



**Sand Hutton and Warthill Federated  
Church of England (VC) Primary Schools**



**Working with Separated Parents Policy – Draft May 2017**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The schools aim to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief. It seeks to develop the full potential of all children in a caring environment which values all its members. A school family of children, staff, parents, governors and friends of the school who all share a commitment to putting universal Christian values at the centre of our daily lives, in all our actions, in all that we think, say or do.

Love and Respect	We care and share and treat others as we would like to be treated.
Responsibility and courage	We are brave enough to admit when we make mistakes.
Self-control and Moderation	We know the effect our actions can have on others.
Honesty and Integrity	We are honest and trust each other.
Kindness and Compassion	We are polite and helpful.
Contentment and Thankfulness	We recognise how fortunate we are.
Patience and Perseverance	We try hard, have a go and don't give up.
Peace and Humility	We appreciate quiet and reflection.
Loyalty and Commitment	We are fair and know what makes a good friend.
Forgiveness and Justice	We understand and forgive each other.
Hope	We are positive, resilient and forward looking

To learn and to grow and **'to be the best we can be'**

**CORINTHIANS**

**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

This policy should be read alongside the following policies: Disability Discrimination Act, Whistle blowing, Anti bullying, Health and Safety, Managing allegations, Child Protection, E safety, Safe working practices, behaviour and site security policy and with reference to our school vision statement: The best we can be

**Rationale**

At Sand Hutton and Warthill Church of England Primary school we seek to ensure that separated parents are treated equally.

## **Introduction**

This Policy aims to show how staff will continue to work with families, in the best interests of children, after parents separate. At Sand Hutton and Warthill Federated C of E Primary Schools we believe education is a joint journey between the child the school and parents, and believe it is crucial for separated parents to be kept up to date with children's learning and attainment. Schools have a legal duty to work in partnership with families and to involve all those with parental responsibility in their child's education (see Appendix A Guidance on Parental Responsibility). This obligation on schools continues even when family circumstances change, for example, relationships between parents break down. It is generally in the best interest of children if parents and schools can work together.

## **Delivery**

Below we have listed the ways in which we will work with absent parents to continue to involve them in their child's education.

- Weekly newsletter will be added to the website each weekend so that non residential parents can access the latest news from school.
- The newsletter will include timely information about upcoming events provided.
- Appointments offered for parents evenings may be separate if the parents wish that
- Letters home and emails are sent to both parents (including those about Parent Governor Elections) and there is provision that both parents may attend parents evening separately. Where parental responsibility is shared either parents may give consent for school trips and for medical treatment.
- Additional copies of end of year reports will be posted to separated parents who register an interest for this information with the school office
- Requests to change a child's surname are only formally accepted with documentation from the courts as is any request from a parent to restrict the access of the other parent to their child unless there is an ongoing safeguarding concern which is being dealt with through the appropriate channels.
- If a child is to be excluded both parents are contacted unless one of the parents is an "absent parent" and on the "absent parent register.
- If a parent notifies school of changing the child's school then school will ensure that the other parent is aware of this change where possible.
- The Schools send out a request for details annually. The registered parent may be asked verbally or in writing if they have not submitted the other parent's details.
- If a parent is "absent" then they are noted on an "absent parent" register.
- This policy will be posted on the school website so that all parents can access this information.

Parents of children joining the school are asked to bring their child's birth certificate. This ensures children are joining the correct year group and also helps the school ascertain who has Parental Responsibility.

Separated parents are required to inform the school and to return a form (Appendix B) indicating ways in which they would like to be kept informed.

Children's welfare and safety are paramount and, where there are issues over access to children, the parent with whom the child resides should contact the school immediately. Where there is a court restraining order in place, the school will put in place measures to ensure the child is not released to a named individual. Where a separated parent has parental responsibility and there is no court order in place, the school is required to allow the child home with them; however the Headteacher is able to use her discretion and would seek clarification if it was felt there was a child protection issue.

The welfare of the child is at the heart of all we do and the Headteacher and Governors maintain the right to discontinue any of the above if it is deemed to be significantly against the child's best interests. Court orders may also alter the position the schools adopt.

## Working with separated parents - Appendix A

Guidance on Parental Responsibility In order to help us to look after your children whilst they are in our care, we are required to ask you to provide certain information, such as name of parents, address, contact details etc. We are also required to ask who has Parental Responsibility for your child. This is important because it allows us to be sure who has the right to make decisions about your child's education and medical treatment. However, we are aware that this is a very specific legal term and many of you may be unaware of how it is applied. The information below aims to provide you with an explanation of who has parental responsibility so that you are able to provide us with accurate information.

All mothers automatically have Parental Responsibility unless a court order can be produced to say otherwise.

If a child's parents were married at the time of the birth, both parents automatically have Parental Responsibility.

For children born from the 1st December 2003 where the father's name is on the birth certificate, the father and mother will both have Parental Responsibility.

In all other cases, fathers are required to officially obtain Parental Responsibility.

Parental Responsibility cannot be lost, except by legal adoption, although it does not guarantee contact.

(If you would like further guidance, there is clear information on the government website [www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ParentsRights/DG\\_4002954](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/ParentsRights/DG_4002954) )

## Working with separated parents - Appendix B

At Sand Hutton an Warthill Church of England Federated Primary Schools we are committed to working with families and understand the importance of continuing the relationship between school and parents who do not live with their child.

Please complete the form below and return to the school office indicating how you would like to be kept informed about your child's education.

Name of parent:

Name of child/children:

Address:

Telephone number/s:

Please indicate which information you would like to receive:

- Appointments for parents evenings at appropriate times
- Additional copies of termly targets
- Additional copies of end of year reports.

Please use the school website to read the weekly newsletter which includes information about upcoming events