



Parent/ carer Separation policy

Policy statement

We recognise that while the parents of some children may be divorced or estranged, both have a right to be informed of and involved in their child's educational process. We recognise that parents who are estranged or divorced may disagree regarding the education of the child, and/or may attempt to limit one another's access to their child. Despite such estrangement, both parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the child's education.

Parents are presumed to have joint custody of the child, unless a court order or written agreement between the parents denying or limiting custody for either parent is in place. The parent with whom the child resides is presumed to be the custodial parent. If estranged or divorced parents both claim to be the custodial parent, asserting that the child is residing with both parents, enrolment records will be examined. The parent who enrolled the child will be presumed to be the custodial parent until a court order or written agreement between the parties, identifying the custodial parent, is provided. A parent will only be prevented from participating in his/her child's education if a court order (e.g., divorce decree, custody order, or restraining order) specifically denies visitation rights.

Procedures

PROGRESS REPORTS AND CHILDRENS RECORDS

Both parents have the right to receive progress reports and review the child's records of their child on Tapestry and to comment upon them. However, if the custodial parent advises the nursery, in writing, to delete the child's address from child's records supplied to the non-custodial parent, the records will be flagged and the deletion will be made.

EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS

In the event the parents are unable to agree with one another on decisions regarding their child's educational program, including, but not limited to participation in trips and consent to evaluation and services, the custodial parent's decision will be binding on both parents unless a court order requires otherwise. In the event the educational decision relates to services provided pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the educational decisions, and the parents' rights and responsibilities, will be pursuant to the statutory requirements.

VISITATION WITH THE CHILD DURING PRE-SCHOOL HOURS

Generally, both parents have the right to attend programs/concerts/plays etc open to parents, to participate in parent helper sessions or otherwise be in the pre-school. The parent's right is not negated solely by the fact that he/she is the non-custodial parent. Such visitation will be limited only if we have received a copy of a court order specifically restricting the parent's access to the child by: 1)

denying the parent's visitation rights; or 2) requiring supervision of the parent's visitation with the child. The Pre-school does not have the responsibility to supervise visitation between a parent and his/her child and, thus, will not allow parent access in that situation.

RELEASE OF THE CHILD TO SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE CUSTODIAL PARENT

Only the custodial parent has the right to authorise removal of the child from pre-school during opening hours. If the custodial parent desires that the child be removed by another individual, he/she must inform us in writing, in person or on the telephone that he/she is authorising such party to remove the child. Such authorisation shall be assumed to be generally applicable, unless the custodial parent specifies that it is limited to a specific date and time.

If the non-custodial parent seeks to remove the child from the pre-school, and the custodial parent has not consented, the following steps should be followed:

1. The manager or senior member of staff will meet with the non-custodial parent and, in his/her presence, telephone the custodial parent and explain the request. If the custodial parent agrees, the child will be released and the records will reflect that the permission was granted orally.
2. In the event the custodial parent cannot be reached, the manager may make a decision based upon all relevant information available to him/her.
3. If the manager or senior member of staff has reason to believe that a possible abduction of the child may occur at the pre-school or the parent is disruptive, the police will be immediately notified.