

## **Parkside Academy** **Commitment to split and blended families**

1. Parkside Academy are committed to all our children, all families of whatever complexion and the wider community we seek to serve.
2. We recognise through no fault of the child a family may need to deal with a marital/relationship break up, loss of a parent or other circumstance. The schools' primary duty is to protect the interests of the child, academically, socially and to ensure the ongoing safety and well-being of the individual. The school takes the safeguarding of all our pupils seriously.
3. There is a large body of research that shows that children's education will benefit if both parents remain involved in their learning and work effectively together. So not only is it the legal right of both parents to be kept informed about their child's education, but in doing so may ultimately enhance their child's progress.
4. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that the school is kept informed of any relevant developments, including the issuing of legal documents and current contact details.
5. On receipt of official documentation i.e. court papers and similar the school will place a copy the materials place on the pupils file.
6. The school will gather information including legal documents, parental views and requests, seeking professional advice where necessary, ensuring that both parents are fully consulted and shall adopt a balanced view. We will seek to involve the child(ren) and ensure that the pupil remains at the centre of the schools' decision making.
7. The school has a duty to ensure that issues are dealt with swiftly, sensitively and with discretion.
8. Everyone who is a parent has a right to participate in decisions about a child's education; the school will treat all parents equally, unless there is a court order to the contrary.
9. The school will do its absolute best to ensure that parents receive information about the child and about relevant school events.
10. A 'parent', as defined by the Education Act 1996, includes all natural parents, any person who has parental responsibility for a child or has care of a child. The latter means the person(s) who the child lives with permanently or temporarily.
11. The school must comply with the court orders but we are not responsible for their enforcement, where the order does not directly refer to the school.
12. The school will not engage in any activities that favour or excludes any parent, unless there is a court order or safeguarding issue to the contrary.
13. The school has an 'open-door' policy and all parents are encouraged to discuss issues with class teachers initially, then the Head. Issues that require further consideration can be concluded on arrangement of an agreed meeting.
14. The school will on an annual basis collect the names of individuals that may collect a child from school. Unless there is a court order to the contrary the school has no right to prevent anyone on the list from collecting the child from school during or at the end of the

school day. The forms will be sent to both parents. As always, if there is a dispute the parents should be asked to sort it out themselves and inform the school of their decision.

15. It is the schools' normal practice in the event of an accident, illness or medical emergency to contact the child's number 1 contact on our database initially, or the parent with residency order, and to notify other parents as soon as practical after the initial incident has been dealt with. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that communication between them is effective to deal with any residual issues.

16. All parents and the child (in most circumstances) can request access to the educational record as defined in the Data Protection Act 2018. Upon receiving a written request by a parent the Head shall make the record available for inspection under supervision or else provide a copy, if so requested, within 15 days.

17. A charge may be levied for any copy requested, provided the fee does not exceed the actual cost of supply (including administration costs) and is as prescribed by the Local Governing Body.

18. It is sufficient to communicate with the 'parent' with whom the child is residing at the time of an educational visit – to seek the necessary permission. We shall through our newsletters and other communications provide information to all parents and families of our activities. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that communication between them is effective to deal with any residual issues.

19. The school will deal with any request from a parent, i.e. leave of absence request in a fair and transparent way – applying the legislation in force, the instructions in any court orders and the judgement of professionals to arrive at a decision. The decision will be communicated with the applicant parent directly. It is not for the school to consult or report to all those with parental responsibility - It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that communication between them is effective to deal with any residual issues.

20. The school aims to respond to all requests, with at least an acknowledgement of receipt within 48 hours of any request.