



Sentral's Administration AI Guidebook

**A practical guide to enhancing efficiency,
service, and communication**

By Matt Esteman, in collaboration with Sentral



Introduction: Your new digital colleague

We know the reality of working in a busy school office. Finance teams are balancing budgets and invoices. Marketing staff are juggling newsletters, websites, and social media. Enrolments teams are supporting families through one of the most important decisions of their lives. Front reception is managing everything at once: calls, visitors, emergencies, and constant requests.

Artificial Intelligence (**AI**) is not just for teaching staff. Its real power for administration staff is in helping you manage complexity, streamline communication, and free up precious time. Think of AI as your on-demand colleague: fast, reliable, and always ready to draft, check, or create.

This guide is designed to show you how AI can:

- Reduce repetitive administrative tasks
- Improve communication clarity and professionalism
- Support decision-making with data insights
- Help you focus on what only humans can do: relationships, judgment, and care.

Start human. Use AI. Stay human.



AI

The 'Why': Core benefits for administration staff

Here are four pillars of AI support for school administration:

1. **Amplify Efficiency:**

- Automate drafting of letters, invoices, receipts, and reports
- Summarise long policy or funding documents into key points
- Generate checklists for compliance tasks

2. **Enhance Communication:**

- Draft clear, empathetic responses to parent or supplier emails
- Write polished newsletter articles or website updates
- Create professional phone scripts and FAQs for reception

3. **Strengthen Decision-Making:**

- Translate raw data into insights: e.g. enrolment trends, budget summaries, or parent survey feedback
- Generate 'what-if' scenarios for planning budgets or marketing campaigns
- Spot gaps or inconsistencies in documentation

4. **Support Every Stakeholder:**

- Personalise communication for prospective parents, suppliers, or staff
- Translate notices into plain English or multiple languages
- Tailor marketing messages for different audiences (parents, alumni, community)



Ethical guardrails: Responsible AI in the office

Just like teachers, your responsibility is to protect sensitive data and maintain trust.

1. Human in the loop:

AI gives you a draft, not a final version. Always edit and check before sending. If you aren't sure, don't send.

2. Handle data with care:

- Never input personal, financial, or sensitive family information into public AI tools.
- **Safe:** 'Draft a professional invoice reminder email.'
- **Unsafe:** 'Email John Smith at 32 Green Street about his overdue fees.'

3. Promote Integrity:

- Be transparent if AI supported your work (e.g., drafting part of a newsletter).
- Ensure tone stays consistent with your school's values and culture.
- Ensure you are adhering to policies and guidelines provided by your school or system.



Please check with a member of the school leadership team if you are not sure what tools to use in your work.

The S.E.R.V.E. framework: Prompting for administration

Administration staff can use the S.E.R.V.E. framework to shape better AI outputs:

S – Scenario: Clearly describe the situation.

E – Expertise: Define your role (Finance Officer, Enrolments Officer, etc).

R – Recipient: Who is this for? A parent, supplier, staff, or external audience?

V – Variables: Key details, dates, deadlines, tone.

E – End Product: The format you need (email, checklist, flyer, script, report).

So instead of a simple prompt like:

Write me a short newsletter article on the Pancake Stall we held. We sold 100 pancakes.

Apply the S.E.R.V.E. Framework to structure the prompt like this:

- **S – Scenario:** The school recently held a Pancake Stall event, and you want to inform the community about its success.
- **E – Expertise:** You are a member of the Marketing & Communications team at the school.
- **R – Recipient:** The article is for parents and families in the school community.
- **V – Variables:** Key details: Pancake Stall held, 100 pancakes sold. Desired tone: warm, community-focused, celebratory. Length: Short newsletter article.
- **E – End Product:** Newsletter article.

So that your final prompt becomes:

The school recently held a Pancake Stall event, and you want to inform the community about its success. You are a member of the Marketing & Communications team at the school. The article is for parents and families in the school community. Key details: Pancake Stall held, 100 pancakes sold. Desired tone: warm, community-focused, celebratory. Length: Short newsletter article. End Product: Newsletter article.



Administration scenarios

For each of the following scenarios, try to identify the elements of S.E.R.V.E., and whether you'd add more.



Finance office: Invoice reminders

Situation: Parents have overdue payments; you need a professional but empathetic reminder.

Prompt Example: Draft a reminder about outstanding invoices. I am a Finance Officer in an independent school. Audience: parents with overdue payments. Tone: professional but understanding, with a deadline for payment. Output: email template.



