



# A Strategy for Effective Communication

September 2025

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## **Why is good communication essential?**

Effective communication within school and between school and parents is essential for knowing and understanding every child as an individual, as well as fostering a supportive and successful learning environment. When communication is clear, consistent, and collaborative, it helps ensure that our pupils' and students' academic, social, and emotional needs are met. Parents and carers are better equipped to support their child's education, staff can tailor their approaches to individual needs, and any concerns can be addressed promptly. Strong communication builds trust, encourages engagement, and creates a shared sense of responsibility for student progress and wellbeing.

Within the school itself, good communication among colleagues promotes teamwork, consistency, and a positive school culture. It allows teachers, support colleagues, and those in positions of leadership to share insights, coordinate strategies, and respond effectively to challenges. When everyone is informed and aligned, pupils and students benefit from a more cohesive and responsive educational experience. Moreover, open channels of communication help staff feel valued and empowered, which contributes to morale and retention.

Between school and home, regular and meaningful communication strengthens the partnership between educators and families. Whether through newsletters, in-school meetings, digital platforms, or informal conversations, keeping parents and carers informed and involved enhances pupil and student motivation and achievement. It also helps schools better understand the context of each child's life outside the classroom, allowing for more personalised support and understanding. Ultimately, strong communication creates a sense of community and shared purpose, which is vital for every child's success.

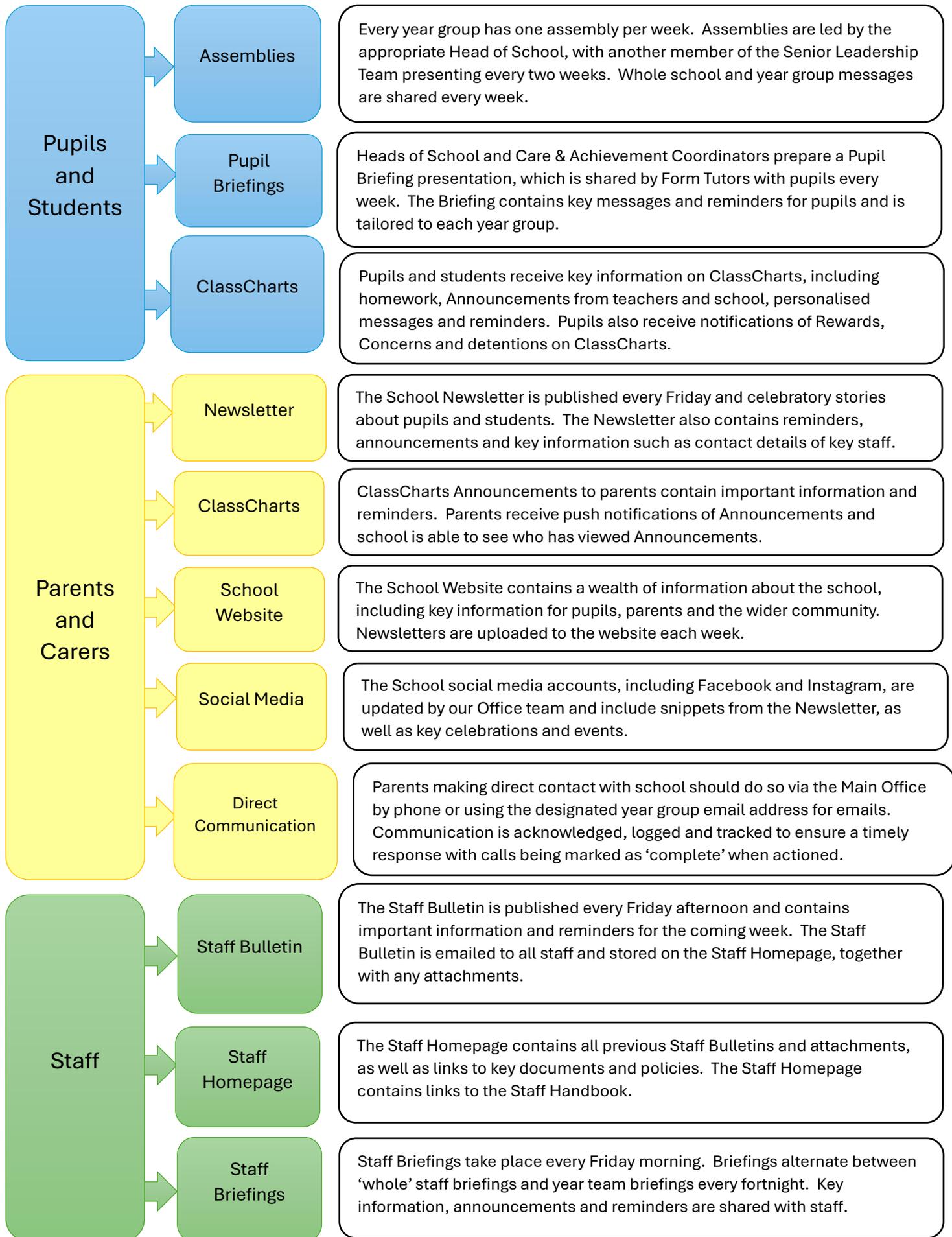
## **What does 'good' communication look like?**

