

Shalom Noam Primary School

Bereavement Policy

September 2021

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| **Dealing with Bereavement** |

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| **Date** | **Review Date** | **Coordinator** | **Nominated Governor** |
| **1/9/2021** | **1/9/2022** | **Mrs Keren Greene/ Mrs Dassy Brodie** | **Mrs Nahva Rose** |

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

* Employment Rights Act 1996
* Education Act 2002
* Employment Act 2002
* Employment Act 2008
* Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

* Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)
* ‘Help When We Needed It Most’ – (www.samaritans.org)
* Race Disparity Audit - Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Website (Cabinet Office)

We have a duty to have in place clear pastoral care support strategies for pupils and school personnel who mourn the death of a family member or the loss of a member of the school community.

We acknowledge that the trauma of any such events can over a period of time affect attitude, performance and the ability to cope with life in general. We have a duty to mobilise the support of the whole school community in order to work together, to support each other and to honour the memory of the person that has passed away.

We are committed to providing an ethos, a learning environment and a curriculum that supports and prepares pupils for coping with bereavement. We believe that through PSHE pupils can improve the skills of pupils by acknowledging and addressing loss, death, bereavement and grief.

We believe pupils and school personnel alike have the right to encounter a caring environment in which they feel safe to demonstrate grief without fear of any form of judgement.

We acknowledge that we have to deal with all forms of bereavement including that of suicide of a pupil, parent or a member of the school personnel. We believe we have ‘an important role in reducing the likelihood of copy cat bevaviour and helping recovery by preparing and responding to the situation properly’ by having in place procedures that help to prepare for and respond to ‘suicide appropriately and constructively, in order to help rebuild the wellbeing of the school community and reduce the risk of further deaths’.

The purpose of the Bereavement Policy is to help everyone involved at a time when there may be shock, upset and confusion, ensuring that there is as little disruption as possible, effective communication takes place and each member of the school community is supported to help them through a very difficult time.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

**Aims**

* To provide pastoral care support strategies for both pupils and school personnel who mourn the death of a family member or the loss of a member of the school community.
* To provide an ethos, a learning environment and a curriculum that supports and prepares pupils for coping with bereavement.
* To provide school-based bereavement counselling.
* To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

**Procedure**

**Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has:

* delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
* appointed a member of staff responsible for pastoral care;
* appointed members of staff as accredited school-based counsellors;

**Role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher will:

* work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
* organise and have in place a Bereavement Support Team to deal with the death of any member of the school community;
* offer the school’s condolences;
* coordinate all information from the family taking into account their wishes;
* inform the Bereavement Support Team and remind them of their role;
* inform all school personnel and the support provided;
* inform all pupils and the support provided ;
* inform parents of the death, any other details such as funeral arrangements and possible school closure;
* when dealing with the death of a member of the school community:
	+ offer the school’s condolences;
	+ be sympathetic and supportive to the needs, feelings and emotions of the family and everyone in the school community;
	+ coordinate all information from the family taking into account their wishes;
	+ inform the Bereavement Support Team and remind them of their role;
	+ inform all school personnel and the support provided;
	+ inform all pupils and the support provided;
	+ inform parents of the death, any other details such as funeral arrangements and possible school closure
* when dealing with the death of a member of the school community due to suicide will refer to ‘Crisis Plan’ in order to prepare for and respond to ‘suicide appropriately and constructively, in order to help rebuild the wellbeing of the school community and reduce the risk of further deaths’;
* when supporting a pupil suffering the loss of a family member:
	+ offer the school’s condolences;
	+ coordinate all information from the family taking into account their wishes;
	+ offer support from the Family Liaison Officer;
	+ work with the family to assess any change in behaviour of the pupil during this traumatic time
* when dealing with a member of school personnel suffering a bereavement:
	+ contact the bereaved member of school personnel and offer the school’s condolences and support from the Bereavement Support Team;
	+ coordinate all information from the family taking into account their wishes;
	+ provide information on their bereavement leave entitlement

**Role of the Bereavement Support Team**

The Bereavement Support Team will:

* consist of the Headteacher, Pastoral care coordinator, school-based counsellors and the nominated governor;
* support a child by:
	+ providing time to listen to the child and letting the child talk;
	+ forming a trusting, caring and supporting relationship;
	+ being sensitive when the child is preoccupied, silent or tearful;
	+ providing practical support;
	+ asking them what support they need;
	+ providing a place of privacy where they can express their emotions on their own;
	+ making them feel valued and normal;
	+ being sensitive the child's beliefs.
* be available to pupils and school personnel;
* lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
* work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor;
* annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

**Role of the Pastoral Care Coordinator**

The coordinator will:

