**Parenting plan**

**For the online and fully interactive version of this plan and guidance on how to successfully complete the plan please visit the Cafcass website,** [**www.cafcass.gov.uk**](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk)**.**A parenting plan is a written agreement worked out between parents (and sometimes grandparents and other family members) after they separate. The plan covers the practical issues of parenting. It asks you to think about your children and, based on their sex, ages and personalities, what they are likely to need. A parenting plan must put the best interests of the child first and set out a shared commitment to your children and their future

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**A question about safety**

Whilst it is important for children to maintain a loving relationship with both parents, the children's safety and their physical and emotional wellbeing should always come first.

Creating a plan like this is an opportunity to agree how far you can share the roles and responsibilities of parenting. This should always be done with safety in mind.

If any of the following are occurring and you do not feel safe to continue with the parenting plan, then please do not go ahead.

* Any form of domestic abuse or violence
* Any actual or attempted child abduction
* Any child abuse
* The abuse of drugs, alcohol or other substance misuse
* Any other safety or welfare concerns that place anyone at significant risk of harm.

**1. Getting started**

We are the parents / carers of:

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| --- | --- |
| Child’s name: | Date of birth: |
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We respect each other as parents / carers and our significance in the lives of our children.

We have drawn up this Parenting Plan to assist us in providing a loving, stable, caring and safe environment for our children, in line with their age and needs.

Signature of parent/carer: Date:

Signature of parent/carer: Date:

## 2. Before you startConsidering our children’s points of view

# What our children need and wantBefore making any proposals in the parenting plan, use a separate piece of paper to make a list of the things that your children tell you they need and want from any future arrangement. This will be a helpful reminder as you go through and make or review proposals in the parenting plan.

##

## 3. Agreements

**General statements of responsibility**These statements set out some basic principles that are essential to establish if there is to be a successful outcome to the parenting plan process. Please read carefully and indicate your acceptance or otherwise using the checkboxes below.

**Our joint responsibilities**

We will keep our children safe and loved even though we are no longer together.

We respect each other as parents and our significance in the lives of our children.

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;
* Co-operating with each other to make decisions in our children’s best interests; and
* Respecting our children’s relationship with each of us.

# Our behaviour in front of children

# We agree to treat each other with respect and kindness in front of our children.

We must ensure that they know we are trying to work together for them.

# Talking about each other in front of children

We agree to only speak positively about each other in front of the children.

We will always try to ensure that our children are not caught in the middle.

# Reviewing plan

We agree that our children's needs will change and that this plan may require review to ensure those needs are met.

## 4. Decision making

**General decision making**

# How will we make decisions on matters that are not specifically mentioned in this plan?

All decisions will be made together

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will make these decisions and inform \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

**Dispute resolution**

# How will we settle differences and disputes?

Top of Form

Find a time to communicate our differences in a safe way

Agree to attend mediation

We don't need to address this question

 If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

**Emergencies**

# What do we do about emergencies, (for example, medical, dental, or accidents)?

Top of Form

Address emergency and then contact our co-parent as soon as practical

Contact our co-parent straight away

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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Bottom of Form

**Rules for children**

# Are there any important rules that we consider essential for the children, (for example, bedtimes, when homework is done, staying out late)? Do we agree that these rules are followed?

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We don't need to address this question

**Big decisions**

# How will we work together to make the big decisions, (for example, school, course selection and careers advice)?

All decisions will be made together

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will make these decisions and inform \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

###  **5.**  **Communication involving children**

### **Children's say**

# How do we find out what our children want to happen, and make sure that they have a say in what we decide?

Write a joint letter to our children asking about their wishes and feelings

Schedule a joint conversation to hear what our children want

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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### **Informing the children**

# How will we talk to our children about the arrangements we have made?

Write a letter

Share the parenting plan with them

Schedule a joint conversation where we all meet up to share our plans and get their feedback

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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### **How to communicate**

### When we are not spending time with them, how will we communicate with our children (by phone, text, email etc)?

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We don't need to address this question

### **When to communicate**

# When is the best time to call/message our children?

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We don't need to address this question

## 6. Communication with each other

**Information sharing**

# How are we going to share important information with each other, (for example, school reports, health issues)?

By email

In person

By phone

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**When to communicate**

# When is the best time to call/message each other about our children?

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### **7. Living arrangements**

# Where do our children mostly live?

With \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Both

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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Bottom of Form

**School holidays**

# Where do our children mostly live?

With \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Both

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**Handover belongings**

# What clothes, toys and other belongings will be taken and returned at changeover?

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**Getting around**

# Who is responsible for taking and collecting the children to and from where they need to be?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The parent who is spending time with the children

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

**Holidays**

# Will we both have holiday time with the children?

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**Pets**

# Are there arrangements needed for the family pets?

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## 8. Childcare

**Alternate carers**

# If neither of us can look after our children, who will be the alternative carers?

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**External care**

# Will anyone else look after our children (for example, childminders, babysitters, relatives, new partners, friends and neighbours)? If so, when?

Yes

 No, no one else will look after the children

We don't need to address this question

 If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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## 9. Community, culture, family ties

**Support network**

# How do we make sure that our children stay in contact with supportive friends and relatives, including grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins?

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**Sibling time**

# How do we make sure that our children have enough time with their brothers and sisters?

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**Special days**

# How do we make sure that our children can share special days, for example, birthdays and religious festivals, with both of us?

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**New partners**

# How will we introduce new partners into our children's lives?

*Note: You and your co-parent are encouraged to have a discussion about how this information will be shared, when and by whom.*

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**Religious practice**

# What do we agree about religious practice and upbringing?

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**Cultural issues**

# Are there any other cultural issues that we need to make sure are respected?

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**Extracurricular commitments**

# Are there any sporting or artistic commitments that we need to account for?

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## 10. Education

**School notices**

# How will we arrange with schools that notices, reports, invitations and other materials are sent to both of us?

Ensure school has contact information (phone, email, addresses) for both of us

Set up a joint email account

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**School involvement**

# How can we each get involved in school life?

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**School communication**

# Do we need to contact school about our situation, and its impact on our children, so that they can be supported in school as needed?

Yes, we will

No, we don't need to

We don't need to address this question

Add any other comment or proposal here

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## 11. Health

**Routine health issues**

# Who organises routine health appointments and treatment?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**Long term health issues**

# How will we meet any additional health needs, including long term or emergency care?

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## 12. Money

**Day-to-day costs**

# How will we share day-to-day costs for clothes, school trips and larger items like computers and musical instruments?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is responsible

Even split between us

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**Pocket money**

# How will pocket money be handled?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be responsible for pocket money

Even split between us

We don't need to address this question

If a different arrangement is proposed describe it here

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**Change to our finances**

# Add additional arrangements below:

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**13. Other**

# Add additional arrangements below:

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**Add another section (optional)Bottom of Form**