Good communication in a school is clear, timely, and purposeful. It involves sharing information in a way that is easy to understand, accessible to everyone, and relevant to the needs of pupils, students, staff, and parents. Whether it's a class message or reminder, a school-wide announcement, a conversation or meeting, effective communication avoids jargon, uses appropriate channels, and ensures that messages are received and understood.

It is also two-way and inclusive. Good communication encourages feedback, questions, and dialogue, making everyone feel heard and valued. School staff listen actively to pupils, students and parents, respond respectfully, and work collaboratively to address concerns or celebrate successes. This openness builds trust and strengthens relationships across the school community.

Finally, good communication is consistent and aligned with the school's vision and values. It supports learning, wellbeing, and engagement by keeping everyone informed and connected. Through our newsletter, website, ClassCharts, social media, meetings, or informal chats, strong communication helps create a positive, transparent, and supportive environment where pupils and students can thrive.

# Woldgate School Communication Overview



## **Our Strategic Aim**

Our aim is to ensure our communication is clear, effective and transparent with all parties, including pupils, parents, staff and the wider school community across all communication streams.

## **Key Staff**

All colleagues have a part to play in ensuring that communication is effective. However, the following individuals have areas of strategic responsibility to ensure we communicate effectively:

Communication Strategic Lead:	Luke Sloman
Communication with pupils and students:	Helen Handley
Communication with parents and carers:	Helen Handley
Communication with staff:	Mike Monaghan

The following colleagues support the strategic leads in communication, pupils, students, parents and carers:

Head of Lower School:	Abi Minton
Head of Middle School:	Roy Askoolum
Head of Upper School:	Ilda Atkinson
Head of Sixth Form:	Kerry Smith
Head of Attendance & Wellbeing:	Sarah Geary
Office Manager:	Avril Charlton

## Summary of Actions 2025/2026

Area of Communication	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline
Assemblies	Ensure that Reward and Attendance certificates are distributed consistently across all year groups every week.	Helen Handley	October 2025
Assemblies	Invite staff to present assemblies	Helen Handley	December 2025
Pupil Briefings	Pupil Briefings will contain a maximum of three key messages and reminders each week	Helen Handley	October 2025
ClassCharts	All Announcements to parents via ClassCharts must be routed through the School Office	Luke Sloman	October 2025
Newsletter	Reduce length of newsletter by alternating Heads of School and Curriculum Focus	Luke Sloman	October 2025
School Website	Update photographs of key staff	Avril Charlton	October 2025
Social media	Increase frequency of social media posts, including Newsletter and weekly updates	Avril Charlton	October 2025
Direct Communication	Route all initial external communication through the School Office to ensure tracking and response times are reasonable	Avril Charlton	December 2025
Direct Communication	As part of our wider development of the WLP Code of Conduct, undertake training with staff regarding the management of communication	Luke Sloman	July 2026
Staff Homepage	Provide staff training on navigating and using SharePoint	Luke Sloman	September 2025

## **Assemblies**

Every pupil in Years 7 to 11 have an assembly every week. The assembly is presented by either their Head of School, another member of the Senior Leadership Team or a guest speaker. The purpose of assemblies is to:

- Share and remind pupils of the school ethos and values
- Celebrate pupil attendance, rewards and achievements
- Remind pupils of school expectations
- Share important information, including safeguarding and online safety
- Provide important announcements and reminders
- Make pupils aware of enrichment opportunities within school

### **What action have we taken already?**

From September 2024, we ensured that assemblies were mapped against a calendar of key events, anniversaries, focus days, weeks and months. These ensured that assemblies were relevant to pupils and students and linked in with wider national events and focus events.

