

# **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 record that parents are separated on our admission forms on entry, and 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 a parent with parental responsibility becomes absent. In this instance we would aim to contact the substantive parent before allowing a child to leave the premises with an absent parent.
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.
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 invitations to events such as Parents' Evening. Separated parents with parental responsibility should not duplicate appointments.

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.

Prepared/Updated by: D Cole	Date: April 2016
Approved by Governors: May 2016 FGB	Review Date: May 2018