



KING EDWARD VI  
SCHOOL LICHFIELD

## Protocol for families with separated/divorced parents

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| <b>To be reviewed:</b>   | By September 2020                                |
| <b>To be reviewed by:</b><br><b>Linked governors' committee:</b> | Headteacher<br>Student & Staff Welfare Committee |

### Our Aims & Values

We want everyone in school to develop to their full potential; it is our job to ensure that students leave us as confident, life-long learners who have a strong sense of responsibility for themselves and for others.

We are a learning community with a positive, inclusive and friendly environment where we take the time to get to know our students so we can support their learning and their personal development. We seek to develop a strong partnership between students, parents and the school to enable this to take place. We encourage all stakeholders to involve themselves in the wider life of the school and its community.

Our overriding aim is to provide the highest quality education for all students. Our commitment is to help each young person to make the most of their abilities, building their character and developing their life skills. Students are challenged to do their best and are supported to ensure that they make good progress. In return we expect a commitment to high standards of effort and behaviour.

### Rationale and legal position

Research and experience have shown that separated parents can become estranged, especially during the initial stages of the split. This is very often traumatic for those children concerned. Inevitably these personal family problems have an impact on the schools the children attend. This policy is an attempt to minimise this impact and clarify to all parties what is expected from separated parents and what can be expected from King Edward VI School and its staff.

The School recognises that, while the parents of some students may be divorced or separated, both have a right to be informed of, and involved in, their son/daughter's education.

The information provided to the school when the student was enrolled detailing whether both parents have parental responsibility for the student will be presumed to be correct unless a court order or original birth certificate proving otherwise is provided to the School.

King Edward VI School wishes to promote the best interests of the student(s), working in partnership with both parents, unless directed by a court order. In the event that the school is not informed of such action, neither parent will have rights superior to the other.

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the school when there is a change in the family's circumstances. We need to be kept up to date with contact details in addition to any other information that may have an impact on the students at school.

## **Communication**

We hope and expect that parents, whatever the nature of their separation, will do all they can to communicate with each other and share information from and for the school, for the benefit of their son/daughter. This also considerably reduces the possibility of errors being made and upset caused.

However, in the event that this may cause difficulty and have a negative effect on the student(s) and their learning, letters, texts and emails can be sent to both parents if this is agreed by parents and the school together.

Information on all the main school events, including productions, sports days, parent's evenings, trips, etc. are available on the school website. Occasionally items are given directly to students such as letters, notes in their planners or educational resources. We would expect parents to share these with each other as and when appropriate. The school will not provide duplicates of such information.

Both parents are welcome to parents' evenings, attending the same appointment unless exceptional arrangements have been agreed with school in advance. We would expect parents to communicate with each other regarding the arrangements for these.

We expect that parents would liaise and communicate directly with each other in matters such as the ordering of school photographs; tickets for performances and other instances. The school will not normally deal individually with these requests.

Responses to parental enquiries will be made to the parent who initiated the enquiry.

## **Progress reports and student records**

Both parents have the right to access termly progress reports via the SWITCH learning platform. If the parents are separated or divorced, separate login information can be given to parents, providing updated contact information has been supplied to the school.

All parents are recommended to use our website and learning platform regularly. They contain most of our communications and have a range of information and links.

## **Requests for Leave of Absence from School**

If one parent seeks leave of absence from school for an extended period, the school may contact both parents to discuss the situation and establish their views before a decision is made as to whether or not the absence will be authorised.

In the event that the parent with whom the student ordinarily resides cannot be reached, the Headteacher or staff member dealing with the issue may make a decision based upon all relevant information available to him/her.

The Headteacher or staff member may have to refuse permission if consent cannot be obtained from both parents.

In extreme circumstances if there is a belief that a possible abduction of the student(s) may occur, advice will be sought from social services and/or the police.

## **In the event of the break-down of a relationship**

King Edward VI School acknowledges that relationships can break down suddenly or traumatically, even for a temporary period, and that we may not be aware of this.

Our position is not to attribute blame but to support the student and to ensure his/her safety which is paramount. We would ask therefore that one parent at least contact the school if a relationship has broken down and inform us of any changes to plans or arrangements, for example emergency contact numbers.

We may well need to meet with you to discuss these arrangements. Parents can be assured we will treat the matter with care and sensitivity. In the first instance, please contact the Student Support team. However, if there is an emergency and you have safety concerns for your son/daughter, please contact the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher with designated responsibility for safeguarding immediately.

## **Our availability**

Whatever the circumstances, we wish to maintain good communication with all members of the school community. Should you wish to speak to a member of staff about any issues related to this policy please phone or email the school using the contact details found on our website [www.keslichfield.org.uk](http://www.keslichfield.org.uk)

## **Linked Policies**

Safeguarding Policy

Attendance Policy

## **Useful links**

School website - <http://www.keslichfield.org.uk/>

SWITCH Learning Platform - <http://www.switchlp.com/>