We also introduced a fortnightly alternation between wider Senior Leadership and Head of School assemblies. This ensured that pupils had a variety of speakers and that they received both whole-school and year-group specific messages.

Heads of School were also provided with printed certificates for Rewards and Attendance to distribute, alongside prizes.

### **What action are we going to take this year?**

From September 2025, we are going to ensure that Reward and Attendance certificates are distributed consistently across all year groups every week. This ensures fairness and also provides a platform for Heads of School to reiterate key reminders and messages, whilst celebrating pupils who are meeting our expectations.

We also want to encourage more staff to present assemblies, as well as continue to build upon the numbers of external visitors invited into speak to pupils and students.

We will monitor the efficacy and impact of our assemblies through pupil voice, both in person (School Council, Form Reps etc) and wider surveys.

## **Pupil Briefings**

Pupil Briefings are shared with pupils every Monday morning by Form Tutors, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation is collated by the appropriate Head of School and contains both whole school and year group-specific key information, reminders about events and expectations. Pupils must log into their Pupil ClassCharts account or app to access.

### **What action are we taking this year?**

From September 2025, all Pupil Briefings will contain a maximum of three key messages and reminders each week, ranging from whole school to year group-specific messages and reminders. This is to ensure consistency and impact of key messages and reminders.

## **ClassCharts**

### **Pupils and Students**

When arriving at Woldgate School, all pupils and students are given access to their ClassCharts Pupil account and can access this via the mobile app or on a web browser. ClassCharts is used to communicate with pupils and students in a variety of ways:

### **Heads of School and Care & Achievement Coordinators**

Heads of School can share Announcements with pupils on ClassCharts, containing either whole-school or year group-specific information or reminders.

Heads of School and Care & Achievement Coordinators are also able to send direct messages to pupils or groups through ClassCharts. Pupils can respond to these messages in a secure 'chat' using their own ClassCharts accounts.

### **Classroom Teachers and Form Tutors**

Teachers can use ClassCharts to set homework, with instructions. Teachers can award Rewards and Concerns and enter more detailed information as to the reasons. They are also able to create class Announcements and directly message pupils in ClassCharts.

Pupils are also able to view any detentions they may have, including the date, time, location and reason.

### **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are issued with a unique ClassCharts code for each of their children at the school, to enable them to access their ClassCharts Parent App. This can be accessed through either the mobile app, or via a web browser.

### **ClassCharts Announcements**

All Announcements to parents and carers in years 7 to 11 are sent via our School Office. Announcements often contain attached letters and documents in PDF format. This ensures consistency of language and format, whilst ensuring that our Office team are aware and able to respond to queries. Currently, the Sixth Form team send Announcements to parents and carers direct.

### **ClassCharts Attendance**

Parents and carers can inform school of their child's absence directly via the ClassCharts Parent App, including the dates of absence and reasons. School is then able to confirm the absence and contact the parent or carer to clarify details as necessary.

### **What action are we taking this year?**

From September 2025, all Announcements to parents via ClassCharts must be routed through the School Office, to ensure consistency of language and format, and to ensure that Office staff are able to respond to queries.

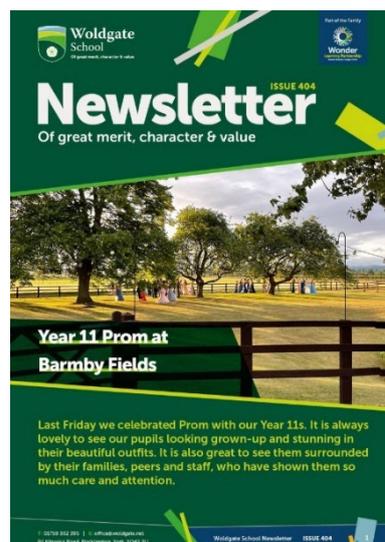


## School Newsletter

Our School Newsletter is published every Friday afternoon and a direct link to the Newsletter, hosted on our website, is shared with parents and carers via ClassCharts. The direct link is also posted on social media to be shared with the wider community.

The purpose of the school newsletter is:

- To celebrate pupil and student work, rewards, achievements and successes
- To celebrate whole school events, rewards, achievements and successes
- Inform parents and the wider community about our teaching and curriculum
- Share our school vision, values and ethos with the wider community
- Share key information regarding safeguarding, attendance and learning support
- Share key information regarding Personal Development and Independent Advice and Guidance
- Provide information and reminders about upcoming events and dates
- Share important announcements and information
- Share contact information for the Attendance and Care & Achievement teams



### What did parents' say?

Through a range of parent voice surveys, parents told us that they valued the Newsletter, particularly the celebration of pupils' achievements and key dates, but that it was too long. Consequently, many parents felt outpaced and were disengaged consequently.

