

Bereavement Policy



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School Background

Swansfield Park Primary School is at the heart of our community and we value a positive relationship with our children, staff, parents and carers and the wider school family in providing a safe, supportive and high quality place to learn and work. We believe in the potential of all children to succeed and reach their goals. We are a dynamic learning community providing an inclusive, engaging and challenging environment for children to thrive and become self-reliant, creative and independent learners. We aim to inspire our children to become thoughtful, confident and engaged citizens of the world and aspire to excellence in all that they do.

Rationale

Every 22 minutes in the UK a parent of dependent children dies, leaving about 41,000- bereaved children each year. Many more are bereaved of a grandparent, sibling, friend or other significant person, and, sadly around 12,000 children die in the UK each year.

Within our school community there will almost always be some recently bereaved children who are struggling with their own situation- or sometimes the entire school community is impacted by the death of a member of staff or a pupil. We hope not to encounter such circumstances, but the statistical inevitability of such an occurrence implies the necessity of having a Bereavement Policy in place in order that we might be proactive, rather than reactive, when responding to these sensitive situations. Empathic understanding in the familiar and secure surroundings of school may be all the bereavement support some children – or staff- require, though referral to more specialist



support should be a consideration where the impact of grief is more complex.

Additional information and resources can be accessed at

www.childbereavement.org.uk

Objectives

The core intentions of this policy are:

- To support pupils and their families /or staff before (where applicable), during and after bereavement.
- To enhance effective communication and clarify the pathway of support between school, family and community.
- To identify key staff within school and the Local Authority, and clarify the pathway of support.
- The Children Act 1989 aimed to ensure that the welfare of the child was paramount, working in partnership with parents to protect the child from harm (www.careandthelaw.org.uk/eg/b section 2). All intentions of this policy endorse that aim as we endeavour to counter any adverse effects of bereavement and maintain pupils' emotional well-being.

The Role of the Governing Body

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to approve this policy, ensure its implementation and review it every three years.

The Role of the Head Teacher

- To monitor progress and liaise with external agencies.
- To respond to media enquiries.
- To be the first point of contact for family/child concerned.
- To keep the Governing Body fully informed.

The Role of the Local Authority

The Local Authority, through the Educational Psychologists, will advise and support staff. They will provide information on referral pathways and on the identification of complex grief.



The Role of the Class Teacher

- To access the child bereavement website for support and information.
- To cascade this learning to support colleagues.

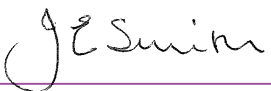

Procedures

1. Contact with the deceased's family should be established by the Head Teacher and their wishes respected in communicating with others. Factual information is essential to avoid rumour and confusion, whilst being sensitive to cultural and religious considerations.
2. Staff should be informed before pupils and be prepared to share information in age-appropriate ways, as agreed for each individual circumstance.
3. Pupils who are affected should be informed, preferably in small groups, by someone who knows them.
4. When appropriate, a letter to all school families affected should be composed at the earliest opportunity and a decision made as to whom, and how, it should be distributed.
5. The school should be aware that the school timetable may need a degree of flexibility to accommodate the needs and wellbeing of children affected by the situation. However, minimal disruption to the timetable also offers a sense of security and familiarity.
6. Staff affected by the death will be offered on-going support as appropriate.
7. In consultation with the bereaved family, arrangements for the funeral attendance may be clarified, with the consideration of full or partial school closure in some circumstances.
8. Where necessary a press statement should be prepared by the Head Teacher.
9. School should be aware that the impact of bereavement follows a child throughout their school life so information should be recorded and shared with relevant people, particularly at transition points.



This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body.

VERSION HISTORY		
VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Initially adopted	November 2017	Adapted into Swansfield Park Primary School

APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION				
	NAME	JOB TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Approved by	Jenny Smith	Headteacher		6 November 2017
Approved by	Bill Grisdale	Governor		6 November 2017

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	Autumn 2021
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