



KEW COLLEGE PREP

Separated Parents Policy

This policy applies to the whole School including the EYFS

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the approach of Kew College Prep (the "**School**") towards managing relationships and communications with separated parents. This is in recognition of the fact that schools have a duty to work in partnership with families and to involve all those with parental responsibility in their child's education.

The primary objective is to ensure the welfare and best interests of the child are prioritised, while maintaining clear, consistent, and respectful communication with both parents. This policy applies to all staff members and is intended to provide guidance on handling situations involving separated parents.

2. Definitions

- **Separated Parents:** Parents who are no longer in a marital or cohabiting relationship.
- **Parental Responsibility:** Legal rights, duties, powers, responsibilities, and authority a parent has for a child and the child's property.
- **Primary Contact:** The parent with whom the child primarily resides.
- **Non-Primary Contact:** The parent who does not primarily reside with the child but maintains contact.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by relevant legislation, including the Children Act 1989, which emphasises the welfare of the child as the paramount consideration. The policy also respects the rights of both parents to be involved in their child's life, provided it is in the child's best interests.

4. Parental Responsibility

The School recognises that, while the parents of some pupils may be divorced or separated, both have a right to be informed of, and involved in, their child's education unless the School has received legal information to state otherwise. This includes receiving information about the child's progress, attending meetings, and being consulted on significant decisions.

5. Communication

The School will send communication to both parents regarding their child's progress, School events, and other relevant information, ensuring that neither parent is left uninformed. This will be achieved through separate emails, letters, or phone calls, where appropriate.

Communications or instructions from one of the Parents or any person with Parental Responsibility shall be deemed by the School to be received from both Parents. We are entitled to expect that Parents have consulted with each other regarding decisions relating to the Pupil for which they have Parental Responsibility. This requirement does not apply to the giving of notice for the cancellation of a place or the withdrawal of the Pupil from the School.

Both parents will be invited to attend meetings and appointments concerning their child. Ideally, both parents would attend the same meeting, to ensure consistency of message. If separate meetings are requested or necessary, reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate this, provided it does not adversely affect the child's welfare. This approach ensures that both parents remain actively involved in their child's life and that important information is consistently shared.

Where children spend time in multiple households, the School expects that parents share logistical information with the School and that they share absence/illness information both with the School and with each other.

In emergency situations, efforts will be made to contact both parents as soon as possible, with the primary contact being informed first, followed by the non-primary contact.

6. Decisions and Information Sharing

The School expects parents to liaise and communicate directly with each other in matters related to their child. It is not the School's responsibility to serve as a go-between or spokesperson for them, nor is it the School's responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the parents regarding their child. As such, it is assumed that coordination on matters such as decisions to be made, enrichment activities for the child, and so forth, will be sorted out between the parents. As such, communication instructions from one parent shall be deemed by the School to be received from both parents. This requirement does not apply to the giving of notice for the cancellation of a place or the withdrawal of the Pupil from the School (see Section 11 below).

Important processes including senior school applications and subsequent final decisions are in the hands of the parents. Whilst staff at the School will willingly advise both parents on which schools might best suit their child, the decision ultimately needs to be made by the parents or through legal processes if necessary.

Both parents will be sent copies of academic reports to ensure they are equally informed about their child's progress. Information regarding School events, such as parent-teacher meetings, sports days, and performances, will be communicated to both parents to encourage their involvement in their child's education and extracurricular activities, as appropriate. Additionally, any medical issues or appointments concerning the child will be promptly shared with both parents, ensuring they are both aware of and can participate in decisions regarding their child's health and well-being. This approach aims to maintain transparency and equal participation from both parents in all significant aspects of their child's life.

Information sharing must comply with our duties under GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Under the principles of GDPR children and young adults can assume control over their personal information and restrict access to it when they are mature enough to understand their rights. Consequently, the School's information sharing policy is contingent on observing GDPR.

7. Disputes Between Parents

The School will maintain a neutral stance in any disputes between parents, and staff members will not take sides or become involved in personal conflicts. Any situations of risk in relation to the pupil or court orders regarding custody, access, or communication must be provided to the School in writing and will be strictly adhered to, with any changes requiring written communication and appropriate legal documentation. In cases of conflict, the School will encourage parents to resolve their issues amicably and may suggest mediation or other conflict resolution services. This approach aims to support a cooperative environment that prioritises the child's welfare.

The Head needs to be aware of any matters that are relevant to the Pupil's safety and security. The Head must therefore be notified in writing immediately of any court orders or situations of risk in relation to the Pupil for whom any special safety precautions may be needed.

The Parents must, as soon as possible, disclose to the School in confidence:

- any family circumstances or court order which might affect the Pupil's welfare or happiness
- any concerns about the Pupil's safety

8. Confidentiality

All information regarding the child and their family will be treated with confidentiality, in accordance with data protection laws and School's policies. Information will only be shared with individuals who have a legitimate need to know, such as teachers, medical professionals, or legal representatives, and only to the extent necessary to fulfil their

professional responsibilities.

In situations where information must be shared with external parties, such as in the case of legal proceedings or safeguarding concerns, the School will ensure that proper consent is obtained from the parents, unless there is a legal requirement to share the information without consent. In such cases, the School will document the reasons for sharing the information and the steps taken to protect the child's privacy.

9. Staff Training

Staff members will receive training on handling situations involving separated parents, which will include understanding the relevant legal framework, effective communication strategies, and conflict resolution techniques. This training aims to equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to manage these situations sensitively and professionally, ensuring that the child's welfare remains the primary focus. Regular refresher courses and updates on any changes in legislation or best practices will be provided to ensure that staff remain well-informed and capable of addressing any challenges that may arise. This commitment to ongoing education and professional development underscores the School's dedication to supporting both parents and children effectively.

10. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and up to date with current legislation and best practices. Feedback from staff, parents, and other stakeholders will be considered in the review process.

11. Provisions about Notice

A notice of withdrawal must be in writing and signed by each Parent and any other person with parental responsibility for the pupil (and the School shall be entitled not to accept such notice unless and until all holders of parental responsibility for the pupil have signed such notice).

Reviewed and approved by:	Updated by:
Name: Andrea Samuelson	Name: Jane Bond
Title: Chair of Governors	Title: Head
Date: 11 Dec 2024	Date: 11 Dec 2024