



Parkhall Integrated College

Bereavement Policy

Agreed by Board of Governors: November 2021

To be reviewed: November 2024

Rational

Parkhall Integrated College believes in adopting a holistic approach to the support and care of its pupils. When bereavement occurs it can affect a variety of people not just the family concerned. To this end we aim to ensure that those involved are given the appropriate support and advice required.

Purpose

The bereavement policy is intended to reflect our positive ethos and contribute to the caring community we wish to nurture.

The main aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils and members of staff faced with bereavement are provided with support.

Guidelines

Bereavement, Loss and Change Procedures

To help pupils or staff cope with a bereavement we must be prepared to support them through their pain, sorrow and anxiety. We cannot make things different but we can make a difference.

Before a child returns to school after the death of a parent or sibling:

1. The Year Head should inform the Vice-principal and other relevant staff as soon as they become aware of the death.
2. The Principal or Vice-Principal should make contact with the family to express the condolences of the School and to offer support to the young person when they return to class.
3. If possible the Year Head should meet the nearest relative to discuss any changes in daily routine eg where they live, how they will come to school. [If suitable the pupil should be consulted as to whether they mind their class talking to them about the bereavement.]
4. The Year Head should ensure that all staff are made aware of the bereavement through the staff notes and daily briefing.

When a child returns to school after the death of a parent or sibling:

1. The Year Head or Head of Boys or Girls Pastoral Care should meet the pupil at the start of the first day back - the pupil should be given 'permission to grieve' - reassured that they may feel emotional and given channels of help to talk to if they wish to use them e.g. Form Teacher, Year Head.
2. Unless parents advise the school otherwise all the teachers who teach the pupil should discreetly acknowledge the death when the child returns, where appropriate (even if it is only a few words). If this does not happen then the pupil may assume that the teacher does not care.
3. The Year Head should make a short note of the death and its cause including the date and place it in the pupil's file.
4. The Year Head should inform the School Office to update the parents' information in the pupil record folder and in SIMS.
5. It is recognised that peer support is vital, but this should not be the responsibility of one child for a prolonged period of time. A set period of time should be given if a pupil is asked to look after their peer and that person can then be reviewed in due course.
6. Where appropriate the Principal and Vice-Principal should decide who will attend the funeral.

Premature Death of a Pupil

In the event of the premature death of a pupil then:

1. The Year Head should inform the Vice-principal and other relevant staff as soon as they become aware of the death.
2. The Critical Incident Management Plan should be consulted and depending on the nature of the death the appropriate steps should be taken from the Plan on how to proceed in the situation.
3. The Principal should contact the family to offer the condolences of the School.

Curriculum

Pastoral themes of death, loss and change are dealt with in the school curriculum, either through specific pastoral lessons or the statutory curriculum. Within these lessons the guiding principle is death should be acknowledged as a part of life.

Staff Bereavements

The school wishes to support staff who are going through a period of bereavement and loss.

Before a member of staff returns to school

- The Principal will contact the member of staff involved to offer support and convey the condolences of the staff.
- The Principal will put a note onto the staff notice board regarding the funeral arrangements.
- Requests to attend the funeral should be given to the Principal

When a member of staff returns to school

- As a general rule it is better to acknowledge the death of a relative than to ignore it. However, the Principal will advise members of staff of the person's wishes.
- The school will be sensitive to the tasks that the person will be asked to undertake when they return.
- A useful contact number for bereaved staff is
Inspire Workplaces - Workplace number is – 0808 800 0002 (available at any time)
Inspire Workplaces provides a confidential and independent counselling support service for all staff that is available at any time. Email: workandstudy@inspirewellbeing.org
Cruse Bereavement Care: 0844 477 9400

Responsibilities

The management of bereavement is a whole school issue but there are clear lines of accountability to ensure our aims are fulfilled. The following summarises the main areas of responsibility:

The Governors

To ensure that the policy is implemented.

The Vice-principal Pastoral

To monitor progress and liaise with external agencies.

The Vice-principal in charge of cover

To liaise with the bereaved member of staff

The Year Head

To liaise with the family and keep other relevant members of staff informed of the situation.

The Class Teacher

To be the first point of contact for the pupil concerned.

Teachers and non-teaching staff

To offer support as appropriate to pupils in the wider school community.

Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Management Team and reported to the Governors.

These policy Guidelines are translated into action through other policies and procedures, for example:

Pastoral Care Child Protection

Anti bullying Policy

Counselling Policy

Drugs Policy

Assessment and Reporting Policy

Curriculum Policy

Internet and VLE Acceptable Use Policy

Monitoring and Evaluating Policy

Chair of Board of Governors: -

M. Alexander

Date 22/11/2021