



Provision of Information for Parents who are Separated or Divorced Policy and Procedure

Adopted: 07-2017
Prepared by: JH

Next Review: 07-2019
Approved by: SCC

This Policy and Procedure applies throughout the School from EYFS to Year 6.

Aim

The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to set out guidelines for School staff on providing information to parents who are separated or divorced together with collection arrangements for children of parents who are separated or divorced.

Background and guidance

The basic rule is that the School should not become involved in disputes between parents concerning their child(ren) and staff should avoid 'taking sides' with one parent against another.

Parents have the right to request and receive reasonable information about their child unless:

- The parent does not have parental responsibility, the child is not residing with that parent and that parent is not paying the fees; or
- An order of the Court has removed or restricted the parent's right to received information about their child (you should ask to see copies of the relevant paperwork); or
- The School has a reasonable belief that disclosing information to the parent will or is likely to prejudice the health and/or welfare of the child

The School has an overriding duty under the Children Act 1989 to do what is reasonable in all the circumstances for the purposes of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.

Procedure

With the exception of School reports and permission letters, which are sent as hard copies, most communications are sent to both parents via ParentMail.

In most cases, relations between separated parents are such that a single copy of a child's School report and permission letters can be sent to the parent with whom the child resides.

If the non-resident parent requests copies of reports and other mailings, the School will provide copies unless the provisions listed above apply. The Head should be consulted before relying on any of the exceptions listed above.

Permission letters should contain a footnote to the effect that whichever parent signs the letter confirms that they have informed and/or consulted any person with parental responsibility for the child.

Any cases of dispute between separated parents about rights of access and/or rights to receive information will be referred to the School's solicitor for advice on the School's position. If parents are unable to resolve disputes between themselves they should be advised to take legal advice. Until such dispute is resolved, the current arrangements will continue.

Each class teacher will keep a record of all children in their class who are known to require duplicate reports or other mailings. This will be a bare factual record only, and will not contain any background information, which will be retained in confidential files relating to the pupils. Each class teacher will pass information on to the next class teacher when a child moves up through the School.

The School Office will make a note on the confidential file of children for whom duplicates of reports and/or other information are to be sent to non-resident parents and a record of children for whom duplicates are not to be sent. Any court orders in respect of a child with which we are provided will also be retained in the child's confidential files. The confidential files are kept securely in the Head's Office.

Collection of Children

Before their child starts at the School, parents complete a confidential information form giving contact details for themselves, any other person with parental responsibility and any other adult authorised by them to collect their child from School. The confidential form contains a footnote to the effect that that the signatory/signatories confirm that they have informed and/or consulted any person with parental responsibility for their child. The onus is on parents to liaise in the signing of the confidential form and also to inform the School of any changes. Subject to complying with any court order of which the School is advised and acting in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff will follow arrangements for collection advised by the signatory/signatories of the confidential form.

Linked Policies

- Missing Child Policy
- Non-collection of Pupils Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supervision of Pupils Policy
- Report Writing Policy