

SEPARATED PARENTS POLICY

Updated September 2013 by Sarah Kirby

Introduction

This Policy aims to show how staff at Spire Nursery & Infant School will continue to work with families, in the best interests of children, after parents separate.

Schools have a legal duty to work in partnership with families and to involve all those with parental responsibility in their child's education (*see Appendix A Guidance on Parental Responsibility*). This obligation on schools continues even when family circumstances change, for example, relationships between parents break down. It is generally in the best interest of children if parents and schools can work together.

Delivery

Below we have listed the ways in which we will work with absent parents to continue to involve them in their child's education.

- Additional copies of end of year reports provided either via the child, in the post, or electronically.
- Termly newsletter sent electronically or by post to non residential parent with details about upcoming events provided.
- School photograph proofs sent electronically or by post to non residential parent.

As part of the Induction Pack, when children start school, all parents will receive a copy of this policy. (*Working with Separated Parents*)

Parents of children joining the school are asked to bring their child's birth certificate. This ensures children are joining the correct year group and also helps the school ascertain who has Parental Responsibility.

Separated parents are required to inform the school and to return a separated parents form indicating ways in which they would like to be kept informed.

Children's welfare and safety are paramount and, where there are issues over access to children, the parent with whom the child resides should contact the

school immediately. Where there is a court restraining order in place, the school will put in place measures to ensure the child is not released to a named individual.

Where a separated parent has parental responsibility and there is no court order in place, the school is required to allow the child home with them; however the Headteacher is able to use her discretion and would seek clarification if it was felt there was a child protection issue.

The welfare of the child is at the heart of all we do and the Headteacher and Governors maintain the right to discontinue any of the above if it is deemed to be significantly against the child's best interests. Court orders may also alter the position the school adopts.

This policy should be read in conjunction with following policies:

Safeguarding and Child Protection
Equality and Community Cohesion

Adopted by the Governing Body December 2012

Next Review Date December 2015

Working with Separated Parents - Appendix A

Guidance on Parental Responsibility

In order to help us to look after your children whilst they are in our care, we are required to ask you to provide certain information, such as name of parents, address, contact details etc. We are also required to ask who has Parental Responsibility for your child. This is important because it allows us to be sure who has the right to make decisions about your child's education and medical treatment. However, we are aware that this is a very specific legal term and many of you may be unaware of how it is applied. This leaflet aims to provide you with an explanation of who has parental responsibility so that you are able to provide us with accurate information.

All mothers automatically have Parental Responsibility.

If a child's parents were married at the time of the birth, both parents automatically have Parental Responsibility.

For children born from the 1st December 2003 where the father's name is on the birth certificate, the father and mother will both have Parental Responsibility.

In all other cases, fathers are required to officially obtain Parental Responsibility.

Parental Responsibility cannot be lost, except by legal adoption, although it does not guarantee contact.

(If you would like further guidance, there is clear information on the government website

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ParentsRights/DG_4002954)

SEPARATED PARENTS FORM

At Spire Nursery & Infant School we are committed to working with families and understand the importance of continuing the relationship between school and parents who do not live with their child.

Please complete the form below and return to the school office indicating how you would like to be kept informed about your child's education.

Child's Name _____ Class _____

Your Name _____

Relationship to child _____

Telephone Number _____

Email address _____

Address _____

Please tick which items you would like us to send to you:-

- End of year reports
- Termly newsletters with details of upcoming events (concerts, parents evening, sports day etc)
- Photograph proofs

N.B. It would be much more efficient if you could provide an email address / mobile number so we can send you this information via an email or using our official texting service.