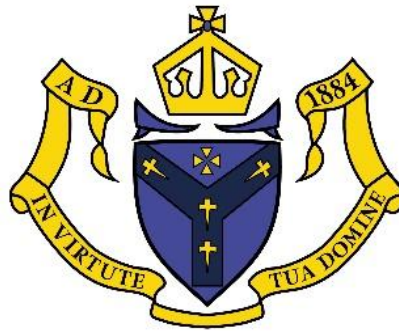


Sissinghurst Church of England VA Primary



Our School Vision

At Sissinghurst Church of England Primary School in partnership with the Church, parents, and wider community, we offer an inclusive learning environment to nurture potential that enables all to be successful. Vibrant, rich curricular opportunities equip everyone with knowledge and skills to question, discuss and challenge.

Everyone's talents are discovered and celebrated. We foster spiritual growth and reflection to find wonder and joy in the World together. As light bearers, our shared responsibility is to encourage each other to be compassionate and kind so we can all shine with integrity, humility and wisdom. We find courage to act when we know there is darkness, illuminating the World with God's light and hope.

We are dedicated to providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. Our Christian values of:

Kindness Forgiveness Courage Service

Policy Title:	Communication Policy
Date:	September 2025 updated Feb 2026
Review Date:	September 2028
Reviewed by:	Sarah Holman
Approved by:	FGB

Contents

1. Introduction and aims	2
2. Roles and responsibilities	2
3. How we communicate with parents and carers	3
4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school	5
5. Inclusion	5
6. Monitoring and review	6
7. Links with other policies	6
Appendix 1: school contact list	7

1. Introduction and aims

We believe that clear, open communication between the school and parents/carers has a positive impact on pupils' 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 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;
- Regularly reviewing this policy in partnership with staff and governors.

2.2 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents in line with this policy and the school's internet acceptable use policies;
- 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 **are not expected** to respond to communications outside of sociable hours (Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm), or their working hours (if they work part-time), or during weekends and school holidays.

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;
- Respond 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.

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 tend to use Outlook to email parents information about the following things:

- Whole school announcements written more formally by letter
- Upcoming school events
- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys or consultations
- Class activities or teacher requests – letter usually with associated electronic consent/details form on a Google or Teams Form
- Payments
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather)

3.2 Arbor in app messaging facility (whole school)

In addition to email, in order to gain maximum 'reach' to as many parents as possible, information in 3.1 above may also be communicated on Arbor. Reminders, updates or short notice changes to events, clubs or other activities will be sent on Arbor.

3.3 Class Dojo (class)

We do not use the message facility on Class Dojo. Some classes (usually in KS2) use this for positive behaviour rewards only.

3.4 Website/School Calendar

Our school website includes a school calendar page of key events. We add a link to this page in every (fortnightly) newsletter to all parents.

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). Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

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

- School times and term dates
- Important events and announcements
- Curriculum information
- Important policies and procedures
- Important contact information
- Information about before and after-school provision
- Fortnightly newsletter

Additionally, on the class pages, there are details about the curriculum and supporting your child at home.

3.5 Phone calls

Phone calls will be made in accordance with our acceptable use policy to communicate one or more of the following:

- More serious first aid incidents (note, children are given a wristband to signal to parents where a less serious head injury)
- Behaviour and wellbeing concerns
- Attendance
- Payments (school lunches, trips and visits, school events)
- Liaising to facilitate external/specialist visits and meetings
- Discussing pupil progress (including any notable achievements and/or concerns)

3.6 Reports

Parents receive reports from the school about their child's learning at the end of the year in written form covering their achievement in each part of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance. Children in YR, Y2 and Y6 also receive a report on KS1 and KS2 SATs test and teacher assessments.

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

3.7 Meetings

We hold parents' evenings twice a year (Autumn Term 2 and Spring Term 4). 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 area of concern.

The school may also contact parents to arrange meetings between parents' evenings 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 asked to attend further meetings to address these additional needs with the school's SENCO.

We offer termly drop-in sessions with our SENCO, FLO and ELSA TA if you wish to book these via the office. Dates are shown here:

<https://www.sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=Drop+in+sessions&pid=92>

4. How parents and carers can communicate with the school

Please 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.

