



LALEHAM GAP SCHOOL

Family Guide

Useful information for parents and
carers

2026/27

This booklet provides useful information for parents and carers that we frequently share. This is not a replacement for the school website or speaking with us but aims to answer common queries.

The published policies and website remain the definitive sources for detailed procedures.

Please note that new families to the school are encouraged to read through the transition packs provided.

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Welcome

Laleham Gap is a [Unicef Rights Respecting School](#).

We are also a registered [Allergy School](#) and [The Balanced System](#) Centre of Excellence.

Our community promotes respect for others and celebrates diversity. We aim to provide a specialist, safe and engaging learning environment where every child is supported to develop confidence, resilience, communication and independence.

Working Together to Learn, Grow and Succeed

At Laleham Gap, our ethos is simple: Learn. Grow. Succeed. We want every child to feel supported, confident and ready to thrive, both in school and as they move towards adulthood. This works best when families feel informed, listened to and able to access help when it is needed. It is also important that we can celebrate children's success together.

This guide brings together the information families ask for most often. It explains who to contact, how we communicate, what to expect from everyday routines and where to find further help.

Over the last two years, we have also been strengthening how we work with families through our work towards the Leading Parent Partnership Award. This guide and our brand new school website a part of that ongoing commitment.

We hope it helps you feel clear, confident and connected. If you are unsure about anything, please contact us. We are here to work with you and support your child.

If you are a new family to the school, we still encourage you to read your transition packs which contain a greater level of information for each age phase.

1. Quick contacts

For day-to-day matters about your child, please begin with the class teacher or form tutor. The school office can direct your query if you are unsure who to contact.

What do you need help with?	Who to contact	How
General enquiries, admissions and payments	School Office	01843 570598 secretary@lgs.kent.sch.uk
Absence and transport issues	Attendance and Wellbeing Coordinator / School Office	justine.marsh@lgs.kent.sch.uk 01843 570598
Medical information or a health update	Medical Team	medical@lgs.kent.sch.uk 01843 570598
EHCP annual review booking or paperwork	EHCP Administrator	sarah.sullivan@lgs.kent.sch.uk
A safeguarding or wellbeing concern	Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL	Call 01843 570598 and ask for a DSL
Primary day-to-day communication	Class teacher / phase lead	Class Dojo or the School Office
Secondary and Post 16 communication	Form tutor / relevant teacher	Email the relevant member of staff or call the School Office

Please keep us updated

Tell the school promptly if your telephone number, email address, home address, emergency contacts, medical information or transport arrangements change. It is also vital the medical team have information about medical conditions related information such as allergy action plans to support your child safely.

2. How we communicate

We always aim to work with families positively and respectfully, even when exploring difficult issues, for the benefit of your children. We ask that you do the same so that we can focus on the best possible support for everyone in our school.

We use different methods depending on the urgency and type of information that we discuss or share with you. Please check emails and Arbor regularly and let us know if you need information in a different format.

We use the [Arbor Parent App](#) across the school. Primary Parents and Strive Class are also encouraged to use [Class Dojo](#) to share regular home-school contact. You will be sent links to these when your child joins us. If you are worried you have not received an invite, please contact the school office or your child's class/form tutor.

Type of information	How we usually communicate
Everyday updates about your child	Conversation at collection, telephone, email, or Class Dojo for Primary families.

Type of information	How we usually communicate
Urgent individual message	We telephone the priority contact first, then other contacts. We may leave a voicemail with a brief message or ask you to call us and send an email.
Urgent whole-school message	We will use Arbor alerts, text messages and/or the school website, depending on the situation.
EHCP annual review	The EHCP Administrator contacts families to arrange the review. In-year reviews may be arranged by the class teacher or form tutor.
News, trips and events	Email, letters, the school website, calendar and e-newspaper.
Training, safeguarding guidance and family support	Email and the Parent/Carer or Wellbeing sections of the website.

