870203 or office@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff
- If you have a question about your child's learning, class activities or homework you can email the class teacher using the class email. Emails are checked at the end of the school day so if the matter is urgent please contact the office.
 - Pearl Class – pearl@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
 - Ruby Class – ruby@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
 - Sapphire Class – sapphire@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
 - Emerald – emerald@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there. We try to respond to all emails within 2 working days.

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
My child's learning/class activities/lessons/homework	Your child's class teacher
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	School office
Payments	School office
School trips	School office
Uniform/lost and found	School office
Attendance and absence requests	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01323 870203 If you want to request approval for term-time absence, contact the school office for a form (this should be within at least two weeks notice).
Bullying and behaviour	School office
School events/the school calendar	School office
Special educational needs (SEN)	School office/SENCo
After-school clubs	School office
Hiring the school premises	School office

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Friends of Alfriston School	School office
Governing board	School office
School meals	School office

Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our Complaints Policy & Procedure. The policy can be found on our school website – www.alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk.