

Whitegate End Primary School and Nursery



Working with separated parents Policy

Responsible Committee	FGB
Date ratified	8 October 2025
Next review	October 2028
Signed on behalf of the governing body	K Painter
Print name	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 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.

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 order in place, Whitegate End Primary School and Nursery will ensure that this is adhered to.

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 from other external agencies, such as police or children's social care, if it was felt there was a safeguarding concern.

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:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Working with separated parents - Appendix A

Guidance on Parental Responsibility

In order for 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 policy 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 <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:	<input type="checkbox"/> Via your child <input type="checkbox"/> By email <input type="checkbox"/> By post
Please tick the information you would like to receive:	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Newsletter (digital link sent)	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Appointments offered for parents evenings at appropriate times (where this is not feasible written reports of parent consultations provided).	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Timely information about upcoming events	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Additional copies of end of year reports.	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Photographs	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Letters home	
<input type="checkbox"/> • Christmas Performance	