Visiting school

- All visitors must report to the main reception and sign in when visiting.
- Please read the safeguarding leaflet and wear the visitor badge provided – this also provides the contact details for the DSL if you have a safeguarding concern while on site.
- Please stay with a member of staff and follow staff instructions while on site, especially in the event of an emergency.
- Arrange meetings in advance wherever possible so the right colleague is available. Colleagues have a wide range of responsibilities and may not be able to see you if you have not booked an appointment.

Making communication accessible

- Our website is accessible by default.
- For other communications, please ask us if you would benefit from a paper copy, larger print or help understanding a letter or form.
- Tell us which communication method works best for your family.
- If an issue is urgent, telephone rather than relying only on email.

For additional information, [please see our school website](#).

3. The school day, attendance and transport

School day

The school is open from 8.30am to 3.15pm, Monday to Friday, during term time. Please do not drop pupils off before 8.30am. Children coming in transport will be cared for by the transport team until the 8.30am handover.

Daily structures differ between Primary and Secondary, and individual timetables reflect pupils' needs.

- Pupils in Primary have a morning break at 10.30 am and lunch at 12:15pm. Lunch is followed by an extended break. Movement and additional learning breaks are organised by the staff working with the children.
- Secondary and Post-16 children have a short break after each 50 minute lesson. This allows them to rest and transition to their next lesson without having to rush. Lunch for this age phase is at 12:50.
- Primary pupils dropped or collected by parents or carers need to meet at the primary door. This is marked with a large blue sign on the outside of the school building.
- Parents of the secondary and Post-16 age phase should drop and collect children from the Wave Car Park or main office if they come by a family vehicle or are walking home.
- All children are signed out and leave through the main school door.
- Tell the main office if you will collect a child who would normally use school transport. You must also tell the transport provider about any change.
- If you are bringing your child to school, please follow the two-lane system: minibuses use the outside lane, while cars and taxis use the inside lane closest to the island.

Home-to-school transport

Kent County Council manages eligibility and arrangements for home-to-school transport. Its information includes free school transport, personal transport budgets, independent travel training and Post 16 transport.

[School transport information](#)

Absence and lateness

Please telephone 01843 570598 on the first day of absence. Leave a message on the absence line or speak to reception.

Telephone each day with an update and tell us when your child is expected to return.

Pupils should arrive by 8.50am each day. If they are late, please report to the main office with the parent, carer or transport escort so the reason can be recorded.

Please provide advance notice and evidence for planned medical or dental appointments wherever possible.

Attendance is a safeguarding matter

If we do not know why a pupil is absent, we will try to contact the family to confirm that the child is safe and their whereabouts are known. If we do not hear from you, or we are concerned, we may perform a Welfare Check at home. In the event we remain concerned, we are legally obliged to contact partner agencies such as the police and social services for assistance.

If a child is persistently absent, or, we notice regular patterns of absence, we will try to work with a family to improve this. If we remain concerned or a child is well-below their expected attendance, we will contact the Kent Pru and Attendance Service for advice.

4. Learning, EHCPs and progress

Laleham Gap offers a core pathway of learning and works alongside National Curriculum requirements to provide a rich and relevant curriculum. Learning includes academic development, communication, personal development, life skills, independence and preparation for adulthood.

For children who require additional support for reasons such as extreme difficulty with transition or Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance, we will discuss our supportive pathways with you and wellbeing offers with you.

Our curriculum approach

- Learning is personalised around pupils' strengths, needs, interests and aspirations.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop positive relationships, self-awareness, self-care and a growth mindset, to support them in becoming independent and successful individuals as they move towards adulthood.
- Primary, Secondary and Post 16 information is available through the curriculum area of the website.
- Families can support learning by discussing current topics, practising agreed skills at home, reading together and sharing achievements with school. We also hold a number of events, such as Meet the Teacher sessions, drama productions, art shows, parent consultation evenings, parent coffee mornings, summer and Christmas fairs, and more, to help families feel part of our community. We encourage you to take part in these activities, as they provide opportunities to join us in celebrating your child's success and talking to us about their learning.

