

Separated / Split Parents Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how the dance school works with children whose parents or carers are separated, divorced, or living apart, ensuring:

- the child's welfare is the primary consideration
 - staff act fairly and consistently
 - safeguarding and legal responsibilities are met
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2. Legal framework

This policy is informed by:

- Children Act 1989
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- NSPCC safeguarding guidance for out-of-school settings

The dance school recognises that:

- Parental Responsibility (PR) may be held by one or more adults
 - Schools and clubs are not responsible for enforcing private family arrangements
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3. Parental responsibility

- The dance school will ask parents to inform us of:
 - any changes to family circumstances
 - who holds Parental Responsibility
 - any court orders affecting the child
- Written legal documentation (e.g. court orders) must be provided if:
 - there are restrictions on contact
 - one parent must not collect the child
 - information must not be shared with one parent

Until such documentation is provided, the school will:

- assume both parents with PR have equal rights to information and involvement
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4. Communication

- The school will normally communicate with the primary contact parent listed on the registration form on Class Manager
- Upon request, the school can:
 - duplicate emails to both parents where appropriate and in the absence of legal restrictions or safeguarding concerns.
 - provide information separately to each parent (where practical)

The dance school will not:

- act as a messenger between parents
 - become involved in disputes
 - take sides in disagreements
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5. Consent and decision-making

For routine matters (e.g. class participation, performances):

- consent from one parent with PR is sufficient

For significant matters (e.g. trips, costume costs, photos, external events):

- the school expects parents to resolve disagreements privately
 - the school will not withhold participation unless safeguarding or legal documentation requires it
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6. Collection and contact arrangements

- Children will only be released to:
 - adults named on the registration form, or
 - adults with written parental permission

If there is a dispute at collection time:

- staff will prioritise the child's safety
- the child will remain supervised
- staff may contact the police if required

7. Safeguarding priority

The dance school will:

- always act in the best interests of the child
- follow safeguarding procedures if:
 - conflict places the child at risk
 - the child shows signs of distress
 - allegations or concerns arise

Any safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, if necessary, to external agencies.

8. Expectations of parents

Parents are expected to:

- keep the school informed of changes
- ensure adult disagreements do not affect the child's experience
- communicate respectfully with staff

The school reserves the right to:

- limit communication to written form
 - set boundaries if staff are drawn into conflict
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9. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- annually, or
- sooner if legislation or safeguarding guidance
- by Charlotte Forster in January 2027