* create and establish a pastoral care programme to assist the needs of all pupils;
* lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
* work closely with the Headteacher and the nominated governor;
* ensure the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy protects all pupils from physical, intellectual, moral, emotional harm;
* line manage a group of special trained school-based counsellors;
* ensure the counsellors receive regular continuing professional accredited training;
* assist in establishing and maintaining good communication between school, parents/carers and external agencies;
* make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
* provide guidance and support to all staff;
* provide training for all staff on induction when the need arises

**Role of School-Based Counsellors**

School-Based Counsellors will:

* be trained and qualified in counselling;
* be trained to listen without passing judgement;
* be trained to help children to sort out their thoughts and feelings;
* provide emotional support allowing children to concentrate more in class, to feel better about themselves and to build their self-confidence;
* use a variety of creative methods to help children express their concerns;
* provide enough time for a child for to explore issues in a meaningful way;
* undertake counselling sessions in a private room;
* regularly review the situation with the child and come to a joint decision when the sessions should end;
* ensure that all matters discussed during counselling sessions are completely confidential;
* only break confidentiality if there is a child protection disclosure and then will:
	+ inform the child that the information has to be shared with others;
	+ inform and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Role of School Personnel**

School personnel will:

* comply with all aspects of this policy;
* listen to and monitor the behaviour and progress of bereaved pupils;
* listen to and monitor the behaviour of their colleagues;
* use a variety approaches in PSHE to meet the needs of pupils.
* implement the school’s equalities policy and schemes;
* report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
* attend appropriate training sessions;
* report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

**Role of Pupils**

Pupils will be aware of the support strategies in place.

**Role of Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers will be aware of and comply with this policy.

**Raising Awareness of this Policy**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

* School website;
* Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
* School events;
* Meetings with school personnel;
* Written communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters;
* Headteacher reports to the Governing Body;
* Text messages
* Email

**Training**

The Headteacher will organise appropriate training for the Bereavement Support Team by an accredited counsellor.

All school personnel:

* have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
* receive training on induction which specifically covers:
	+ All aspects of this policy
	+ Pastoral Care
	+ Safeguarding and Child Protection
	+ School Based Counselling
	+ Dealing with Sensitive Incidents
	+ Equal opportunities & Inclusion

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| **Headteacher:** | Graphical user interface, text, application, Word  Description automatically generated | **Date:** | September 2021 |
| **Chair of Governing Body:** | D:\Users\Family Rose\Downloads\new doc 2020-11-12 21.56._1 (1).jpg | **Date:** | September 2021 |

**In the event of bereavement:**

This policy should be copied, distributed and made available to all staff.

**How to respond to a phone call about a death.**

* Make sure you write down as many details as possible. (Who? When? Why? If possible)
* Ask the caller (if it’s a parent/child death) if it would be OK for someone from school to call them in a few days to discuss returning to school/siblings. Etc.
* Check that we have the correct number to call them back on.
* Ensure you notify the Head (or senior staff) as soon as possible.

**Plan of Action Following the Death of a Pupil**

* Whoever takes the call needs to try and get as much information as possible about the events surrounding the death. (In a sensitive manner)
* The Head and Chair of Governors need to be informed.
* Primarily, the class teacher and TA need to be informed.
* All other staff need to be informed at the earliest convenience. A staff meeting needs to take place as soon as possible to discuss the best plan of action. (The nature of the death may have implications, I.e safeguarding Etc.)
* Class teacher to tell children about the death, allow time for questions and reflection. (Answer as accurately as possible)
* Identify absent staff and pupils that will need to be informed.
* Send letter home to inform parents.
* Staff to attend funeral, where appropriate.

**Plan of Action Following the Death of a Staff Member**

* Whoever takes the call needs to try and get as much information as possible about the events surrounding the death. (In a sensitive manner)
* The Head (senior staff in the event of it being the Head) and Chair of Governors need to be informed.

All staff need to be informed at the earliest convenience. A staff meeting needs to take place as soon as possible. A discussion needs to take place about who will need to be informed and by whom.

* Identify absent staff and pupils that will need to be informed.
* Speak to children who had/have worked closely with the staff member, in a small group.
* Class teacher to tell children about the death, allow time for questions and reflection. (Answer as accurately as possible)

· Send letter home to inform parents.

**Plan of Action Following the Death of a Parent**

* Whoever takes the call needs to try and get as much information as possible about the events surrounding the death. (In a sensitive manner
* Primarily, the class teacher and TA need to be informed.
* All other staff need to be informed at the earliest convenience. Identify absent staff and pupils that may need to be informed.
* Teacher to speak with child (where possible in their home) discuss how they want to deal with returning to school. Do they want to tell their friends or for the teacher to do it.
* Speak with child’s carer, what is the ‘family story?’
* Remind the child that all boundaries at school still apply.
* However if they need a time out or time to reflect, offer it.
* Staff to attend funeral, where appropriate.