



Bereavement Policy

Bereavement policy

Red Hall Primary School

Approved by: School Improvement
Committee

Date: March 2021

Last reviewed on: March 2021

Next review due by: March 2022



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Bereavement Policy

1. Aims

This bereavement policy aims to:

- Set out a guideline for how the school will respond to a death in our school community
- Set out a plan for communicating deaths in a timely manner that balances our school community's interests and transparency with the wishes of the family of the deceased
- Identify best practices for supporting pupils and/or members of staff experiencing bereavement
- Define the roles and responsibilities of key SLT, staff members and the governing body
- Provide a roadmap and framework for pupils or staff returning to school following bereavement

2. Roles and responsibilities

We've covered the people who will typically have a role in responding to bereavement. You may want to add others, such as:

- Designated safeguarding lead
- SLT
- SENCO
- Bereavement or crisis team
- Religious leaders, where this is deemed appropriate

2.1 The headteacher

The headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for delegating any responsibilities under this policy to other members of staff.

The headteacher will:

- Liaise with the family of the deceased
- Where appropriate, communicate details of a death to pupils and staff as set out in this policy, or activate communication teams
- Respond to media requests for information in the case of a publicised death via Local Authority Press Office
- Participate in any multi-agency reviews as requested
- Lead reintegration meetings for pupils or staff returning to school after a bereavement
- Arrange for monitoring and support of the pastoral support team or any individual staff members who are supporting bereaved pupils or staff
- Engage with local authority support

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Leads and Senior Leadership Team

The DSLs and SLT has responsibility for monitoring and supporting bereaved pupils and staff members (including before their bereavement, where relevant – for example, in the case of terminal illness).

The DSLs and SLT support team will:

- Provide direct support to bereaved pupils and staff
- Signpost to external support available to bereaved pupils and staff
- Organise safe spaces for bereaved members of the school community to take a time out
- Organise memorials, e.g. temporary tributes, books of condolences, memorial web pages



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- Arrange for the attendance and supervision of pupils at funerals (where permitted)
- Maintain a calendar of dates and holidays that may be particularly difficult for bereaved pupils or staff and ensure they're supported on those days
- Provide additional support during significant transitions e.g. when moving up to the next year group or transitioning to a new school

2.3 Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy, and supporting the headteacher.

The Governing Body will:

- Undertake regular monitoring of how the school is supporting the bereaved, and the staff who support them, for example through meeting with bereavement link Governor
- Monitor the headteacher's emotional wellbeing, for example through regular meeting with bereavement link Governor
- Where necessary, arrange for another senior staff member to take the lead if the headteacher is not available to respond to a death immediately

3. Provision for supporting staff who support the bereaved

Supporting pupils and staff who are grieving can be painful. Those staff members who carry out this essential work will be monitored and supported.

- Access to Counselling Service
- Support from Educational Psychology (EdPsy4Everyone)
- Referral to HR services
- Regular check in from SLT member
- Access to further training from the Educational Psychology team
- Support from the local authority Behaviour Unit, Sycamore Centre

4. Immediate actions following a death

4.1 Clarifying information and the wishes of the family

- DSL or SLT member will be responsible for contacting the family to confirm news of a death and determine the wishes of the family in terms of what can be shared with the rest of the school community and how
- In the event that the family can't be immediately contacted further advice would be sought from the Local Authority Press Office

4.2 Sharing the news with staff

- DSL or SLT will be responsible for sharing the news with staff and explaining what support will be available to those who need it
- The business continuity plan will be followed to ensure that all staff are informed appropriately

4.3 Sharing the news with pupils

- DSL or SLT be responsible for sharing the news with pupils and explaining what support will be available to those who need it. Dependant on circumstances this may be via whole school assembly or class assembly, parents may need to be informed first.



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- What steps will be taken to ensure pupils are informed in a timely and appropriate way

4.4 Informing parents/carers

- Parents/carers will be notified of a death via a letter home from the email system explaining the steps you've taken during the day to inform pupils of the death, what additional support has been made available and where to go for more help and information
- Make available to parents support from Samaritans and Child Bereavement UK

4.5 Responding to specific causes of death

Some deaths need to be handled more sensitively due to their potential to cause fear, anger or imitation.

- The death is the result of suicide external support would be sought
- The death is due to homicide or family violence (Child Bereavement UK has a guide to 'Supporting children and young people bereaved by murder or manslaughter', which you can find at the bottom of [this page](#))
- If the death is due to contagious disease, we will follow procedures as determined by our local health protection team

5. Follow-up actions and support following a death

5.1 Support for pupils and staff

Pupils and staff may require support to grieve in the initial days and weeks following a death.