Please note that communication from parents / outside agencies will only be acknowledged through these agreed channels. Communication directed to staffs' personal, non-school accounts (e.g. through social media) is strictly forbidden in accordance with our acceptable use policy. This is also the case when using named school email accounts as all email traffic is only allowed via the office email address unless an exceptional circumstance.

4.1 Arbor messaging

Parents should always send a message using Arbor to the Class Teacher about non-urgent issues in the first instance. The Class Teacher will aim to respond **by 5pm on the same day wherever possible**, however please note that once the school day has started, they will have limited opportunities/time to respond other than a short reply if time allows. **If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.**

4.1 Email

Parents should always email the school, or the appropriate member of staff, about non-urgent issues in the first instance. This should be via the office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk email as this is manned in working hours. We aim to acknowledge all emails within **3 working days**, and to respond in full (or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate) within **5 working days**.

If a query or concern is urgent, and you need a response sooner than this, please call the school.

4.2 Phone calls

If you need to speak to a specific member of staff about a **non-urgent** matter, please contact the school office and the relevant member of staff will aim to contact you within **3 working days**.

If this is not possible (due to teaching or other commitments), someone will get in touch with you to schedule a phone call at a convenient time. We aim to make sure you have spoken to the appropriate member of staff within **3 days** of your request.

If your issue is urgent, please telephone the school office on **01580 713895**.

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 you would like to schedule a meeting with a member of staff, please email the appropriate address (see appendix 1), or call the school to book an appointment.

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

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

- Any concerns you may have about your child's learning
- Updates related to pastoral support, your 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. We currently make whole-school announcements and communications (such as email alerts and newsletters) available in the following languages:

- English

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 **3** years. The policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Links with other policies

The policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Online safety and acceptable use
- Parent code of conduct
- Staff code of conduct (part of Staff Handbook)
- Complaints
- Child protection

8. Complaints

If you would like to file a formal complaint, please follow the procedure set out in our complaints 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 01580 713895 or office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
- Put the subject and the name of the relevant member of staff (from the list below) in the subject line (for emails)
- We will forward your request on to the relevant member of staff

Remember: check our website first, much of the information you need is posted there.

We try to respond to all emails within **3 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 via Arbor message, in person on the gate at collection or via email via the office
My child's wellbeing/pastoral support	Our school FLO, Mrs Jo Ridgway in person on the gate or via the office (email or phone)
Child protection and safeguarding, including online safety	One of our school DSLs: Sarah Holman, Sharmila Desai, Anna Wolfe or Jo Ridgway via office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk or call if urgent.
Payments	School Business Manager, Mrs Sue Branson sbm@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Clubs	School office, Mrs Wendy Papagno (Wed and Thursdays) office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Sport fixtures	PE/Sports Lead, Mrs Sarah Saxby is the lead who generally organises sporting fixtures and events. Event attendance consent will usually be obtained through Mrs Papagno in the office.
School trips	School office, Mrs Wendy Papagno office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk

I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT...	WHO YOU NEED TO TALK TO
Uniform/lost and found	School office, Mrs Helen Hodges office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Attendance and absence notification	If you need to report your child's absence, call: 01580 713895 If you want to inform us of an absence in advance, you should email office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk and mark for the attention of Mrs Desai, Attendance Leader
Bullying and serious behaviour	The Headteacher, Sarah Holman or Mrs Sharmila Desai, Deputy Headteacher office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
School events/the school calendar	School office, Mrs Helen Hodges office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Special educational needs	Our school SENCO, Mrs Anna Wolfe office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Breakfast and after-school club	School office, Mrs Wendy Papagno or Mrs Helen Hodges office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Hiring the school premises	School Business Manager, Mrs Sue Branson sbm@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Friends of Sissinghurst School (FoSS)	The Friends can be contacted via their Facebook page or via the school office office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
The Governing Board	Governors can be contacted via our office team office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk
Catering/meals	Our meals are subcontracted to Caterlink who can be contacted directly through their website: meals.caterlinkltd.co.uk/contact-us Alternatively, please raise any queries with the school office.