



# Thorpepark Academy

## Separated Parents Policy



1	Summary	Separate Parent Policy		
2	Responsible person	Tracey Johnson and Britta Dickinson-Fry		
3	Accountable SLT member	Caroline Knight		
4	Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff		
5	Who has overseen development of this policy	Britta Dickinson-Fry		
6	Who has been consulted and recommended policy for approval	Caroline Knight Staff		
7	Approved by and date	Caroline Knight November 2025		
8	Version number	7		
9	Available on	Every	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	Trust website <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N Academy website <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N SharePoint <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
10	Related documents (if applicable)			
11	Disseminated to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trustees/governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff		
12	Date of implementation (when shared)	November 2025		
13	Consulted with recognised trade unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N		



**1. Introduction..... 3**

**2. Academy responsibility.....4**

**3. Surname change.....4**

**4. School holidays.....5**

**5. Conflict between parents.....5**

**1. Introduction**

Thorpepark Academy recognises that some of our children’s parents are separated or divorced. We understand that this can be a difficult situation and our main aim is not to put any additional stress on the child/ren concerned. Your child/ren are our main priority and we hope parents will make every effort to recognise this and support us and their child/ren. This policy will apply unless the academy is aware of any court orders in place and has a copy of the documentation as confirmation. Parents and partners may need to check on who has official parental responsibility and provide evidence of this. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the academy when there is a change in the family circumstances. The academy needs to be kept up to date with contact details, arrangements for collecting children and emergencies.

This policy is linked with our Child Protection Policy where we have a duty of care to all our children.

**Definition of a parent**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published non-statutory advice on parental responsibility. Page 4 explains that, for the purposes of education law, a parent is defined as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative)
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person with whom the child resides and who looks after the child irrespective of the relationship

Biological parents automatically have parental responsibility (unless there is a court order in place limiting this). Other adults can acquire parental responsibility in a number of ways, including through:



- A court order, including child arrangements orders and emergency protection orders
- Being appointed guardian
- Adoption
- An agreement with the child's mother (and other parent if that person also has parental responsibility for the child)
- More than one person may have parental responsibility for a child

### **Academy responsibility**

Thorpepark Academy will:

- Ask for information of both natural parents on the admission form. It is the registering parent's responsibility to include this information. Parents are aware that if a natural parent's information is missing and they contact the academy, they will be added to the database for their child, unless there is a legal reason why this should not happen. If there is a legal reason parents will need to provide legal paperwork, word of mouth cannot be taken.
- Give access to formal documentation, such as reports, to both parents
- Send routine academy information, such as trips, to the parents with whom the child lives for permission. The absent parent will receive information about the trip but not be asked for signed permission unless there is legal documentation stating such. In some cases Social Care may share PR and will need to give signed permission
- All parents are encouraged to use the School App on their phone/devices
- Parents are notified of parent governor elections via newsletter or the school App.
- Need to be informed through the contact sheets as to the people we may call on in the event of an accident or emergency; these will be called in the sequence record on our database
- Need to be informed as to who is able to give messages to the academy regarding their child's welfare such as a change in travel arrangements or collection for medical appointments; this may include new partners
- Make separate parent evening appointments where possible. If parents do not request a separate time a joint appointment will be made
- Encourage children to be organised, in terms of having dinner money, PE kits, reading books and homework etc. in the right location to bring to school
- Inform parents of their child's progress and any issues which may arise
- Inform parents of exclusions, off site education, EHCP and SEN information
- PR restrictions are put in place in the academy if we are aware of such and have written, legal confirmation
- The academy holds an absent parent register, it is up to the absent parent to inform the academy of any changes to their details

However, the academy will always have the right to refuse entry or terminate any communication with parents who are abusive and use inappropriate language or aggressive behaviour towards any member of staff.

### **Surname change**

When a parent requests a surname change for their child legal documentation is required. A letter from the separated parent is also required.

**School holidays**

Should either parent with PR withdraw their child from school for holiday in term time both parents could face the same fine. If one of the parents does not agree to the holiday then they must put this in writing, which will prevent them being fined.

**Conflicts between parents**

The academy is not required to obtain the consent of the resident parent before recording the contact details of the non-resident parent, or sending their child's educational information. This is because all parents and people with parental responsibility have an independent statutory right to see certain information (unless this is limited by a court order).