Education, Health and Care Plans

An EHCP describes a child or young person's needs, intended outcomes and the provision required. Families are important partners in reviewing

progress and helping to shape future priorities. To support this process, please:

- Read the papers before the annual review, and use the parent and child voice forms provided to share your views.
- Talk with your child, in an accessible way, about what is going well and what matters next.
- Send relevant reports or updates before the meeting where possible.
- Contact the EHCP Administrator if you have a query about review arrangements.

Preparing for a review

Think about progress, current concerns, independence, friendships, communication, health, wellbeing and longer-term aspirations.

[Curriculum information](#)

[EHCP information and guidance links](#)

5. Safeguarding and wellbeing

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The school is committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people and has trained Designated Safeguarding Leads who can listen, advise and respond sensitively. We have a moral and statutory duty to work with families and our partner agencies for the welfare of children, and will contact families and relevant agencies if we have concerns.

For an overview of our safeguarding procedures, please see our school website: <https://www.lgs.kent.sch.uk/safeguarding> and / or read the relevant policies.

If you are worried about a child

- Call the school on 01843 570598.
- Ask to speak with a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.
- Explain what you have seen, heard or been told, using the child's own words where possible.
- If a child is in immediate danger, always contact the emergency services.

The school will usually aim to discuss concerns with parents or carers first. However, this may not happen where doing so could increase risk or where immediate contact with statutory services is required.

How the school supports safety

- Regular staff safeguarding and child protection training.
- Safer recruitment checks and trained colleagues on interview panels.
- Clear procedures for concerns about adults, child-on-child abuse and online safety.
- Partnership work with families and relevant external agencies.
- Filtering and monitoring on school devices and networks.

- Supporting parents with courses and access to online training.

Wellbeing support

Laleham Gap using The Balanced System approach. We have a broad range of Universal, Targeted and Specialist strategies and interventions that we use to support children across the school.

The Wellbeing and Therapies area of the website brings together information about targeted support, the Local Offer, mental health referrals, crisis helplines and useful services:

[Wellbeing and Therapies](#)

If you are concerned about your child's wellbeing and mental health, please let their class teacher/form tutor know so that they can refer them into our weekly wellbeing meeting.

6. Medical needs, meals and allergies

Please tell the Medical Team promptly about diagnoses, medication, allergies, changes in presentation, hospital treatment or updated clinical advice. A pupil may need an Individual Healthcare Plan or Intimate Care Plan even if they already have an EHCP.

- Provide current, written medical instructions and complete the school's medication forms.
- Send medication in the original labelled container, following the school's current procedure.
- Discuss significant health changes before your child returns so any support, training or risk assessment can be updated.
- Ensure emergency contact details remain current

Forms

The school website includes forms for medicine in school and medication updates. Please contact the Medical Team if you are unsure what to provide. [Medical forms and other useful parent forms](#)

School meals and packed lunches

Meals are cooked on site and follow a three-week cycle. Special diets can be accommodated, and pupils may bring a packed lunch. Current menus include allergen information.

- Current published price: £2.20 per day or £11 per week. Check the website for any change.
- Payment is required in advance and can be made through the available school payment methods.
- Families can check eligibility and apply for free school meals online.
- Tell the school about prescribed medical or cultural dietary requirements so appropriate arrangements can be discussed.

[Lunch menus and current prices](#)

7. Uniform, equipment and belongings

Uniform

While Laleham Gap offers adjustments and support with clothing related to sensory or medicals needs, we believe a school uniform helps children to develop their sense of community and be proud of the school that they attend. Primary and Secondary uniform details are published separately on the school website.

Key things to note:

- Uniform and accessories, except the new PE shirt, can be purchased from the Schoolwear Centre in Margate. You will be contacted regarding PE shirts.
- Items can be delivered to school for collection if this is helpful.
- For second-hand uniform, Friends of Laleham Gap and our Resources Managers have a wide range of second hand items that are in good condition. Please contact the school office if you wish to purchase any.
- Please check the published Uniform Policy and phase-specific lists before purchasing.

