

Parental Responsibility

Parental Responsibility is a legal term; it does not necessarily mean only the person that looks after the child.

Who has Parental Responsibility?

- All mothers have PR.
- Fathers who are married to the mother at the time of birth automatically have PR.
- From 01/12/03 unmarried fathers who attend to register the birth of the child and have their name on the birth certificate.
- Before 01/12/03, unmarried fathers of the child could gain PR by either marrying the mother of the child or gaining it by Court Order.
- Adoptive parents at the point when adoption of a child is finalised.
- People with an SGO (Special Guardianship Order).

Who does not have Parental Responsibility?

- Stepparents and Civil Partners do NOT automatically have legal PR even if they have brought up the child. They can gain this through a court order.
- Foster Carers do NOT have PR.

Once a person has legal Parental responsibility, it cannot be lost unless someone else legally adopts the child. However, it can be shared or be limited with other parties e.g. the Local Authority.