



Legal Access Policy

Rationale: To ensure that the welfare/care of children is protected while in the centre and that the centre upholds guardianship and custodial rights of parents.

Guidelines:

- 1) Non-custodial parents continue to have guardianship rights are entitled to exercise them.
- 2) A 'Custody Order' of the court states rights in terms of access for the non-custodial parent.
- 3) A 'Ward of the State' may be placed under guardianship of the court but both parents also retain their guardianship rights
- 4) Both Parents (regardless of custodial rights) as guardians are entitled to:
 - a) A copy of any written report made about the child's development
 - b) Discuss the development of the child with the Head Teacher
 - c) Contribute to major decisions affecting the child
 - d) Be part of parent consultation groups
 - e) See any records available for parents.
- 5) Centres should make reasonable efforts to assist guardians to avail themselves of these rights.
- 6) It is the responsibility of parents to inform the centre of the custody and access arrangements.
- 7) Staff, if they have reasonable doubts about their identity, good faith or legal rights of any person wishing to make contact with a child, should consult the parent who is known to have legal access. A person can be asked to produce a copy of the "access Order' or to give the name of the solicitor from whom any enquiry can be made.
- 8) When there is any doubt, unrestricted access to a child should not be allowed e.g. Head Teacher stays with parent and child.

Procedures:

- On Enrolment parents will fill out the enrolment form stating custodial agreements
- All staff should be aware of individual children's custodial agreements
- If a parent/family member comes to visit, the parent will be called to confirm the visit.

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