

Christchurch Infant School

Bereavement Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body	March 2022
Next review:	March 2023

CHRISTCHURCH INFANT SCHOOL

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

Within our school community there will almost always be recently bereaved children who are struggling with their own situation. Whether it be the death of a parent, grandparent, sibling or beloved family pet. At other times the entire school community may be impacted by the death of a member of staff or pupil. A policy within school will help us to support pupils and/or staff before, during and after bereavement in an effective way, enabling identification of key staff and a clear pathway. This will enable us to ensure when necessary that staff and pupils receive optimum support to promote their wellbeing.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

- To support pupils and staff during and after bereavement
- To support pupils and staff following a diagnosis of a terminal illness
- To enhance communication and effective pathways for support between school, family and the community
- Identify key responsibilities within school and the Local Authority to implement the Bereavement Policy and co-ordinate support

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER/DSLs

- Identify main contact for child/family
- Ensure the school possesses information about the death to support the child, staff and pupils
- To inform staff/pupils/governors
- Liaise with external agencies
- Respond to media enquires

THE ROLE OF KEY STAFF

- To identify individual staff to support a bereaved child within school
- To ensure that key staff receive adequate bereavement support training to help them with this role
- To establish links with external agencies to co-ordinate support and make referrals when needed

PROCEDURES

- Immediately following news of a bereavement, contact to be made by the Headteacher/DSL to the family to offer condolences and gather information. At all times being respectful of the family's wishes on how they want the news to be communicated about the death/terminal illness within the school community.
- Gather factual information around the death wherever possible to avoid rumour and any social media misinterpretation of facts
- Religious and cultural differences to be considered and respected with regard to the death and support of a pupil
- School staff to be informed of the bereavement before pupils to enable them to help with preparation about how to share information with students in an age appropriate way. Each member of staff should feel supported on how to do this and will have access to training and support if needed.
- Pupils directly affected by the death i.e. the bereaved child is known to them, should preferably be told in small groups by someone they know.
- A letter to be sent to all school families affected will need to be prepared at the earliest opportunity
- School timetables may need to be flexible to respond to the children's emotional wellbeing needs. However overall keeping to routines will offer children a sense of normality
- Staff affected by the death to be offered ongoing support whenever needed
- Communication with the bereaved family regarding funeral arrangements, respecting their wishes as to decisions whether staff and pupils attend
- The Headteacher will be responsible for any statements made to the media if appropriate
- Keeping records and sharing relevant people/service so that a bereaved or terminally ill child can access support throughout their school life particularly with transitions to other schools.

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