



STOWE
FAMILY LAW

PARENTING PLAN TEMPLATE

WHAT IS A PARENTING PLAN?

A parenting plan is a written agreement drawn up between divorcing or separating parents, whether they have been married or not. It sets out practical arrangements for the couple's shared children after separation.

Parents are usually at the forefront of the decision-making when it comes to the parenting plan. However, input can also be included from other family members, for example grandparents, especially where children have a strong relationship with the wider family or other connections. Children can also contribute depending on their age and understanding of the situation. Open communication is hugely important when navigating the parenting plan.

This template is to guide your child-arrangement planning. It is not a legally binding document but serves as a formalised record of your agreements about your children's futures.

This form can be printed and filled in, or you can fill it in digitally to share online with your ex-partner.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

The Family Justice System, which is the legal system helping to resolve family disputes after relationship breakdown, is keen for children to maintain a healthy and loving relationship with both their parents after separation. However, in some circumstances, this may not be possible, for example if it threatens the physical and/or emotional safety of the children involved.

With this in mind, a parenting plan may not be the best option for you if any of the following are relevant:

- Any form of domestic abuse to child or parent - physical, emotional, financial, etc.
- Any actual or attempted child abduction
- Substance abuse, including drugs or alcohol
- Any other welfare concerns that pose a risk of harm



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COMMITMENTS

Parent _____

Parent _____

We are the parents of:

Name	Date of birth	Important notes (ie. any health concerns, learning difficulties, formal diagnosis)

We recognise our children's rights to:

- Emotional and physical safety, stability and security
- Feel loved by both of us and significant family members
- Know and be cared for by both of us and significant family members
- Develop independent and meaningful relationships with each of us

As parents we accept responsibility for:

- Our children's physical care, health and safety
- Our children's emotional stability
- Our children's changing needs as they grow and mature
- Protecting our children so they are not exposed to harmful parental conflict that is prolonged or aggressive
- Cooperating with each other to make decisions in our children's best interests
- Respecting our children's relationship with each of us

We agree to adhere to the following behaviours in front of our children to ensure they know we are working together for their benefit and they will not be caught in the middle or forced to choose a side:

- Treat each other with respect and kindness
- Talk about each other positively
- Communicate openly
- Review the plan regularly to ensure our children's changing needs are being met

This parenting plan was agreed on _____

The plan will be reviewed in line with our children’s changing needs upon mutual agreement.

We have considered our safety and welfare, and that of our children. We agree we can safely work together.

Any additional professionals contributing to this plan should be noted here

e.g. counsellors, parenting coaches, divorce coaches

Name	Role	Contact details

Signature of parent _____

Date _____

Signature of parent _____

Date _____

DECISION-MAKING

MAKING DECISIONS

Not all decisions that will arise in our post-separation life will be able to be covered in this plan. We may be faced with new challenges or questions regarding our children.

How will we make a decision?

We will make all decisions jointly

_____ will make the decision and inform

Not applicable

Another arrangement that we have discussed and agreed upon

BIG DECISIONS

There may be points where bigger decisions have to be made about our children, for example if one of us needs to move to a different town or country, or there are significant medical decisions to be made.

How will big decisions be made?

We will work together to reach a solution

We will use mediation or another dispute resolution method

_____ will make the decision and inform

We will work together, with the child in question and any other relevant people

Another arrangement that we have discussed and agreed upon

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

We have committed to working together for the benefit of our children. However, there may be times where we do not immediately agree on what is best for the children.

How will disputes be resolved?

Communicate directly with each other in a neutral location

Attend mediation (or an appropriate version e.g. child-inclusive mediation or hybrid mediation)

Another arrangement that we have discussed and agreed upon

COMMUNICATION

We agree to keep whatever feelings we have about each other separate to our co-parenting. We will encourage our children to maintain communication with the other parent regardless of who they are spending time with.

PARENT TO PARENT COMMUNICATION

Whilst we are no longer a couple, our role as parents continues and it is important we communicate regularly about our children to ensure their safety, wellbeing and happiness.

What is our preferred method of sharing important information with one another?

e.g. school matters, trips, medical issues and anything else you deem important to your family

In person

By email

By phone call

Via a parenting app e.g. OurFamilyWizard

Another arrangement that we have discussed and agreed upon

Any notes e.g. what information should be shared, when it is appropriate to call rather than inform in person

When is the best time to communicate with each other about our children if this is not in person?

PARENT TO CHILD COMMUNICATION

We are committed to maintaining open channels of communication with our children, regardless of who they are physically with. Factors such as their age and understanding will be considered at this point, but as our children grow up their communication styles and needs will change. We will regularly review and work with our children, where appropriate, to ensure positive communication.

How will we communicate with our children when they are with the other parent or another caregiver? Explain best methods and note any potential issues e.g. if your children are too young to have their own phone

How regular will this contact be and are there specific schedules to work around?
e.g. daily, after their evening meal

Any further notes

PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

LIVING AND CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Your time with your children is important. Many parents divide time equally after divorce or separation, but there is no fixed blueprint. Living and care arrangements post-separation depend on your unique family situation. You will need to consider a variety of factors, including work commitments, housing and what is in the best interests of your children.