### What action have we taken already?

From September 2024, we dramatically reduced the length of the Newsletter by rotating the front-page focus on Lower, Middle, Upper and Sixth Form schools each week, over four weeks. This reduced the length and reduced the necessity for colleagues to produce articles every week, also improving the quality of the articles. This action was met favourably by parents, although many continued to state the Newsletter was too long.

### What action are we going to take this year?

From September 2025, we are further reducing the length of the Newsletter by alternating our weekly focus from 'school' to 'curriculum area' on an eight-week rotation cycle, from the current four. This will further reduce the length by showcasing either the 'care' or 'achievement' aspect of school. We are also alternating our key information and reminders from Learning Support, Attendance and Safeguarding on a three-week rotation. Other features, such as the Headteachers welcome, key dates, rewards and key contact information will feature each week.

We will monitor parent and carer views and satisfaction with the reduced Newsletter via termly parent voice surveys, as well as discussions with our Operations and Communications Working Group.

## **School Website**

Our school website serves as a central hub for communication, information, and engagement between the school, parents and the wider community. First and foremost, our website seeks to showcase our vision, values and ethos.

Our website provides essential details such as term dates, contact information, curriculum outlines and summaries and school policies and guidance, while also showcasing our pupils' achievements, events, and news. For parents, pupils and students, it offers access to resources like ClassCharts and other learning resources, newsletters, and our school calendar. For prospective pupils and their families, it presents the school's ethos, facilities, and admissions process, helping them make informed decisions. Overall, the website enhances transparency, accessibility, and connection within the school environment.

We have already taken steps to direct parents and carers to our website. Firstly, we have sought to direct parents and carers to our website with links etc whenever possible, rather than including duplicate information in Announcements.

Secondly, we have saved our School Newsletter on our website, and included a direct link for parents, instead of attaching a copy of the Newsletter to Announcements.

### **What action are we going to take this year?**

From September 2025, we are going to update our website with new photographs of key individuals within the school and redevelop our Sixth Form online prospectus on the website.

## **Social Media**

Woldgate School maintains Facebook and Instagram social media accounts and manages these through Hootsuite software. Social media enables us to quickly and easily share information and celebrate our pupils and students with the wider community, as well as with pupils, students and parents.

We use our social media presence to:

- share our Newsletter with the wider community each week
- share photographs and comments celebrating our pupils' and students' achievements, including Rewards
- make our wider community aware of school events and activities
- share important information and reminders with the wider community

### **What action are we going to take this year?**

From September 2025, we are going to increase the number of posts on social media on a weekly basis. As part of this effort, we will ensure that the weekly newsletter is segmented and distributed in pieces over the course of each week.

We will also ensure that key events taking place in school are reported on social media, using appropriate photos.

## **Direct Communication**

We receive many emails and phone calls from parents and carers each day, and it is essential that each of these contacts is acknowledged and responded to within a reasonable time frame. Direct contact between school and parents, when managed effectively, builds trust and positive relationships between home and school, and further ensures that support for pupils is at its most effective.

### **What have parents said?**

In various surveys, parents indicated that responses to direct communication was inconsistent and varied between year groups. This was further compounded when school staff were absent, as direct emails were left unanswered until the colleague returned. Parents also asked for acknowledgement of emails, as well as phone calls.

