**4.7 Separated Families**

At Woolston Pre-school we recognise that when parents separate or have separated it can be a difficult and emotional time for all concerned and that this can be ongoing. Our main role is to offer support and guidance to the child/children involved. In this policy we set out how we will support all parties involved. The child’s Key Person will work closely with both parents to build close relationships which will support the child’s/children’s emotional wellbeing and report any significant changes in behaviour to both parents. Parents will be signposted to relevant services and organisations for support where necessary.

**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 or living with the child
* Protecting and maintaining 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.

**When registering with Pre-school**

During the registration process we collect details about both parents including who has parental responsibility, as this can avoid future difficult situations. True and correct information must be provided.

**If a parent does not have parental responsibility, or there is a court order in place to prevent this, we must have a copy of this documentation for the child’s records.**

If a child is registered by one parent of a separated family, we request disclosure of all relevant details relating to the child and the other parent. This is so we are able to provide both parents with all the relevant information regarding the child’s education journey with us. If there is a court order in place to prevent this, we must have a copy of this documentation for the child’s records and we ask that when changes or updates are made to any injunction or court order that we are informed at the earliest opportunity.

**We will:**

* Ensure the child’s welfare is paramount at all times that they are in preschool
* Comply with any details of a court order where applicable to the child’s attendance at pre-school where we have seen a copy/have a copy attached to the child’s file
* Provide all information on the child’s progress to both parents unless it is deemed not suitable or the courts state this not to happen
* We are only able to provide both parents with updates in regards to the child’s education if both parents details are provided
* We ensure that there is an invitation sent to bothparents, where possible, to all pre-school events, for example- parents evenings, arts and craft sessions, Mother’s day and Father’s day events and any other social events held
* Ensure any incident or accident within preschool relating to the child is reported to the person collecting the child
* Ensure that all matters known by the staff regarding the family and the parent’s separation remain confidential
* Ensure that staff treat both parents equally and with respect
* Do not restrict access to any parent with parental responsibility unless a formal court order or contact information is not able to be obtained.

**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 practicably possible
* Work with us to ensure continuity of care and support for your child/children
* Not involve the pre-school staff in any family disputes, unless this has a direct impact on the care we provide for the child
* Talk to the manager or key person away from the child/children when this relates to family separation in order to avoid the child/children becoming upset or distressed unnecessarily. This can be arranged in a way that is suitable to the parents; this could be a formal meeting, an informal chat, an email to Woolstonps@gmail.com, a call or a text whichever is convenient to the parent
* Preschool will put the child’s well being above all else and this requires us to be neutral party at all times especially during any disputes to court hearings

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woolston and Woolston Adventure Pre-Schools held in November 2019**

**Updated in December 2023**

**Role on committee: Nominated person**

Signed by

Date

Name of Signatory:

**Woolston Preschool manager**

Name Gemma Woodward

Date

Signature