



Supporting changes in a child's life

Separated Families

Clyde Nursery Ltd understands that some children in our care have a single parent/carer or have parents/carers who live apart but who may both be involved in the care of their child or children.

When parents/carers separate, it is a difficult situation for all concerned. The Nursery understands that emotions run high, and this policy lays out how the Nursery will support all parties during this time.

While the law does not define in detail what parental responsibility is, the following list sets out the key points to consider:

- Providing a home for the child
- Having contact with and living with the child
- Protecting 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

During registration to the Nursery, it is very important for the Nursery staff to know:

- The main contacts for each child including emergency contacts.
- If not shared, who has the main parental responsibility.
- If not shared, who should receive letters or communication from the Nursery.
- If not shared, who is primarily responsible for the payment of fees, etc.

It is therefore very important that this information is made clear on each child's registration form. This will ensure that any information is communicated or issued to the correct parent/carer without causing any offence or distress and will avoid difficult situations which may arise at a later date.

If a child is registered by one parent of a separated family, the Nursery requests that all details relating to the child and other parent are disclosed wherever possible. This includes any current Court Orders, Injunctions, etc. This will allow the Nursery to have all the appropriate information in order to support the child fully.

The Nursery staff will comply with any details of a Court Order where they are applicable to the Nursery's function, provided the Nursery has a copy of the Court Order in the child's file.

The Nursery cannot restrict access to any parent or stop a parent collecting a child unless a Court Order is in place stating that one or other is not able to collect the child. Normal security procedures will always be followed but without a Court Order, Nursery staff are not able to prevent parents leaving the Nursery with their child. Parents/carers are respectfully asked not to put Nursery staff in this position.

Any changes to a child's domestic situation must be notified in writing as soon as possible so that the best possible support can be given to the child in Nursery.

The Nursery will endeavour to act on the information provided on the child's registration form, Child's Care Plan and in particular will deal with the child's main carer unless specifically requested otherwise – it is not normal practice to report on progress or on daily activities to both mum and dad. Communication will usually be to the child's main carer only.

Nursery staff will:

- Provide information on the child's progress
- Issue invitations to parents' evenings
- Report any incidents or accidents within Nursery.
- Ensure all information relating to the child and family are kept securely and confidential.
- Ensure staff treat parents/carers equally and with respect.

Above all, staff will ensure the child's welfare is paramount during their time at Nursery. Staff will treat all parents equally and with due respect; they will keep the child as their focus and will always remain neutral.

Where parents/carers of a child or children are separated due to work commitments, e.g., shift working or working away from home, staff will support the child at all times ensuring their welfare is paramount and will be prepared to deal with any situations which may arise as a result of the child's family routine being disrupted due to a parent/carer being absent from home for any length of time. Significant/relevant changes in a child's life will be recorded in the child's chronology. Consideration should be given to introduce a staged plan to support the child through the change.

Bereavement

Clyde Nursery Ltd understands that there may be times when children and their families experience grief and loss of close family members, friends, and pets while in Nursery. This is not only a difficult time for families, but it may also be a confusing time for young children, especially if they have little or no understanding of why their parents/carers are upset or why a much-loved person or pet is no longer around.

Clyde Nursery Ltd aims to support both the child and their family and will adapt the following procedure to suit family preference:

- If there is a loss of a family member or close friend, parents/carers should inform the Nursery Manager/Room Senior as soon as they feel able to. This will enable staff to support both the child and the family wherever possible. It also helps staff to understand a potential change in behaviour of a child who may be grieving or confused about what has happened.
- The Nursery Manager/Director and the Room Senior will talk with the parents/carers to ascertain what support is needed from the Nursery. This may be an informal discussion or a meeting away from the child to prevent the child from becoming upset.
- The child may need extra support during this time and the Nursery will do all it can to ensure the child's 'Key Person' is able to fully support the child. The Nursery also recognises that the child may require access to counselling services and will suggest this if they feel it would be of benefit to the child.
- The Nursery will be flexible wherever possible to provide whatever the child and family may need during this time.

A copy of this policy is available to view in the Policy Folders held in the Nursery Office and Nursery Playrooms.

Reviewed: November 2024

Date of Next Review: November 2025

Appendix: Child's Care Plan
Chronology