

The Weald Federation

Of Five Ashes, Frant, Mark Cross and Mayfield Church of England Primary Schools



With God's love we grow and learn together

With God's love we grow and learn together to inspire every child and adult to flourish within our community. Through our Christian ethos, excellent teaching and shared learning, we aim to encourage everyone to discover who they are in relation to God, the world and others. This is in order to prepare for, and positively contribute to, our ever changing and diverse world.

Communications Policy

Led by:	EHTs
Date implemented:	October 2025
Date for next review:	October 2026
Approved by:	FGB
ESCC policy / school	School

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1. Introduction and aims

In all schools within The Weald Federation, we believe that clear and open communication between staff and parents/carers plays a vital role in supporting pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Effective communication:

- Provides parents/carers with the information they need to support their child's education.
- Builds trust between home and school, helping us better meet each child's academic and pastoral needs to enable them to flourish in line with our vision.
- Enables the school to improve through constructive feedback and collaboration.

This policy aims to promote clear and open communication by:

- Outlining how the Senior Leadership and staff communicate with parents/carers.
- Setting clear expectations for how staff respond to communications from parents/carers.
- Guiding parents/carers to the most appropriate member of staff for their query or concern, ensuring timely and effective responses.
- Working with other members of staff to make sure parents/carers get timely information if they cannot address a query or send the information directly themselves at that time.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leadership (Heads of School (HOS), Inclusion Leads and Executive Headteachers (EHTs))

- Ensuring communication with parents/carers is clear, timely, and appropriate.
- Overseeing the implementation of this policy.
- Reviewing the policy, alongside the Executive Heads and Governing Board, regularly to ensure its effectiveness.
- Executive Headteachers will respond to formal complaints in line with the Complaints Policy.
- See section 4 for the roles and responsibilities of the Inclusion Leads.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Responding to communication from parents/carers in line with this policy and the school's Online Policy and Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.
- Recording key information relating to safeguarding concerns, more serious behaviour and pupil well-being on our school record keeping system.
- EHTs communicate with all relevant stakeholders regarding Federation information.

Staff will **aim** to respond to communication during their working hours. 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.

Incidents in School

If an incident occurs during the school day that we believe parents/carers should be informed about, the school will take the following actions:

If a Child Is Unwell

- The school will **contact parents/carers or the designated emergency contact** to request that the child be collected.
- If no one is available to collect the child, they will remain in school in a **safe and appropriate space** until the end of the school day.
- If a child has an Individual Health Care Plan due to medical needs, this will be followed.
- If a child cannot be collected and requires immediate medical attention, the school will determine the appropriate actions to be taken.
- In the event that a child sustains an injury requiring parental notification, parents/carers will be informed either by Arbor, at the end of the school day or in a phone call (see our First Aid Policy for further information).

Incidents Involving Other Children

At The Weald Federation, we are committed to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all children. When a serious incident occurs involving two or more pupils or the whole school, the school will inform the parents or carers of the children directly involved or send out a whole school message via Arbor.

- When informing parents/carers about more serious incidents involving other children, please note:
 - **Not all incidents** will or can be shared with parents/carers in line with our safeguarding and data protection responsibilities. It is the school's responsibility to balance all considerations and put the welfare of ALL of the children in their care at the centre, taking external advice as required.
 - The school reserves the right to decide whether or not to share details, based on the nature and severity of the incident.
- If parents/carers are collecting their child:
 - They will be **informed at pick-up** about the incident and any follow-up actions.
 - Names of other children involved will not be automatically shared and staff will be mindful of different perspectives and everyone's right to confidentiality.

- If parents/carers are **not collecting their child**:
 - A **phone call or Arbor message** will be sent.
 - This message will provide a summary of the concern and offer or request a follow-up conversation.

3. Communication between parents/carers and school

We are committed to ensuring that all members of our community can communicate effectively with the school. If you require support to access school communications or completing forms, please contact the school office.

Role of parents and carers:

- Ensuring that all communication with the school (written and in person) is respectful at all times
- Directing queries, via the school office email, to the appropriate staff member whenever possible.
- Responding to school communications (e.g., meeting requests) promptly.
- Regularly checking all communications from the school.
- Always seeking permission to record a meeting with a staff member.

Parents/carers should **not** expect staff to respond to their communication outside of their working hours, weekends or during school holidays. The office email is checked at regular intervals during school holidays, but a response may not happen until the school reopens.

There may be occasions where a school is unable to provide specific information requested by a parent or discuss something of a particular topic. Where this is the case, the school will explain why this cannot be provided or discussed. For example, this may be due to confidential information related to another child/family or the school awaiting a formal decision by The Governing Board or Local Authority.

How to contact school?

If parents/carers need to speak to a specific member of staff – teacher, Inclusion Lead, Head of School or Executive Headteacher - they should either email or telephone the school office. Meetings with teachers are usually held at the end of the school day due to their teaching commitments. Pre-arranged meetings are sometimes possible before school.

