



Separated Family Policy

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At Allsorts, we support families experiencing separation by collaborating closely with parents to create the most effective transition and support plans. We recognise that this can be a challenging time, and we focus on supporting a child's emotional well-being. We also report any significant changes in behaviour to the parents.

When necessary, we direct parents to relevant services and organisations that can provide support for the entire family

Parental responsibility

While the law does not define in detail what parental responsibility is, the following list sets out some of the key features of someone holding parental responsibility.

These include:

- 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.

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

For unmarried parents, the situation is different. By current law, a mother always has parental responsibility for her child. A father, however, only has parental responsibility if he was married to the mother at the time of the child's birth or if he has obtained legal responsibility for the child through one of the following 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.

Be aware of different types of family arrangements and seek further advice from a solicitor, NDNA legal helpline or children's social care if required.

Registration

During the registration process, we collect information about both parents, including who has parental responsibility. This helps prevent any potential issues in the future.

We ask for these details on the child registration form. If a parent does not have parental responsibility or has a court order restricting their rights, we require a copy of that documentation for the child's records.

When a child is registered by one parent in a separated family, we request that all relevant information regarding the child and the other parent be disclosed, including any court orders or injunctions. This ensures that we can fully support the child and family in accordance with the policy outlined below.

We will:

- Ensure the child's welfare is paramount at all times they are in the setting
- Comply with any details of a court order where applicable to the child's attendance at the setting, where we have a copy attached to the child's file
- Provide information on the child's progress, e.g. learning journeys, progress checks within the setting, to both parents where both hold parental responsibility
- Invite both parents to nursery events, including parental meetings and social events, where both hold parental responsibility
- Ensure any incident or accident within the nursery relating to the child is reported to the person collecting the child
- Ensure that all matters known by the staff about the family and the parents' separation remain confidential
- Ensure that no member of staff takes sides regarding the separation and treats both parents equally and with due respect

- Not restrict access to any parent with parental responsibility unless a formal court order is in place. We respectfully ask that parents do not put us in this position
- We will seek legal advice in the case of any disputes regarding the care or collection of the child and sharing of information, where required, to ensure we meet all legal requirements.

We ask parents to:

- Provide us with all information relating to parental responsibilities, court orders and injunctions
- Update information that changes any of the above as soon as practically possible
- Work with us to ensure continuity of care and support for your child
- Not involve staff in any family disputes, unless this directly impacts on the care we provide for the child.
- Talk to the manager and/or key person away from the child when this relates to family separation in order to avoid the child becoming upset. This can be arranged as a more formal meeting or as an informal chat
- Not ask the nursery to take sides in any dispute. We will only take the side of your child, and this will require us to be neutral at all times.