- Access to Counselling Service
- Support from Educational Psychology (EdPsy4Everyone)
- Referral to HR services
- Regular check in from SLT member
- Access to further training from the Educational Psychology team
- Support from the local authority Behaviour Unit, Sycamore Centre
- Support from Child Bereavement Trust or other relevant charities

5.2 Timetables

- SLT would review the situation and whether a timetable adjustment would be required for part of the school community or whole school community

5.3 Tributes and condolences

- DSL and SLT will work with the family to look and how the deceased would be memorialised. The wishes and feelings of the family would always be considered.

5.4 Funerals

We will consult the family as appropriate, to confirm:

- Whether members of staff and/or pupils are welcome to attend the funeral or memorial service
- How condolences should be made and how staff and pupils can contribute

If staff are welcome to attend the funeral and wish to do so they would use the Special Leave Form to make a request

If pupils are welcome to attend the funeral and wish to do so leave of absence would be provided by parent/carer



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6. Support for pupils returning to school after bereavement

Whether a pupil has been away from school following a personal bereavement or after a death affecting the whole school community, the school will support them in their return to school and for as long as necessary afterwards.

6.1 Reintegration meeting

DSL and SLT will meet, telephone or virtually meet with the parents/carers to discuss how best to manage a return to school.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Determine whether the pupil is emotionally ready to return to the classroom either full-time or with adjustments to the timetable to allow for a phased return
- Address any concerns the pupil and their parents/carers have about the return to school
- Consult with the pupil about how or even if they want their classmates to know of the death (where relevant)
- Open lines of communication between the pupil and relevant staff to ensure support should the pupil feel overwhelmed
- Open lines of communication between the school and the pupil's parents/carers to coordinate support
- Consider any additional support needed for a pupil who is vulnerable or has special educational needs (SEN) or a disability

6.2 Ongoing support

- We will maintain regular contact with the pupil's parents/carers to monitor how the pupil is coping
- We acknowledge significant dates or holidays may be especially difficult (use of CPOMs calendar to support with this)
- We know that grief may impact a pupil's progress and affect their behaviour. To manage this, we will monitor and record any changes in behaviour. Contact with family will be made and a discussion of further support will be made.
- We will take care to manage changes for bereaved pupils by preparing them in advance (where possible) and taking extra steps to support necessary transitions

7. Support for staff returning to school after bereavement

Whether a staff member has been away from school following a personal bereavement or after a death affecting the whole school community, the school will support them in their return to school and for as long as necessary afterwards.

7.1 Reintegration meeting

Head teacher or Deputy Head will meet with the bereaved staff member to discuss how best to manage a return to school.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Determine whether the staff member is ready to return to work and the best way to make that return (e.g. a phased return to work or a temporary change in duties)
- Address any concerns the staff member may have about the return to school
- Consult with the staff member about how or even if they want their pupils and colleagues to know of the death (where relevant)
- Set guidelines for communication between the staff member and their line manager to monitor and support the staff member



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7.2 Ongoing support

We acknowledge that grief can have an impact on a staff member's physical and mental health, which can then go on to impact their performance.

We also recognise that grieving is highly personal and that there can't be a one-size-fits-all solution for monitoring and supporting a bereaved person.

We will work with each individual to create a system of monitoring and support that works for that person.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every three years by Head teacher. At every review, it will be approved by School Improvement Committee.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- Coping with a school emergency policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix: useful contacts

ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
Child Bereavement UK	Helpline: 0800 02 888 40 https://www.childbereavementuk.org/contact-us
Winston's Wish	Helpline: 08088 020 021 https://www.winstonswish.org/about-us/contact-page/
Cruse Bereavement Care	Helpline: 0808 808 1677 https://www.cruse.org.uk/about-cruse/contact-us
Mind	Infoline (information and signposting to further help): 0300 123 3393 Further contacts: https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/bereavement/useful-contacts/
Sycamore Centre	Sycamore Short Stay School Old Park Farm Estate Dudley DY1 3QE Tel: 01384 848237 Email: info@sycamore.dudley.sch.uk
Ed Psych 4 Everyone	www.edpsych4everyone.com By telephone on: 01384 594083 or 07850 300479



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ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
	<u>emilycrichton@edpsych4everyone.co.uk</u>