Compassion Courage Cooperation

Wittersham Church of England Home-School Communication Policy 2026

We strive to cooperate and work alongside all members of our community to feel valued, nurtured, and empowered as they embark upon their journey to become the very best that God intended. Throughout their voyage of discovery with us, we ensure all children are provided with a rich curriculum and experiences that promote courage and a strong moral purpose underpinned by our Christian values, preparing them to become compassionate citizens within our rural community and the wider world.

Revision History

Version	Date	By	Description
V01	February 2026	Mrs Coulson	New Policy

'On a voyage of discovery; learning and growing together in the light of God.

Introduction and aims (aligned with Complaints Policy)

At Wittersham Church of England Primary School, we believe that clear, respectful and purposeful communication between home and school is essential to supporting children's learning, wellbeing and development. Strong partnerships with parents and carers help us to work together in the best interests of every child.

This policy aims to:

- promote clear, open and respectful communication between home and school;
- set out how the school communicates with parents and carers;
- clarify how and when parents and carers should communicate with the school;
- establish clear expectations and boundaries for communication;
- protect the wellbeing of pupils, staff and families by ensuring communication remains proportionate, constructive and manageable.

This policy applies to all communication between parents/carers and the school, whether in person, by telephone, email, letter or via digital platforms.

Scope and principles of home–school communication

All communication between home and school should be:

- respectful and courteous;
- focused on the best interests of the child;
- proportionate and purposeful;
- timely and appropriate;
- in line with school procedures and working hours.

The school is committed to listening carefully to concerns and responding fairly. Equally, the school has a duty to safeguard staff wellbeing and ensure that communication does not negatively impact the learning environment or the wider school community.

How the school communicates with parents and carers

The school communicates with parents and carers through the following agreed channels:

- email;
- Class Dojo;
- letters sent home;

- newsletters;
- the school website;
- scheduled meetings such as parents' evenings;
- telephone calls where appropriate.

The school does not use text messaging as a routine method of communication.

Parents and carers are expected to check school communications regularly to ensure they are aware of key information.

How parents and carers should communicate with the school

Parents and carers are asked to communicate with the school in a way that supports clear, effective and balanced home–school relationships.

All non-urgent communication should be directed through the school office in the first instance. This ensures messages are logged, shared appropriately and responded to in a timely manner. Parents should not routinely email individual members of staff directly unless advised to do so by the school.

Email is the preferred method of communication for non-urgent matters. Where possible, emails will be responded to within two working days.

Class Dojo is used for whole-school and class communication. It should not be used for urgent matters or to raise complex or sensitive concerns. Dojo messages are monitored during school working hours only.

To support staff wellbeing and work–life balance, the school operates clear communication boundaries:

- communication is managed between 8.00am and 5.00pm on school days;
- staff are not expected to read or respond to emails or Class Dojo messages outside these hours;
- no responses will be provided during half-term breaks or school holidays;
- all staff email accounts operate an out-of-office response during school holiday periods.

Expectations of conduct and respectful communication

All members of the school community are expected to communicate in a respectful and reasonable manner. The school will not tolerate communication that is abusive, aggressive, threatening, intimidating or harassing.

This includes communication that:

- causes distress to staff;
- interferes with staff carrying out their professional duties;
- negatively impacts the wellbeing of pupils or the wider school community.

Managing unreasonable, persistent or harassing communication (consistent with Complaints Policy)

The school recognises that, on rare occasions, communication from parents or carers may become unreasonable, persistent or amount to harassment. The school has a duty to protect staff wellbeing and ensure communication does not negatively affect pupils or the wider school community.

Harassment is defined as repeated, unwanted or unreasonable communication which causes distress, alarm or intimidation. This may include behaviour that appears minor when viewed in isolation but has a cumulative impact over time.

Unreasonable, persistent or harassing communication may include, but is not limited to:

- communication that is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific or repetitious in nature;
- excessive correspondence, including repeated emails, messages or telephone contact about the same concern or complaint;
- the excessive or unreasonable use of formal requests, including Freedom of Information requests, as a means of continuing communication;
- an insistence on pursuing complaints or concerns that are unsubstantial or where the outcomes sought are unrealistic or unreasonable;
- an insistence on pursuing concerns in a manner that is incompatible with the school's published procedures or reasonable expectations of communication;
- an insistence on communicating only with the Headteacher, regardless of the nature of the issue or the appropriate delegation of responsibilities within the school;
- repeatedly pursuing a concern where the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example where the desired outcome is outside the school's legal authority or remit;
- making repeated or groundless complaints about staff involved in managing communication or concerns, including seeking to have those staff replaced;
- the use of abusive, aggressive or threatening language or behaviour towards school staff, whether in person or in written communication;
- failing to clearly specify the grounds of a concern or complaint, despite offers of

support from the school to do so.

Parents and carers are expected to limit communication to what is necessary while an issue is being considered. Excessive or repetitive correspondence may delay resolution.

Where communication is considered to be becoming unreasonable or persistent, the school will normally seek to address this informally in the first instance. This may include reminding the parent or carer of the appropriate communication routes, expected response times, and the stage reached within school procedures.

If the behaviour continues, the school may take proportionate steps to manage contact in order to protect staff wellbeing and ensure the effective running of the school. These steps may include one or more of the following:

- confirming in writing that the matter has been fully considered in line with school procedures, that it is now closed, and that no further response will be provided on that issue unless new and substantive information is received;
- requiring all future communication relating to the matter to be routed through the school office, rather than individual members of staff, to ensure messages are logged, shared appropriately and responded to consistently;
- limiting communication to a single agreed method (for example, email only) and/or a single named point of contact within the school, in order to prevent duplication, reduce confusion and ensure clear lines of accountability;
- setting clear response times and boundaries, and declining to respond to further correspondence that repeats previously addressed points or does not provide new, relevant information;
- confirming that any meetings relating to the matter will take place online and will be recorded.

Where the school has confirmed that a matter is closed and communication continues without new or substantive information, the school reserves the right to cease correspondence on that issue and no further communication will be entered into.

If unreasonable or harassing communication continues, further measures may be put in place to protect pupils, staff and the school community. Any measures will be proportionate, reviewed regularly, and lifted if communication becomes reasonable.

Accessibility and support

The school is committed to ensuring communication is accessible to all families. Parents and carers who require reasonable adjustments, additional support, or alternative

formats for communication are encouraged to contact the school office to discuss their needs.

Out-of-office arrangements and safeguarding during closures

During school holidays, including half-term breaks, Christmas and Easter, all staff email accounts operate an out-of-office response and emails are not routinely monitored. Class Dojo messages will not be read or responded to during these periods.

An example out-of-office message is:

"Thank you for your message. I am currently out of the office for the half-term break and will return on XXX. During this time, I will not be regularly checking emails and the school office is closed.

If your message relates to an emergency or a safeguarding concern, please contact Kent Children's Services on 03000 41 11 11. In an emergency, please contact the police on 999.

Monitoring, review and consistency with local authority guidance

This policy has been written to align directly with the school's Complaints Policy, including the language used to describe unreasonable, persistent and harassing behaviour, and the proportionate actions the school may take to manage communication.

The policy is consistent with Kent County Council expectations and model guidance for home–school communication and for managing serial or unreasonable contact. It reflects best practice in balancing effective parental engagement with staff wellbeing and the safe, orderly running of the school.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The policy will be reviewed regularly and approved by the Governing Body.