BECKY TAYLOR FAMILY MEDIATION

FREE GUIDE · CHILD ARRANGEMENTS

Child Arrangements Planning Worksheet

A step-by-step tool to help you create a parenting plan that works for your family.

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How to Use This Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you and the other parent think through and agree on the practical details of your child arrangements. You can work through it together (ideally with a mediator), or each complete it separately and then compare your answers.

There are no right or wrong answers — only what works best for your family. Be realistic about your circumstances, work schedules, distances, and your children's ages and needs.

> "The best parenting plan is the one that reflects your family's reality — not an ideal family."

Before you start

- **Focus on your children.** What do they need to feel safe, loved, and secure?
- **Be flexible.** Arrangements will need to adapt as your children grow and circumstances change.
- **Keep it simple.** Overly complicated schedules are hard to follow and can cause stress.
- **Write it down.** A written plan prevents misunderstandings and provides clarity.
- **Seek help if needed.** If you are struggling to agree, mediation can help you find common ground.

What happens next

Use the worksheets on the following pages to map out your parenting plan step by step. Once complete, you can turn this into a formal parenting agreement with the help of a mediator or solicitor.

Worksheet 1: Living and Contact Schedule

Use this section to map out where your children will live and when they will spend time with each parent.

Primary Living Arrangement

- [ ] Where will your children live most of the time?
- [ ] Will they have one primary home or shared care (e.g., week on/week off)?
- [ ] How does this fit with school, work schedules, and your children's routines?

Regular Contact Schedule

- [ ] Which days/nights will the children spend with each parent?
- [ ] Will handovers happen after school, at weekends, or at specific times?
- [ ] Are there any midweek contact visits (e.g., dinner with the non-resident parent)?
- [ ] Will contact be overnight or daytime only (especially for younger children)?

Map out a typical week or fortnight.

Handover Details

- [ ] Where will handovers take place (home, school, neutral location)?
- [ ] What time will handovers happen?
- [ ] Who will drop off and who will collect?
- [ ] What should you do if someone is running late?

Worksheet 2: School Holidays and Special Occasions

School holidays and special occasions require advance planning. Decide how you will divide these times.

School Holidays

- [ ] How will you divide the summer holidays (e.g., alternate weeks, split in half)?
- [ ] What about Christmas, Easter, and half-term breaks?
- [ ] Will you alternate who has the children for each holiday, or divide each holiday in half?
- [ ] How much notice is needed if either parent wants to take the children away?

Special Occasions

- [ ] How will you handle birthdays (the children's and each parent's)?
- [ ] What about Mother's Day, Father's Day, and other significant days?
- [ ] Will you alternate Christmas Day, or will one parent always have the children?
- [ ] What happens on religious or cultural holidays that matter to your family?

Family Events

- [ ] Can the children attend extended family events (e.g., grandparents' birthdays, weddings)?
- [ ] Do you need to notify the other parent in advance?
- [ ] What happens if an event falls during the other parent's contact time?

Worksheet 3: Communication and Decision-Making

Good communication is essential for effective co-parenting. Decide how you will stay in touch and make important decisions together.

Parent-to-Parent Communication

- [ ] How will you communicate (text, email, phone, co-parenting app)?
- [ ] How quickly should you respond to each other's messages?
- [ ] What topics should you communicate about (schedules, health, school, emergencies)?
- [ ] How will you handle disagreements or conflicts?

Staying in Touch with the Children

- [ ] Can the children contact the other parent when they are with you?
- [ ] How often and by what method (phone, video call, text)?
- [ ] At what time of day (e.g., before bed, after school)?
- [ ] What if the children do not want to speak at that moment?

Major Decisions

- [ ] Schooling (choosing a school, moving schools, special educational needs support)
- [ ] Healthcare (medical treatment, vaccinations, therapy, mental health support)
- [ ] Religion (religious upbringing, ceremonies, practices)
- [ ] Extracurricular activities (significant commitments like joining a sports team)
- [ ] Passports and international travel (consent needed for taking children abroad)

These decisions should usually be made jointly by both parents. How will you make them if you disagree?

Worksheet 4: Practical Logistics and Review

These final details help ensure your parenting plan runs smoothly and can adapt as your children grow.

Practical Arrangements

- [ ] How will you manage clothing, school uniforms, and belongings between homes?
- [ ] Will the children have duplicate items (toothbrush, favourite toys) at each home?
- [ ] Who is responsible for taking the children to school, activities, appointments?
- [ ] How will you coordinate school pick-ups during your respective contact times?
- [ ] What happens if one parent is unable to have the children at their scheduled time?

Financial Responsibilities

- [ ] How will you handle child maintenance (CMS calculation or private arrangement)?
- [ ] Who pays for school trips, uniforms, extracurricular activities?
- [ ] Will you split additional costs (e.g., music lessons, sports clubs)?
- [ ] How will you manage unexpected expenses (medical costs, school events)?

Reviewing and Updating the Plan

- [ ] When will you review the plan (e.g., every six months, annually)?
- [ ] How will you handle changes in work schedules, relocation, or new relationships?
- [ ] What process will you use to agree changes (discussion, mediation, court)?
- [ ] How will you involve your children's views as they get older?

Your parenting plan should evolve as your children grow and circumstances change.

Completing Your Parenting Plan

"The best parenting plans are living documents — they grow and change as your family does."

Need help creating your parenting plan?

If you are finding it difficult to agree on arrangements, mediation can help. A trained mediator creates a safe, neutral space for you to work through these questions together and reach solutions that work for your family.

Ready to take the next step?

Book a free, no-obligation call to discuss how we can support you.

BOOK A FREE 30-MINUTE CALL

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