Marketing & communications: Newsletter blurb

Situation: You need a 150-word article about the school's athletics carnival for the weekly newsletter.

Prompt Example: Write a summary of the athletics carnival. I work in Marketing at a school. Audience: parents and families. Emphasise student spirit, achievements, and community attendance. Output: newsletter article, 150 words, upbeat tone.



Enrolments: Parent welcome pack

Situation: You want a polished FAQ sheet for prospective families.

Prompt Example: Create a welcome FAQ for new families. I am an Enrolments Officer at a Catholic independent school. Audience: parents considering enrolment. Cover fees, uniforms, co-curriculars, and transport. Output: one-page brochure with Q&A style.



Front reception: Phone scripts

Situation: Reception staff often answer repetitive questions from parents.

Prompt Example: Draft a phone script for common queries. I am a receptionist at a school. Audience: parents calling the school office. Include absentee line, uniform shop hours, and excursion details. Output: bullet-point scripts.



Professional learning plan

Situation: A member of the administration staff is preparing a professional learning plan for themselves for the next year.

Prompt Example: [attach your role description to the prompt] Use this role description to complete a set of SMART goals for me. I want them to be aspirational, as I would like to go for a promotional position at the end of this year. I would like to work on the following skills in particular [insert list of skills]. Highlight any gaps or questions you have, then offer me a clear and concise professional learning plan.



Your AI-powered week: An administration workflow

For each of the following prompts, rewrite it to be a S.E.R.V.E. prompt.

Monday Morning (Finance):

Draft 3 variations of a fee reminder email, professional and polite.

Wednesday Afternoon (Marketing & Comms):

Write 5 engaging social media posts for the Open Day.

Thursday Morning (Enrolments):

Summarise enrolment enquiries data into key trends and recommendations.

Friday Afternoon (Reception):

Draft 5 short PA announcements for library returns, excursions, and uniforms.



Remember: AI will get you an answer that addresses somewhere between 10% and 90% of what you need. The deeper prompting you do, the better the result will be.

Quick reference: Administration prompt library



Finance:

Draft a professional but friendly invoice reminder.

- **S – Scenario:** A reminder about an outstanding invoice needs to be communicated.
- **E – Expertise:** Finance Officer.
- **R – Recipient:** External supplier or parent responsible for payment.
- **V – Variables:** Invoice number, payment due date, amount owing, polite and professional tone, offer of assistance if there are queries.
- **E – End Product:** Drafted email text for a professional but friendly invoice reminder.

Summarise a 10-page funding document into 5 bullet points.

- **S – Scenario:** A 10-page funding document needs to be summarised for quick reference.
- **E – Expertise:** Administration Officer tasked with distilling complex information.
- **R – Recipient:** Senior staff, school leadership team, or other stakeholders requiring a concise overview.
- **V – Variables:** Core funding themes, significant dates, main recommendations, total amounts, and summary of actions. Maintain a professional and succinct tone.
- **E – End Product:** A bulleted summary (5 key points) for rapid reference and decision-making.



Marketing & Comms:

Write a 100-word newsletter article on Year 6 camp.

- **S – Scenario:** The school is preparing to inform families and staff about the upcoming Year 6 camp, aiming to build excitement and increase engagement.
- **E – Expertise:** Acting as the Marketing & Communications Officer.
- **R – Recipient:** The newsletter article is for school families and staff; the Facebook headline will reach the broader school community and prospective families.
- **V – Variables:** Include camp activities, dates, location, highlights; keep the tone positive, welcoming, and concise.
- **E – End Product:** Deliver a 100-word newsletter article summarizing the Year 6 camp and create a catchy headline suitable for a Facebook post.

Create a catchy headline for a Facebook post.

- **S – Scenario:** The school is preparing for the upcoming Year 6 camp and aims to communicate key details to families and staff, while also building excitement and encouraging engagement.
- **E – Expertise:** Acting as the Marketing & Communications Officer responsible for crafting school messages.
- **R – Recipient:** The newsletter article will inform school families and staff; the Facebook headline is designed to attract the wider school community and prospective families.
- **V – Variables:** Include camp activities, dates, location, highlights, and maintain a positive, welcoming, and concise tone.
- **E – End Product:** Provide a 100-word newsletter article summarizing the Year 6 camp and a catchy headline suitable for a Facebook post.



Enrolments:

Draft a warm welcome email for a family attending a school tour.

