

# Whitegate End Primary School and Nursery



## Working with separated parents Policy

<b>Responsible Committee</b>	TLS
<b>Date ratified</b>	9 November 2022
<b>Next review</b>	November 2025
<b>Signed on behalf of the governing body</b>	<i>K Painter</i>
<b>Print name</b>	K Painter

## **Introduction**

This Policy aims to show how staff at Whitegate End Primary 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.

- Newsletter sent electronically or by post to non residential parent.
- Appointments offered for parents evenings at appropriate times (where this is not feasible, written reports of parent consultations provided).
- Additional copies of end of year reports provided either via the child, in the post, or electronically.

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

Separated parents are required to inform the school and to return a form (*Appendix B*) 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 their 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 is adopts.*

**This policy should be read in conjunction with following policies:**

Safeguarding and child protection

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 <https://www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities> )

## Working with separated parents - Appendix B

At Whitegate End Primary 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.

Name of parent:	
Name of child/children:	
Address:	
Telephone number/s:	
Email:	
Please circle the best way to send information to you:	Via your child  By email  By post
Please tick the information you would like to receive:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Newsletter</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appointments offered for parents evenings at appropriate times (where this is not feasible written reports of parent consultations provided).</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timely information about upcoming events</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional copies of end of year reports.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photographs</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letters home</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Christmas Play</li></ul>	