

ST JOSEPH`S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
SAFEGUARDING
BEREAVEMENT POLICY

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ST JOSEPH`S PRIMARY SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING BEREAVEMENT
POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School believes in adopting a holistic approach to the support and care of its pupils. Death is not seen as an illness - it is normal and an inevitable part of human existence. When bereavement occurs, it can affect a variety of people not just the family concerned. It is inevitable that at some point St Joseph's Primary School will have to deal with the death of a member of its community.

To this end, we recognise that work needs to be carried out to ensure that families, children and young people are given

- the opportunities to develop skills to cope with loss and grief and
- have access to appropriate information and support when needed

There is no single recipe for provision and services will always need to be organized in the light of needs, priorities and resources.

Various Government legislative and guidance documentation provide a framework to support schools covering death and bereavement. The Education Act (1996) emphasizes the importance of promoting the personal, social and spiritual development of children and young people as part of their education. The national Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship Framework (DFEE and QCA 1999 a and b) also stress the need for schools to address bereavement specifically as well as other losses such as divorce and separation.

We recognise that, in order to fulfil our responsibilities in delivering the five outcomes outlined in the Children Act 2004, as a school we need to be proactive in preparing children for loss and grief and be reactive in supporting them through loss and grief.

The management of a bereavement situation will be a central role for the members of the Senior Management Team.

B. POLICY REVIEW

Consultation concerning the development of this policy was vital in ensuring all parties understand their role and responsibilities. The process itself also reflects the positive and caring ethos of the school.

The following people were consulted in the preparation of the policy:

- Staff
- Pupils
- Parents
- Governors
- The Local Authority

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy will be made available to any OFSTED team in the normal way. Its existence is known to staff, pupils and parents through the consultation process. Copies are available in both the library and staff room and a copy will be sent to the Local Authority.

C. THE AIMS

This safeguarding bereavement policy is intended to reflect our positive ethos and contribute to the caring community we wish to nurture. It is hoped it will contribute considerably to the emotional health and well-being of our school community.

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

This support includes the opportunity for them

- to express their feelings in a safe environment,
- to be given space and time to come to terms with their loss
- and access to specialist advice if necessary.

It is recognised that the situation for the child, young person and/or family will be monitored over time. It is our hope that anyone faced with bereavement will regard our community as a place where children and young people can grow and face the challenges that lie ahead. This, in turn, will contribute to our learning community.

D. PROCEDURES

Once the situation occurs concerning a bereavement the following steps will be taken:

- Contact will be made with the family to ascertain the facts and offer support
- Use will be made of the Knowsley 'Positive Responses to Supporting Bereaved Children' Pack
- Staff will be informed and decisions taken concerning the best way to inform pupils and for internal mechanisms for support to be organised and employed
- Pupils will be informed in the agreed manner
- The Local Authority and other agencies will be informed and involved as appropriate
- Fr Anton, parish priest, can be called upon for support.
- If appropriate, a press statement will be prepared and a strategy for dealing with the media agreed with the family
- Discussions will take place concerning attendance at the funeral and any memorial service agreed with the family
- The basic information will be recorded
- The mechanism for reviewing the situation should be agreed with the appropriate staff.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

The management of bereavement is a whole school issue but there need to be clear lines of accountability to ensure our aims are fulfilled.

The following summarise the main areas of responsibility:

The *Governors*

To ensure the policy is implemented

Head teacher/Senior Management Team

To monitor progress and deal with external agencies

To coordinate the medias inquiries

To be the first point of contact for the individual concerned and their family

To identify appropriate support within the school community for the individual concerned

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

The school's religious contact member

To advise the senior management and to offer support as required

F. TRAINING

The training and development of staff is a fundamental aspect of our human resource management and as such staff will have the opportunity to undertake relevant training in the management of bereavement. This will involve general awareness-raising for all staff and more specialised training for those with specific responsibility. The school Learning Mentor has been fully trained in bereavement and in the use of 'Positive Responses to Supporting Bereaved Children'.

G. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Management Team and reported to the Governors on an annual basis.

This will include the following methods:

- Feedback from pupils and parents affected by bereavement
- Focus groups of staff and pupils
- Feedback from form tutors/class teachers involved in supporting a bereavement situation
- Discussion with relevant Local Authority personnel
- Discussions with external agencies involved

Discussed and Agreed by staff 23/2/11

Discussed and Adopted by Governors 2/3/11

Parents/Carers invited to comment 4/3/11

Signed

Head teacher *C. Newstead*

Chair of Premises, Health and Safety Committee *M. Long*