- **S – Scenario:** The school is preparing to welcome new families for upcoming school tours. To ensure a positive first impression and smooth communication, a warm welcome email is required for families attending a tour.
- **E – Expertise:** As the Enrolments Officer, your responsibility is to engage prospective families, provide important details, and set a welcoming tone that reflects the school's values.
- **R – Recipient:** The intended audience for this communication is parents or caregivers who have booked a school tour.
- **V – Variables:** Include the date and time of the scheduled tour. Mention meeting location and any necessary sign-in procedures. Offer contact information for questions. Keep the tone friendly, informative, and inviting.
- **E – End Product:** Draft a welcome email template for families scheduled to attend a school tour.

Create a FAQ sheet about uniforms and transport.

- **S – Scenario:** Families frequently have questions about school uniforms and transport options. To streamline communication and ensure everyone has access to essential details, a comprehensive FAQ sheet is needed.
- **E – Expertise:** As the Enrolments Officer, you are responsible for answering common queries from families and providing accurate, up-to-date information.
- **R – Recipient:** This FAQ sheet is intended for current and prospective families who require guidance on uniforms and transportation.
- **V – Variables:** Include key information about uniform requirements, purchasing locations, bus routes, drop-off and pick-up times, and contact details for further enquiries. Maintain a clear, friendly, and informative tone.
- **E – End Product:** Produce an easy-to-read FAQ sheet about uniforms and transport.



Reception:

Write scripts for handling common phone enquiries.

- **S – Scenario:** Reception staff frequently handle a wide range of phone enquiries from parents and caregivers, seeking information about school procedures, enrolment, and day-to-day logistics.
- **E – Expertise:** As the Receptionist, you are the first point of contact for the school, responsible for providing clear, accurate, and helpful responses to all callers.
- **R – Recipient:** These scripts are intended for use by front office staff when answering phone calls from parents, caregivers, or community members.
- **V – Variables:** Include polite greetings, clear identification of the school and your role, concise answers to common questions, and friendly closings. Ensure the tone remains professional, warm, and approachable.
- **E – End Product:** Develop a set of easy-to-follow scripts for handling the most common phone enquiries received at reception.

Generate 3 polite ways to redirect a parent complaint.

- **S – Scenario:** Reception staff often encounter situations where parents call to lodge a complaint about school matters. Managing these calls professionally and constructively is essential for maintaining positive relationships.
- **E – Expertise:** As the Receptionist, you serve as the initial point of contact for the school, responsible for receiving feedback and ensuring concerns are addressed appropriately.
- **R – Recipient:** This guidance is intended for front office and reception staff who field incoming calls from parents or caregivers.
- **V – Variables:** Provide polite, empathetic responses; clearly communicate the process for addressing complaints; redirect callers to the appropriate staff member or department. Maintain a friendly, professional, and calm tone throughout the interaction.
- **E – End Product:** A set of scripts offering three courteous ways to redirect a parent complaint over the phone.
 - *“Thank you for sharing your concern with us. I understand how important this is. May I connect you with our Deputy Principal, who is best equipped to assist with this matter?”*
 - *“I appreciate you bringing this issue to our attention. I’ll make sure your feedback reaches the right person. Would you like me to transfer your call to our Student Services Coordinator?”*
 - *“I’m sorry to hear about your experience. To ensure you receive the most accurate information and support, may I pass your details along to the relevant department so they can follow up with you directly?”*

Let's continue the conversation



You've explored the framework for AI in education; the next step is implementation. A powerful strategy requires a powerful platform.

Sentral is more than just a school management system; it's a strategic partner that streamlines everything from student data and reporting to payments and parent engagement, freeing your team to lead with confidence.

Schedule a strategic call:

Book a no-obligation demo with our team to see how Sentral can power your school's vision.

Discover the platform:

Learn more about how Sentral empowers educators across Australia.

 www.sentral.com.au

 www.linkedin.com/company/sentral/



The Next Word

Navigating the complexities of AI in education requires more than just prompts; it requires a strategic partner. At The Next Word, we help school leaders move beyond the hype to build robust AI strategies, deliver practical staff training, and create ethical frameworks that enhance learning while managing risk. We ensure you lead the change, not just react to it.

Ready to build a future-ready school?

Book a complimentary, no-obligation AI strategy call with our education team to map your school's next steps.

 www.nextwordnow.com

 admin@nextwordnow.com

 www.linkedin.com/in/mesterman/



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