

Separated Family

When parents separate it is a difficult situation for all concerned. The pre-school understands that emotions run high and this policy lays out how the pre-school will support the child and their family within the setting. We feel this policy will support all parties in this difficult time including our team.

Parental responsibility

While the law does not define in detail what parental responsibility is, the following list sets out the key roles:

- Providing a home for the child
- Having contact with and living with the child
- Protecting and maintaining the child
- Disciplining the child
- Choosing and providing for the child's education
- Determining the religion of the child
- Agreeing to the child's medical treatment
- Naming the child and agreeing to any change of the child's name
- Accompanying the child outside the UK and agreeing to the child's emigration, should the issue arise
- Being responsible for the child's property
- Appointing a guardian for the child, if necessary
- Allowing confidential information about the child to be disclosed.

England and Wales

If the parents of a child are married to each other at the time of the birth, or if they have jointly adopted a child, then they both have parental responsibility. Parents do not lose parental responsibility if they divorce, and this applies to both the resident and the non-resident parent.

This is not automatically the case for unmarried parents. According to current law, a mother always has parental responsibility for her child. A father, however, has this responsibility only if he is married to the mother when the child is born or has acquired legal responsibility for his child through one of these three routes:

- By jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother (From 1 December 2003)
- By a parental responsibility agreement with the mother
- By a parental responsibility order, made by a court.

Scotland

A father has parental responsibility if he is married to the mother when the child is conceived, or any time after that date.

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

Alternatively, unmarried fathers can also be named following a re-registration of the birth.

Registration

During the registration process it is important for the pre-school to know all details about both parents. This includes details about who does or does not have parental responsibility as this will avoid difficult situations that may arise at a later date.

The pre-school requests that all details are logged on the child Admission form. If a parent does not have parental responsibility, or has a court order in place to prevent this, the pre-school needs a copy of this documentation for the child's records.

If a child is registered by one parent of a separated family, the pre-school requests that all details relating to the child and other parent are disclosed wherever possible, e.g. court orders, injunctions. This will allow the pre-school to have all the appropriate information in order to support the child fully.

The pre-school will ensure separated parents who both still have parental responsibility receive information relating to their child, pre-school events and newsletters.

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