

Brine Leas School

An Academy

PARENTAL SEPARATION AND SCHOOL PROTOCOLS

PRINCIPLES

Parental separation can be traumatic for children, and can provide organisational challenges for them that they did not previously have to deal with. At Brine Leas, our role is to support each child, so that they can continue to enjoy school and achieve their potential.

Students and schools can sometimes be caught in the middle of parental separation and can be expected to take sides, or be assumed to have taken sides. From the school's perspective, it is important to us that we continue to inform all individuals with parental responsibility of their child's progress and wellbeing. It is not our role to offer advice in these circumstances, nor to be involved in resolving issues between parents.

PRACTICE

1. Please update the school of any changes in circumstances, so that we are able to fulfil our duties.
2. The school needs to be notified when parents separate. This set of protocols will be sent to both parties once we are informed.
3. The school requires copies of any relevant Court Orders and will amend its procedure to take account of them. The school is not able to act on a verbal instruction relating to Court Orders, from either parent.
4. If a parent with parental responsibility arrives to collect a child, the school is not able to refuse the parents' right to take their child, unless relevant Court Orders have been provided to the contrary.
5. The school should be informed immediately if someone with parental responsibility becomes estranged. Whilst we cannot ignore the fact that parental responsibility remains in this instance, we will liaise closely with the family to see how best the situation can be managed within school.
6. Where there are disputes between parents, they are required to seek their own independent legal advice. The school is not able to pass any view. Should the school require its own legal advice, this will be sought. The school will fulfil its duty when dealing with appropriate external agencies, but will not get involved in family law disputes.
7. We must receive the written consent of all parties with parental responsibility for a child's name to be changed on our records, or if the child wishes to be known by a different name, however, if a name has been changed by Deed Poll then a copy of this is required for school records.

8. All individuals who are listed with parental responsibility on our system will receive assessment information, and information about events such as Parents' Evening (normally via My Child at School. Separated parents with parental responsibility will not be able to make duplicate appointments as the school cannot reasonably cope with this.
9. The school will accept written consent from anyone with parental responsibility when seeking approval for a trip or other school activity.
10. We are able to make adjustments in school, in relation to handing in homework, should a child find that they have left their work with one parent etc. Parents are requested to let school know of any arrangements that may present organisational challenges for their child.
11. The school is able to facilitate counselling and offer emotional support to a child whatever the circumstances.

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