[Uniform information](#)

Personal belongings and specialist equipment

- Please clearly label all personal belongings including bags, coats, lunch boxes, bottles, communication aids, chargers and specialist items.
- Tell the class team about any essential equipment your child needs during the day.
- Share instructions, ownership details and maintenance information for specialist equipment where relevant.
- Please avoid sending valuables unless agreed with school.

Communication equipment

Please ensure any communication aid your child relies on arrives charged and ready for use, with essential accessories.

Lost property

Please contact the class team or school office promptly if your child is missing items. Clear labelling gives us the best chance of returning items quickly.

8. Online safety and the Arbor Parent App

Arbor Parent Portal and App

The Parent Portal and Parent App support school communication and online payments. Your username is the email address used by the school. If you need help setting up or accessing your account, contact the school office.

- Keep your login secure and do not share it.
- Check notifications and messages regularly.
- Tell the school if your email address changes.
- Use the main office for urgent messages.

[Online payments and Arbor guidance](#)

Helping children stay safe online

Both school and parents play an important role in helping children to navigate technologies and stay safe online. You can assist at home by:

- Agreeing clear, consistent boundaries for devices and online activity.
- Use age-appropriate parental controls and privacy settings.
- Talk regularly about what your child enjoys online and anything that worries them.

- Encourage your child to tell a trusted adult if they see upsetting content or receive unwanted contact.
- Report urgent safeguarding concerns to the school's DSL team.

Free parent resources

The school promotes National College resources for parents and carers, including online safety and safeguarding guidance.

[National College Sign Up Link](#)

[Online safety for parents and carers](#)

9. Parent partnership and getting involved

Laleham Gap is working towards the Leading Parent Partnership Award. This reflects an ongoing commitment to clear communication, useful guidance, welcoming families and involving parents and carers meaningfully in school life.

[Leading Parent Partnership Award](#)

Ways to take part

- Attend annual reviews, parent evenings, transition events and training where possible.
- Join parent and carer coffee mornings and community events.
- Read school letters and respond when requested.
- Complete surveys and feedback forms honestly and constructively.
- Share ideas for events, support or improvements to family information.
- Support learning at home in ways agreed with the class team.

Coffee mornings and family events

Coffee mornings are intended to be relaxed, welcoming opportunities to meet other families and staff, share experiences and learn more about

topics of interest. Current dates should always be checked on the website calendar.

Your voice matters

Feedback should lead to visible action. If you make a suggestion, it is reasonable to ask how it has been considered and what will happen next.

Friends of Laleham Gap

Families can also support and take part in the wider school community through Friends of Laleham Gap – a charity run by staff and parent trustees to raise funds for resources and experiences that cannot be provided through government funding alone. Please speak to the school office and ask to speak to a staff trustee if you would like to fundraise for us or make a donation.

[Parent and carer coffee mornings](#)

10. Concerns, complaints and useful links

If something is not working well, please tell us

It is important to raise the matters early with the class teacher/form tutor, age phase lead or relevant member of staff. If you do need to contact us with a concern or a complaint, please:

- Explain the concern clearly, including what happened and the outcome you are seeking.
- If it is not resolved, contact the appropriate phase leader or senior leader through the school office.
- Use the school's published Complaints Policy if the matter cannot be resolved informally.

Safeguarding concerns are different

If your concern is about a child's safety or the conduct of an adult, ask for the DSL or follow the safeguarding information on the school website. Do not wait for the complaints process.

Quick website directory

[School homepage](#)

[Safeguarding Page](#)

[Key Policies](#)

[Laleham Gap School - FAQs](#)

[Parents and Carers Information including LPPA](#)

[Wellbeing and Therapies Area](#)

[Wellbeing Strategies and Interventions Overview](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Parent and carer coffee mornings](#)

[Term dates](#)

[School letters](#)

[Severe weather](#)

[Useful links](#)

Keeping this guide useful

We welcome suggestions about updates to the website and this guide, unclear wording or topics that would help families. Please send feedback to the school office so future versions can be improved.

Thank you for your support.

Laleham Gap School
Learn. Grow. Succeed.