

EVERSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL



SCHOOL POLICY

Separated Parents

20th March 2018

Implemented:

Spring 2019

Date for review:

Eversley Primary School

Separated Parents Policy

At Eversley Primary School we recognise that, while the parents of some pupils may be divorced or separated, both have a right to be informed of, and involved in, their child's education.

The school will not seek to make judgements about individual circumstances but will treat both parents equally unless there is a specific ruling in existence. Staff will never pass judgement on either parent to the child.

We expect that parents, whatever the nature of their separation, will do all they can to communicate with each other and share information from and for the school, for the benefit of their child. It is assumed that the parent with whom the child principally resides will keep the other parent informed. We understand that occasionally this can be difficult and parents can become estranged. Our aim is to work with all parties to promote positive family involvement in the best interests of the children involved.

Where a non-resident parent is named on a child's birth certificate or the parents were married at the time of the birth, the father and mother both have Parental Responsibility. Where there are no specific orders* against a non-resident parent having access to their child, this parent retains the same rights as the resident parent and:

- can book an appointment at Parents' Evening to meet with their child's class teacher. This parent must contact the School Office who will make an appointment on their behalf;
- can attend school performances, such as class assemblies and Christmas nativities, that all parents would be invited to;
- can receive a copy of their child's end of year school report. Non-residential parents must inform the school of a postal address for the report to be sent to;
- can contact the school to arrange an appointment at times outside of parents' evening appointments, to meet with their child's class teacher, the SENCO, deputy headteacher or headteacher to discuss their child's education;
- can purchase a copy of their child's school photograph. Non-residential parents must contact the School Office who will provide the relevant information to enable them to purchase the photograph.

Eversley Primary School expects that both the resident and non-resident parent of a child attending our school will:

- inform the school in the event of any changes to the access arrangements laid down by the family court*, and provide evidence to support this so that copies can be taken and retained on file;
- inform the school of any change to their contact details – home address, phone number and email address;
- access copies of letters and newsletters and dates of upcoming events on the school website to inform themselves of events that may be of interest to them;

- inform the school if they would like to have a parents' evening appointment with the child's other parent or at a separate time or day;
- understand that on occasions, where the school is not clear, the other parent may need to be contacted to clarify circumstances. This is done to protect and support the well-being of the child;
- not turn up to school unannounced and demand to see their child during the school day, apart from in exceptional circumstances, so as not to disrupt the education of their child;
- act in civil and respectful manner towards one another when both in attendance at school events or when on the school premises;
- agree to allow the other parents the same rights they have for the child, as outlined in the first section of this agreement.

Should an un-named parent (or unknown to the school) seek information or access to his/her child, the school will always inform the main carer of this to check Parental Responsibility and ensure no court order is in place. For the avoidance of doubt, we will seek written confirmation from the main carer. Proof of identity of the non-resident parent will always be required in these cases.

Collecting a child from school

The school will release children to parents in accordance with arrangements notified to the school. If one parent seeks to remove the child from school in contravention of the usual arrangements and the parent to whom the child would normally be released has not notified the school of any change the following steps will be followed:

- Where a separated parent, who has parental responsibility and no court order in place, wishes to take the child during or at the end of the school day, the resident parent will be contacted in order to ensure that they are in agreement with the arrangement. If the parent to whom the child would normally be released agrees, the child may be released and the records will reflect that the permission was granted orally. If the parent opposes the other parent wanting to take the child then the school will advise that without a court order we cannot prevent them from doing so.
- In the event that the parent to whom the child would normally be released to cannot be reached, the Head Teacher or staff member dealing with the issue will make a decision based upon all relevant information available to him/her.
- During any discussion or communication with parents, the child will be supervised by an appropriate member of school staff in a separate room.
- In extreme circumstances, if there is a belief that a possible abduction of the child may occur or if the parent is disruptive, the police should be notified immediately.

Disagreements between parents must be resolved between the parents and cannot be resolved by the school or Local Authority.

This policy will be reviewed regularly by staff and governors of the school.

***Court Orders**

Upon receipt of a specific court order restricting access to a parent, the school retains the right to consult with the Local Authority before taking immediate action. The school is only obliged to comply with an order if it is properly notified and has received a copy for its files, and only to the extent that it relates to school. In the event that the school is not informed of the existence of such an order, neither parent will have rights superior to the other. Only a Court Order stating the arrangements is deemed to be valid; a letter from a solicitor is not sufficient.