### **What action have we taken already?**

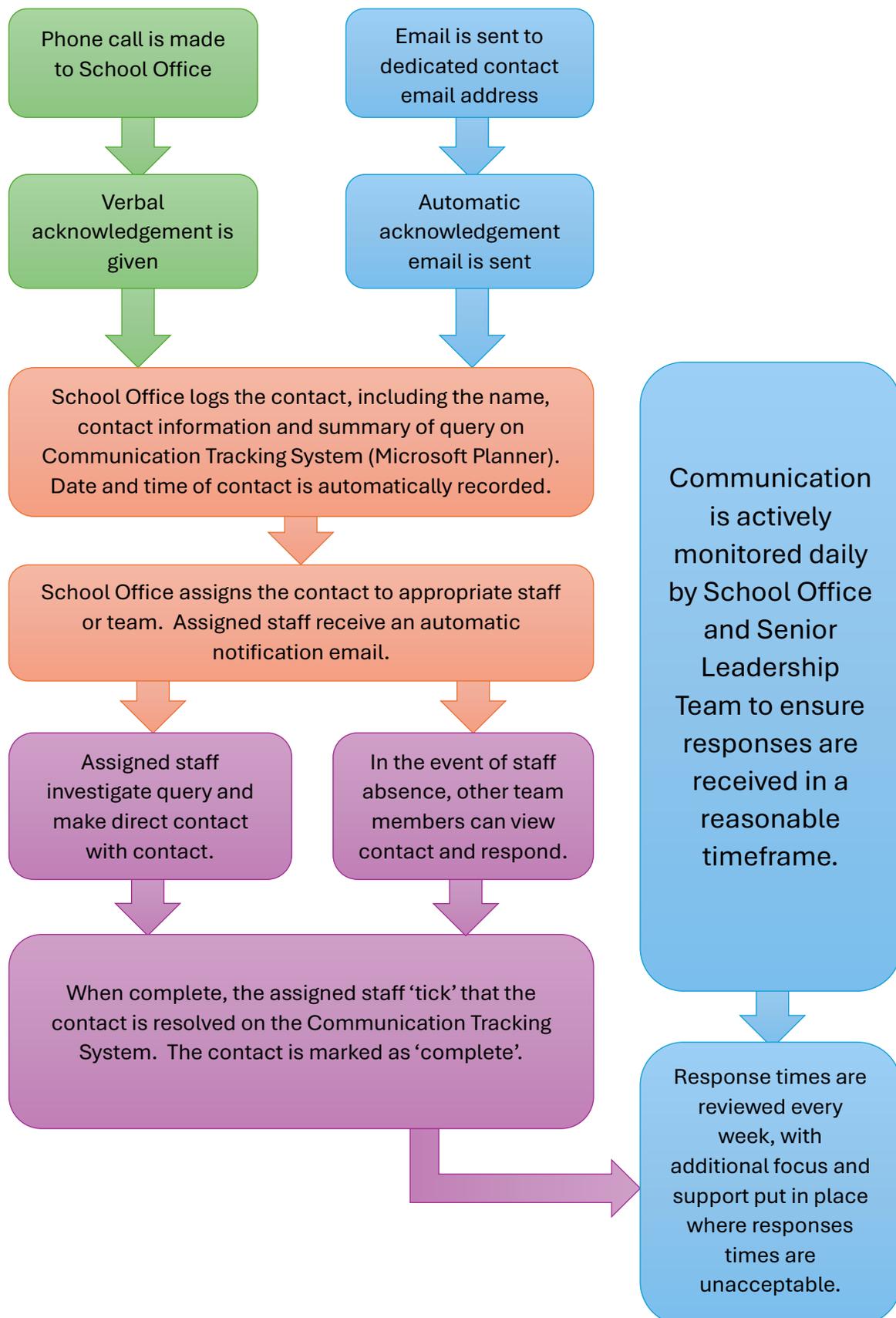
In response to this feedback, we have already made significant changes over the last year to improve our communication process, and to ensure responses are within a reasonable timeframe.

- We removed the mobile phones from the Care & Achievement team. This ensures that all phone calls go first to the School Office, to be directed to the appropriate colleague.
- The School Office logs all phone calls and emails on a dedicated Microsoft Planner Plan, with a brief description of the call, query or concern. The call is allocated to at least one member of staff, who receives an email informing them. When the call has been 'actioned', the member of staff 'ticks' the call as being completed. At all times, outstanding calls and emails are visible to the Office team, and the entire Care & Achievement team.
- We have introduced dedicated email addresses for each year group. All emails to these addresses are routed to the School Office email address and are read by the Office team. All emails to these addresses receive an automated acknowledgement.
- We now measure the response times to calls and emails, as measured as the difference between the date and time the call/email was logged on Planner, and the date and time it was marked as 'actioned'. This enables the school leadership to monitor response times and take action to support colleagues in responding to calls and emails as necessary.

### **What action are we going to take this year?**

To further improve our direct communication processes, we are planning on logging all phone calls and emails intended for all school colleagues, in addition to the Care & Achievement team. This will further improve consistency between calls and emails directed to different areas of the school.

