

Excalibur Academies Trust Separated Parents Advice

Research and experience have shown that separated parents can work well together in the best interests of their children and together can play a role in their children's education. However, some parents become estranged, and do not work together or in the best interests of their children, especially during the initial stages of their separation. This is very often traumatic for any child concerned where personal family problems can have an impact on both the children and the academies the children attend.

This advice is an attempt to minimise any impact, clarify to all parties what is expected from separated parents and what can be expected from the academy / staff.

Who has "Parental Responsibility"? (The Children Act 1989)

The definition of a parent for academy purposes is much wider than for any other situation. The Education Act 1996 defines a parent as:

- All **natural parents**, including those that are not married;
- Any person who has **parental responsibility** but is not a natural parent e.g. a legally appointed guardian or the Local Authority named in a Care Order;
- Any person who has **care of a child** i.e. a person with whom the child resides and who looks after the child irrespective of the relationship

Having parental responsibility means assuming all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent of a child has by law. People other than a child's natural parents can acquire parental responsibility through:

- Being granted a Residence Order
- Being appointed a Guardian
- Being named in an Emergency Protection Order (although parental responsibility in a such a case is limited to taking reasonable steps to safeguard or promote the child's welfare)
- Adopting a child.



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