Email Guidance

- Please include the **subject of your query** and the **name of the relevant staff member** in the subject line of your email.
- Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff.
- **Non-urgent queries** will be acknowledged within **48 hours** (excluding weekends), with an indication of next steps.
- **Urgent queries** will be addressed on the **same day** (for example, family emergencies, serious safeguarding or welfare issues)

Phone Guidance

- If leaving a voicemail, please clearly state:
 - The **subject of your call**
 - The **name of the staff member** you wish to contact

- Your message will be passed on promptly, and we aim to ensure a response within 48 hours for non-urgent matters.

Before You Contact Us

Please **check the school website and latest newsletter first**, as much of the information you may need—such as term dates, policies, and event details—is readily available there.

School	Executive Headteacher	Head of School	School office	Telephone
Five Ashes	Miss J Warren	Mr D Gurr	fiveashesoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01825 830395
Frant	Mrs J Challis	Mrs L Beach	frantoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01892750243
Mayfield	Miss J Warren	Miss E Ramsay	mayfieldoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01435 873185
Mark Cross	Mrs J Challis	Mrs L Hillman	markcrossoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01892 852866

School Communication System: Arbor

We use Arbor as our Management Information System to manage pupil data, communication, and administrative tasks.

Parents and carers can stay connected with the school through the dedicated Arbor App. The school uses this platform to send messages to individuals, specific groups, or the entire school community. Parents and carers can also respond directly through the app, which is checked daily by school staff to ensure timely communication. Absence reporting can also be managed on the Arbor app.

We keep parents/carers informed, via Arbor, about the following things (this list is not exhaustive):

Upcoming school events

- Scheduled school closures (for example, for staff training days)
- School surveys, consultations and inspections
- Class activities or teacher requests
- Sharing newsletters and specific letters
- Payments
- Short-notice changes to the school day
- Emergency school closures (for instance, due to bad weather or no water)

School Calendar [The Weald Federation](#)

Our newsletters and school website share key dates for the school year.

Where possible, we try to give parents/carers 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). Sometimes a date is noted and further information follows.

Any such event will be included in the school calendar.

Reports

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

- A written annual report (sent in July) covering pupils' achievement in each area of the curriculum, how well they are progressing, and their attendance. This may include results of national tests:

phonics screening for Y1, phonic re-takes for some Y2 pupils, multiplication times tables check for Y4 and End of KS2 SATs for Y6 pupils.

Parent Meetings

We hold 2 formal parent consultations each year – one in Term 2 and one in Term 4. During these meetings, parents/carers can talk with teachers about their child’s achievement and progress, their child’s wellbeing, or any other area of concern.

The school may also contact parents/carers to arrange meetings between parents/carers’ evenings if there are concerns about a child’s achievement, progress, or wellbeing. Parents/carers can also ask for additional teacher meetings, via the school office, at any time.

Parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs (SEND), or who have other additional needs will be invited to additional meetings. Please see the Inclusion section of this policy for further information regarding this.

Federation Website

Key information about the school is posted on our website and we encourage parents/carers to check the Federation website or other communication before contacting the school. This includes:

- 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
- Withdrawal from Learning forms
- Complaints Policy

4. Inclusion (SEND)

Each school has an Inclusion Team. As team members work part-time, all enquiries should be directed to the school office in the first instance.

Parents/carers of children with special educational needs (SEND) will be invited to meet with the Inclusion Lead and, where possible, the class teacher up to three times per year.

Weald Federation overall Lead: Mrs J Challis, Executive Headteacher				
School	Inclusion Lead (SENDCo)	Inclusion Support Administrator	School office	Telephone
Five Ashes	Mrs S Thomas (Wednesday and Thursday)	Mrs G O’Connell	fiveashesoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01825 830395
Frant	Mrs J Thomson (Monday and Tuesday)	Mrs E Comeau	frantoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01892750243
Mayfield	Mrs S Thomas (Wednesday and Thursday)	Mrs F Chrusciel	mayfieldoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01435 873185

Mark Cross	Mrs J Thomson (Monday and Tuesday)	Mrs G Smith	markcrossoffice@thewealdfederation.org	01892 852866
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5. Monitoring and review

The Executive Headteachers monitors the implementation of this policy and will review the policy every year.

The policy is approved by the Governing Board.

6. Links with other policies

This policy links to other policies such as:

- Acceptable Use of Technology
- Online Safety
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Health and Safety
- SEND Information Report
- Complaints
- Crisis Management

7. Complaints

In the majority of cases, we aim to manage complaints informally through seeking to understand the parent's perspective, share additional information or a different perspective, to reflect on our practice and to find a positive resolution. However, we recognise that on rare occasions, parents/carers may wish to make a formal complaint regarding communication and should follow the procedure set out in our Federation Complaints Policy; this can be found on the Federation section of our websites.