## How Direct Communication responses are managed in school



## Staff Bulletin

Our staff bulletin is issued to all school staff every Friday afternoon contains important information, reminders and attachments for the coming week. The staff bulletin consists of different sections:

- Welcome from the Headteacher
- New school build updates
- School Calendar
- Attendance and safeguarding
- Teaching and learning (notices and reminders about teaching)
- Supporting our pupils and students (focusing on pupils with SEND in particular)
- General notices (where all staff can post notices and reminders)
- Stars of the week (where staff can thank others publicly)

Nominate a 'Star of the Week'!

Staff Bulletin Notice or Announcement

Recommend a book to pupils and students

Staff Bulletins See all

+ Add ▾



**Staff Bulletin: Have a great summer!**  
Our School Vision: 'A school where everything we do is...'  
Mr L Sloman (Woldgate) 19 July  
113 views



**Staff Bulletin: W/b 14th July 2025**  
Our School Vision: 'A school where everything we do is...'  
Mr L Sloman (Woldgate) 11 July  
234 views

Our staff bulletin is created and shared on Microsoft SharePoint. A link is emailed to all staff, who can then view the bulletin on the Staff Homepage on SharePoint, as well as read all previous staff bulletins.

The staff bulletin is designed to be as succinct as possible and to be read on a Monday morning, although in practice many staff read it on a Friday afternoon. Although members of the Senior Leadership team write the headed sections of the bulletin, all staff can submit general notices and attachments for inclusion in the staff bulletin, and all staff can nominate a colleague for the 'Star of the Week'

award – both are submitted via the Staff Homepage.

The staff bulletin is intended to reduce the necessity for whole staff emails during the week, and to provide all important information in one, accessible format. Other than emergency announcements, all staff information and reminders should be communicated via the staff bulletin.

## Staff Homepage

The Staff Homepage was developed on SharePoint and launched in September 2023 to make important information, documents and links easily accessible to all school staff. It was also developed to reduce unnecessary emails and attachments, and to improve the security of information and data by utilising shared document access and editing functionality.



The screenshot shows the Woldgate School Staff Homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Core Values, Staff Report, and Staff Support Summary. Below the navigation bar is the Woldgate School logo, which features a shield with a green and gold design and the text 'Woldgate School'. To the right of the logo is the heading 'Woldgate School Staff Homepage' and the school's vision statement: 'Our School Vision: 'A school where everything we do is worthy of great merit, character and value''. Below this is a welcome message: 'Welcome to the Woldgate School Staff SharePoint homepage. This is where we can share useful information, bulletins, newsletters, notices and more between colleagues.' There are five small icons representing different school activities or values. At the bottom, there are two sections: 'Our School Vision: A school where everything we do is worthy of great merit, character and value.' and 'Our Curriculum Intent', which includes the text 'What does this look like in our school?' and 'We are passionate in our aim to ensure that all our pupils have the...'

The Staff Homepage is the default loading page of web browsers in school and contains links to heavily used school software. The Staff Homepage also contains links to other important school resources, including the Staff Handbook, Events and Visits request form, homework timetables, duty rotas and many more.

## **What action are we going to take this year?**

To ensure that all staff are confident in navigating and using SharePoint, we are undertaking a training session for all staff on SharePoint in September. In particular, we will focus on how to access and edit shared documents to improve data security and reduce unnecessary sharing of files.

## **Staff Briefings**

Staff briefings take place every Friday morning, between 8:30am and 8:45am and are an opportunity to share important information, announcements and reminders with staff. It is also an opportunity to share news and celebrate both pupil and staff achievements and events. Staff briefings are also an opportunity to bring the whole school staff community together, to talk and catch up. There are two forms of the staff briefings – each take place on alternating Friday mornings:

### **Whole School Briefings**

Whole school briefings generally focus on whole school information and reminders, including information and reminders regarding safeguarding and supporting pupils with special educational needs. Whole school briefings also present opportunities to remind staff about upcoming events and celebrate pupil and staff achievements.

### **Year Team Briefings**

Form tutors attend year team briefings, each presented by the appropriate Head of School. Year Team briefings focus on year group-specific information and reminders and give year teams to discuss specific queries and issues.

## **Communication with the wider community**

In addition to the means of communication outlined above, we also ensure we communicate with the wider community through a range of media. Wider communication ensures that everyone living within the wider area is aware of important updates and events and are included in the life of the school. Examples of media include:

- Newspapers, including articles and adverts
- Social media and news outlets
- Primary Newsletters (for distribution to local primary schools and pupils)
- School banners
- Participation of pupils and staff in community-based events and/or at community venues (Pocklington Arts Centre and All Saints Church etc)