

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

1. Policy Statement

The School is committed to actively promoting the health, safety and well-being of all members of the school community. Many of our staff and students are likely to encounter the death of a relative or family friend during their time in school. For a few the loss will be more immediate and traumatic, involving the loss of a colleague, personal friend, parent/carer, sibling or teacher.

In providing support for the bereaved, the School aims to:

- to foster a caring attitude to those suffering a bereavement
- to encourage a consistent, yet flexible approach to the situation
- to inform all those concerned, including staff and parents/carers of possible approaches
- to increase understanding about bereavement and its effects on individuals and families
- to enable staff, students and parents/carers to identify sources of appropriate personal support

In line with our Provision of Information policy, this document is available to all interested parties on our website and on request from the School Office.

SWPS is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

2. Procedures for dealing with a bereavement

2.1. In the event of a death in the school community (staff or student)

- The Head will co-ordinate the School's response with HR and/or the appropriate member of the SLT.
- The staff will be told by the Head; absentees will be contacted, including those on maternity leave.
- Students will be told either in a full school assembly or by form tutors as appropriate. Absentees will be noted so that they can be informed by tutor or Head of Year.
- Parents/carers will be informed by letter as and when appropriate.
- A range of strategies will be ready to be adopted after a significant loss. Decisions about these will be made in consultation with the family/families involved.
- An individual teacher or small group of teachers will be identified as the family's point of contact. This person/group will ensure that contact with the family does not end abruptly.
- Parents/carers of all students involved will be kept fully informed about the actions of the School throughout the immediate period of grieving.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend any school response to the death e.g. a memorial service.

2.2. In the event of the death of a parent/carer or sibling not at the School

The School will:

- acknowledge the loss to the family in writing.
- offer support in consultation with the family.
- inform relevant staff and students as and when appropriate.

2.3. In the event of the death of a close relative of a member of staff

The Head working with HR and SLT line manager will:

- Liaise closely with the member of staff concerned to establish an appropriate and sensitive means of communicating the loss.
- Inform the Staff Social Committee.

Suggested strategies are available in the guidelines in Appendix A.

3. Training:

All staff have access to online training on this issue - 'Dealing with Bereavement and Loss' - via Educare (TES Develop) and all staff with pastoral responsibilities are encouraged to complete this course.

4. Appendices:

The following Appendices are available in Pastoral folders in SharePoint or from the Pastoral and Wellbeing Room Co-ordinator:

Appendix A: Guidelines for Staff Action Hierarchy and Action Plan:

- A1: The Bereavement Team
- A2: Assembling the Team
- A3: Team members' responsibilities
- A4: Resources and Contacts

Appendix B: Background Information for Staff

- B1: Helping Children Cope
- B2: Helping Children Grieve

Appendix C: Checklist For Bereavement in School

5. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body is ultimately responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

This document will be reviewed and updated annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral or as events or legislation requires.

Next scheduled review date: June 2025	Last reviewed: May 2024
Key updates in this version:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic addendum removed • Addition of key colleagues who will work with the Head to manage a sudden death • Update to location of resources