



Solefield School

Solefield School Bereavement Policy

1. Introduction

At Solefield School, we recognise that bereavement is a universal experience that affects members of our school community at different times and in different ways. We are committed to supporting pupils, staff, and families through grief with compassion, sensitivity, and respect.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To provide a clear framework for responding to a death in the school community.
- To ensure all staff feel confident and supported in managing bereavement.
- To offer appropriate emotional support to pupils and staff.
- To maintain a caring and supportive environment that promotes resilience and wellbeing.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- The death of a pupil, staff member, or close family member.
- Anticipated bereavement (e.g. terminal illness).
- National or local tragedies affecting the school community.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (Kate Easton), Headmistress (Helen McClure) and Wellbeing Lead (Dana Koheji):** Lead the school's response, communicate with families, and coordinate support. Provide emotional support and liaise with external agencies.

- **Director of Learning Development (Lisa Glennon-Cousins):** Advises on supporting pupils with SEND.
- **Class Teachers/Form Tutors, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:** Offer day-to-day support and monitor pupil wellbeing.
- **All Staff:** Are expected to respond with empathy and follow the guidance in this policy.

5. Immediate Actions Following a Death

- Confirm facts sensitively and avoid speculation.
- Inform staff in person or via a confidential briefing.
- Contact the bereaved family to offer condolences and support.
- Notify pupils, in accordance with the family's wishes, in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner.
- Inform the wider school community as appropriate.

6. Supporting Pupils

- Provide a safe space for pupils to express their feelings.
- Offer one-to-one or group support through the Pastoral Team with the support of the school counsellor.
- Adjust academic expectations temporarily if needed.
- Maintain routines to provide stability and normality.

7. Supporting Staff

- Offer time off or flexible working where appropriate.
- Provide access to counselling or external support services via Education Support or Cruse Bereavement support.
- Encourage peer support and regular check-ins.
- Employee Assistant Programme offers staff support.

8. Communication

- Use clear, honest language (e.g. "died" rather than "passed away").
- Avoid euphemisms that may confuse younger children.
- Send letters to parents/carers when appropriate, using templates adapted from Child Bereavement UK and Winston's Wish.

9. Memorials and Tributes

- Respect the wishes of the bereaved family.
- Consider age-appropriate ways to remember the deceased (e.g. memory books, assemblies, planting a tree, a pebble tree).

10. Training and Resources

- Staff will receive regular training on bereavement awareness.
- The school will maintain a list of recommended books and resources for different age groups.
- A Bereavement Toolkit is available to staff on Sharepoint.

11. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or following a significant bereavement event. Feedback from staff, pupils, families and LAB Governors will inform updates.

Helen McClure
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Review: 1.9.26