

Separated Parents and Family Breakdown Policy



Policy Statement

At Grass Roots Private Day Nursery our primary focus is the wellbeing and safety of the child. We aim to maintain a neutral, child-centered environment. We recognise that family separations can be difficult, and we are committed to supporting children through these transitions while remaining impartial.

Legal Framework and Compliance

This policy is underpinned by the following UK legislation and guidance:

- **EYFS Statutory Framework (2025):** We comply with requirements to maintain accurate records for all parents/carers and to work in partnership with families.
- **The Children Act 1989:** We recognise the legal definition of Parental Responsibility (PR). We cannot legally bar a parent with PR from collecting their child or receiving information without a **Section 8 Court Order** (e.g., a Child Arrangements Order, Prohibited Steps Order, or Non-Molestation Order).
- **Data Protection Act 2018:** We respect the privacy of both parties. We will provide information regarding the child's progress to both parents, but we will not disclose the private contact information of one parent to the other.
- **Education (Child Registration) Regulations:** We are required to aim for at least two emergency contact numbers for every child.

Information and Contact Details

To ensure the safety of the child and effective communication, the setting requires:

- Full contact details (address, email, and phone) for both parents, provided they both hold Parental Responsibility (PR).
- Sight of the child's birth certificate upon registration.
- Emergency contact details from both parties where possible.

Communication and Progress Reporting

We believe both parents have a right to be involved in their child's education and development. Unless a court order states otherwise:

- Both parents will have access to our digital learning journals/parent apps.
- Information regarding parents' evenings, snapshots, and special events will be sent to both parents.
- Duplicate copies of newsletters or paper reports can be provided upon request.

Collection and "Fall-outs"

This is often the most sensitive area of the policy. Our procedures are as follows:

- **Agreed Collection:** We expect parents to provide a clear, written schedule of who is collecting the child on specific days (this can be added to the family app)
- **Refusing Collection:** Under UK law, we cannot refuse a parent with Parental Responsibility from collecting their child simply because the other parent has requested it (e.g., following a "fall-out" or verbal disagreement).
- **Legal Restrictions:** We can only refuse collection if there is a legally binding Court Order (such as a Prohibited Steps Order or a Non-Molestation Order) specifically naming the individual and the restriction. A copy of this order must be kept in the child's file.
- **Safety Concerns:** If a parent arrives to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol/drugs or displays aggressive behavior that puts the child or staff at risk, we will follow our standard Safeguarding Procedure and may contact the police.

Conflict Resolution on Site

- The setting is a neutral zone. We expect all adults to behave respectfully.
- If a dispute between parents occurs on the premises, staff will intervene to ensure the child is not distressed.
- Continued conflict or aggressive behavior on-site may result in parents being asked to drop off/collect at staggered times or, in extreme cases, a ban from the premises.

6. Changes in Circumstances

Parents are required to notify the Manager immediately if:

- There is a change in living arrangements.
- There are new legal proceedings or Court Orders in place.
- There is a change in the person(s) authorised to collect the child.