



# Yelvertoft Primary School

## Separated parents policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator
January 2017	January 2019	Mrs Servent - Headteacher

It is our aim to develop and maintain supportive working relationships with all adults who are parents, or who have parental responsibility for children in this school. Our primary concern is for the best interests of the child and no action will be taken or omitted where this would potentially cause, or expose them to the risk of harm.

The purpose of the policy is to clarify what is expected from separated parents and what can be expected from the school and its staff.

See appendix 1 for a definition of the terms 'parent' and 'parental responsibility' (referred to as PR from here onwards). For ease of understanding we refer to separated parents as 'resident' and 'non-resident' indicating who the child lives with for most of their time.

### **What will the school do?**

- The school will treat all parents fairly and recognise their entitlements, especially in the following areas;
  - Appeals against admission decisions
  - Access to school records
  - Sharing of information about their child's education
  - Responding to Ofsted and school questionnaires
  - Attendance at parents meetings and school events
  - The right to take part in parent governor elections
  - Participation in exclusion procedures
- The school will make as much information as possible available via the school website at [www.yelvertoftprimary.com](http://www.yelvertoftprimary.com) to ensure it is easily accessible to all parents.
- Administrative type information such as notification of schools trips, information about minor accidents, leaflets and letters from outside organisations and other day to day information will go home in book bags with the child.
- Newsletters will go home in book bags and be posted on the school website.
- Invitations to parents' evenings, concerts and other in school events will go home in book bags and via Parent Mail. They will be sent to non-resident parents by email, when we have an up to date address.
- Annual pupil reports will be sent to non-resident parents by post, to the address they provide.
- The school will continue to offer separate parents evening appointments when requested as long as this is practically possible for teachers but due to the rising numbers of separated families this may change in the future.
- Each parent in a separated family will be offered one ticket per performance.
- The school will comply with current court orders (when we have been notified of these) which restrict or define the rights of one or both parents in relation to school matters (for example, access arrangements which might prevent a parent from picking up a child during the school day). When the court order has not yet been released, the school will act on a verified letter from either parents' solicitor until the court order can be provided.
- Where no court orders are available and parents dispute each other's right to remove children from school social services will be notified. The child/children will remain in the care of the school until a decision is made by social services or parents can reach an agreement.
- The school will treat information provided at the point of admission as correct, unless a legal document such as a court order, birth certificate or deed poll proves otherwise.
- Before making contact with non-resident parents for the first time a check will be carried out with the resident parent. This is to prevent the possibility of identifying a

child's whereabouts when court orders prevent this but have not yet been made available to the school.

- When a court order indicates that a non-resident parent should not have contact with a child we will make the resident parent aware if they attempt to enter the school or ask for information.

### **What do parents need to do?**

- Make us aware as soon as possible when there is a change in family circumstances. This is to ensure that we can support your child with any anxiety or distress they may be experiencing at a difficult time.
- Ensure that you give us up to date details including who to contact in emergencies and keep us informed of arrangements for collecting children from school.
- Either or both parents should make us aware if there are any court orders in place and provide the original document to be copied and kept in the child's records.
- Parents should make their own arrangements for how they will share information that only goes home in book bags.
- Although the school will try to make contact with non-resident parents where possible, it is their responsibility to establish contact if they wish to be kept informed about their child's progress.

### **What the school cannot or will not do**

- We will not take sides with either parent.
- We cannot enforce court orders but will comply with them and contact any relevant agencies if we are asked to breach them.
- We cannot mediate between parents or be used to pass information.
- We will not send routine administrative type letters or information from third parties to non-resident parents.

### **Management of the Policy**

The Head Teacher/Safeguarding Designated Lead(s) will familiarise themselves with this policy and ensure all Staff, Governors and Volunteers are aware of the procedures to follow should the need occur.

The policy will be made available to parents and published on our school website.

<b>Headteacher:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Chair of Governing Body:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

## Appendix 1

### Definition of parent

Under section 576 of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), a "parent" in relation to a child or young person is defined as:

- The natural parents of a child, whether they are married or not
- Anyone who although not a natural parent has parental responsibility for a child
- Any person, who although not a natural parent, has care of a child

### Who has parental responsibility?

A mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child from birth.

A father usually has parental responsibility if he's:

- married to the child's mother
- listed on the birth certificate (after a certain date, depending on which part of the UK the child was born in)

You can apply for parental responsibility if you don't automatically have it.

### Births registered in England and Wales

If the parents of a child are married when the child is born, or if they've jointly adopted a child, both have parental responsibility.

They both keep parental responsibility if they later divorce.

### Unmarried parents

An unmarried father can only get legal responsibility for his child in 1 of 3 ways:

- jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother (from 1 December 2003)
- getting a parental responsibility agreement with the mother
- getting a parental responsibility order from a court

### Births registered in Scotland

A father has parental responsibility if he's married to the mother when the child is conceived, or marries her at any point afterwards.

An unmarried father has parental responsibility if he's named on the child's birth certificate (from 4 May 2006).

### Births registered in Northern Ireland

A father has parental responsibility if he's married to the mother at the time of the child's birth.

If a father marries the mother after the child's birth, he has parental responsibility if he lives in Northern Ireland at the time of the marriage.

An unmarried father has parental responsibility if he's named, or becomes named, on the child's birth certificate (from 15 April 2002).

### Births registered outside the UK

If a child is born overseas and comes to live in the UK, parental responsibility depends on the UK country they're now living in.

### Same-sex parents

Civil partners

Same-sex partners who were civil partners at the time of the treatment will both have parental responsibility.

Non-civil partners

For same-sex partners who aren't civil partners, the 2nd parent can get parental responsibility by either:

- applying for parental responsibility if a parental agreement was made
- becoming a civil partner of the other parent and making a parental responsibility agreement or jointly registering the birth