



Wittering Primary School

Separated Parents Protocol

Aims

In families where a child's parents are separated or divorced, we recognise that this can be a difficult situation and our main aim is not to put any additional stress on the child concerned. The child is our main priority and we hope parents will make every effort to recognise this and support us and their child.

This policy aims to minimise any impact to children at Wittering Primary School and to clarify to all parties what is expected from separated parents and what can be expected from the school and its staff.

Definitions

The definition of a parent for school purposes is much wider than for any other situation. The Education Act 1996 defines a parent as:

- All natural parents, including those that are not married;
- Any person who has parental responsibility but is not a natural parent e.g. a legally appointed guardian or the Local Authority named in a Care Order;
- Any person who has care of a child i.e. a person with whom the child resides and who looks after the child irrespective of the relationship

This guidance will apply unless there are court orders in place stating otherwise, (a copy of such an order will be required), or when the whereabouts of one parent is unknown. Parents and partners may need to check who has legal parental responsibility.

The school will always encourage parents to engage with their child's education.

The school commitment

To ensure a smooth relationship between parties the school will:

- Send formal documentation, such as reports, to both parents following a formal request.
- Send routine school information, such as school trips, newsletters to both parents via the Class Dojo App.
- Request parental permission for financial transactions such as dinner money, clubs or trips as well as consent for urgent medical treatment from the parent with whom the child lives, in the case of shared access, the parent with whom the child lives for the majority of the time. – N.B. Class Dojo uses the main email address linked to the pupil. Additional email addresses can be set up on the account. If this is required please contact the School Office for more information.
- Allow a child to be collected from school by a guardian with parental responsibility if the child is happy to go, however if this is without prior arrangement we will notify the parent/guardian that the child would normally reside with.
- Request information, for the contact sheet, about the people we may call in the event of an accident or emergency from the parent with whom the child lives, in the case of shared access, the parent with whom the child lives for the majority of the time. These will be called in the sequence given to us.

To ensure a smooth relationship between parties the school will not:

- Accept and pass on messages, gifts or cards for a child on behalf of a parent.
- Not act as a line of communication between parents who are in conflict regarding their child's education.
- Accept multiple requests for an appointment at Parents' Evenings, unless there are exceptional circumstances which will need to be discussed with the school. It is only realistic for teachers to discuss the child once per parents' evening. We hope parents can make amicable arrangements to accommodate this.

Links to other policies

Code of Conduct

Safeguarding and Child Protection