Names of children involved in these scheduling arrangements

How will time be split between parents? e.g. week on week off

How often will the pattern repeat?

Weekly

Bi-weekly

Other

Handover day will be (unless otherwise communicated)

Handover time will be (unless otherwise communicated)

Where/how will handovers take place?

Neutral mid-point

Receiving parent's house

School pickup

Other

Other arrangements/notes e.g. how to communicate change in plans, how much notice is required, whether other family members will be involved e.g. grandparents

How do you intend to communicate any disruptions? e.g. due to parent illness or child illness

HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

In this section, you can discuss your plans for school holidays, including any planning for trips abroad, staying with family during festive seasons or anything else relevant to your children.

Division of school holidays/teacher training days:

We will maintain the normal structure

We will alternate weeks in the school holidays

Another arrangement we have discussed and agreed upon

Easter, Christmas, other religious festivals, birthdays and other special occasions

Explain how special occasions will be shared, e.g. alternate years

Spending time with extended family during the school holidays

How will this be communicated between parents?

In person

Via phone call

Via email

Via parenting app

Another arrangement we have discussed and agreed upon

How much notice is required in advance of taking the children away from their usual place of residence to visit family or friends?

No less than 7 days

No less than 14 days

A month

Holidays outside of England and Wales

It is important to remember that when you have separated, you must get the other parents' express permission to take your children out of England and Wales (this includes taking them to Scotland or Northern Ireland). It is best to have this permission in writing.

How will you communicate potential plans for overseas holidays?

Which parent is consistently responsible for the children's passport(s)?

Is there a maximum length of time an overseas trip can last for on a single occasion?

Not applicable

Yes (give duration below)

What contact will the children have with the other parent when they are away?

The same as our usual routine

Different arrangement (record below)

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING

Our children's current education and school are noted below.

Child's name	Education level	Institution

Where will each child move on to after their current stage?

Child's name	Education level	Institution

If we cannot agree on schools, or circumstances change e.g. one parent needs to move away for work, we will try our best to come to an agreeable solution that is in the best interests of our children.

How will we do this?

In person discussion in a neutral location

Through mediation

Alternative arrangement we have discussed and agreed upon

How much involvement will our children have in these conversations?

Will both parents attend parents' evenings?

Yes

No

If no, how will this be arranged and communicated?

If any of your children have, or develop, specialist learning requirements, how will this be dealt with?

As parents, you will need to keep your children's school abreast of your living situation and anything that might impact learning.

Will this be a joint responsibility, will you share it depending on who the children are with, or will one parent be primarily responsible?

Joint responsibility

The parent who the children are with at the time

_____ will be primarily responsible

How will curricular and extra-curricular activities be financially managed?

E.g. school trips, school lunches, dance lessons, football, necessary kit etc.

We will divide everything equally

Another arrangement we have discussed and agreed upon

HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

Note any existing medical conditions for each of your children in the table below, and what medication is required for treatment.

Child's name	Allergies	Dietary requirements	Medical conditions	Current treatment and notes

Registered dentist _____

Registered doctor _____

Other health professionals e.g. therapists, physiotherapists

Name	Title	Name of the child they support	Contact information

How will you deal with medical emergencies? e.g. communication with the other parent, when can a decision be made without the knowledge of the other parent etc.

Which parent is responsible for booking annual dental checkups, optician appointments?

Will both parents attend medical appointments?

Yes, we will do this together

No, the parent who booked will attend

SCREENS AND INTERNET USAGE

From mobile phones, to laptops, to gaming consoles, you may wish to have rules in place for how much time your children are allowed to spend on their devices, and at what age they are allowed.

Make some notes to support the comment on the left, including what you will do about parental controls:

EMERGENCIES

Unfortunately, you may encounter non-medical emergencies. It's important you know what your responsibilities are and how to deal with any emergency decision making. This may mean not consulting the other parent until after the decision has been made.

Make some notes to support the comment on the left, including information about what you consider to be an emergency:

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

CHILD CARE

There will most likely be times where family members, friends or professional child minders will be involved in your children's care. In this section, you can note down who you are happy for your children to be cared for by, and for what length of time. You can also discuss contact arrangements for the times when the children are not with either parent.

Name	Relationship to child	Regular contact?	Contact information

If one parent wishes to leave the children with a new caregiver, how will this be communicated and what restrictions are in place?
e.g. the other parent must meet the caregiver first, there must be at least 7 days notice etc.

INTRODUCING NEW PARTNERS

You may already have, or in the future have, new partners.

How will you communicate new partners with each other and with your children?

Are there any restrictions around introducing new partners to the children?

FAITH AND RELIGION

In this section, you can discuss ongoing arrangements for religious practices, including church attendance, weekly groups, if this is important to your family.

Is there a religious group you and your children are part of?

Yes

No

Specify the group

Place of worship / secondary place of worship

Any notes concerning ongoing practice of religion

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

It is important for children that their community remains stable through the process of their parents' separation. This looks different for each family, but may include regular time spent with grandparents, aunts/uncles, close friends etc.

How will you be ensuring your children's community is protected both in immediately post-separation and into the future?

ANY FURTHER NOTES

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Call our Client Team on **0330 838 7456** to speak with one of our specialist family lawyers or visit **stowefamilylaw.co.uk**



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