



South Bromsgrove High
Inspiring Confidence Through Learning

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Bereavement Policy

Adopted by the Governing Body
Reviewed by the Governing Body
Next Review
Policy responsibility

November 2009
June 2020
June 2023
Deputy Headteacher

To realise its mission to provide a 'safe and supportive' environment and to meet statutory requirements, South Bromsgrove has a Bereavement Policy.

From time to time every school is touched by the death of a student, member of staff or a family member. Individuals and families react to bereavement in their own very unique ways. Bereavement can have a profound effect on the school community so it is important that reflection upon the appropriate response occurs.

The aims of this policy are:

- to establish effective procedures for supporting students and/or staff with a bereavement
- to develop flexible plans which reflect how the school would respond in a tragic situation
- to enable the school to work in partnership with parents and carers
- to assist in the induction of new staff.

When a death occurs

- The Headteacher, and in his absence the Deputy Headteacher, will be the primary point of contact with a family when a death has occurred. The Headteacher may consult and seek the assistance of the pastoral staff in supporting the bereaved.
- The Headteacher will gather information regarding the death and will consult with the family regarding their wishes in sharing the information with the School community.
- The Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) will convene to develop a support plan for the school community.
- It is important that factual information is shared in a timely manner so that assumptions and rumour are not spread, as they can only add to the family's distress.
- Staff should be informed as early as possible and guidance and support should be offered to assist in telling students.
- Once staff know, students should be told as soon as possible and this is best done in familiar groups (tutor groups) by someone they know (tutor).
- Staff are encouraged to identify students who may be particularly vulnerable. For example, someone who may have witnessed the death may require special attention.

The death of a student

- In the case of the death of a student, appropriate pastoral support should be provided for the whole school community. SLT and pastoral staff should be deployed to provide counselling and comfort.
- Support (pastoral staff and LA psychologists) should be made available at designated

areas and times during the school day.

- A book of remembrance should be set up in an appropriate location where the bereaved can come to express their grief and loss.
- Services of remembrance may be offered at various times.
- Support for staff who are directly involved with grieving students is imperative and staff should have the opportunity to meet at the end of the School day, to provide opportunity to share feelings and reactions.
- The Headteacher will determine the appropriate period of time for this pastoral support to continue.
- If the press are involved the Headteacher will consult the LA Press Officer regarding an official statement on behalf of the School.

Funeral Procedure

- When a funeral has been planned for the deceased, it is essential that the school is sensitive to the family's culture and abides by the family's wishes.
- The family may welcome involvement of members of the school community but equally, may wish to keep the funeral private.
- The Headteacher, in consultation with SLT, will identify which staff and students may want to attend and the practicalities of issues such as staff cover and transport.
- The Headteacher will consult staff and students in determining what is appropriate in terms of sending flowers, a collection and/or any further more permanent remembrance.

The death of a family member of a student

- In the case of the death of a family member of a student, if the death happens while the child is at school, a representative for the family, preferably a parent should come to the school to inform the child.
- In some circumstances it may be necessary for pastoral staff to give the death notification.
- Before notifying fellow students, the School should speak with the bereaved student's family to determine what information should be given to classmates.
- Classmates should be informed how the bereaved classmate wants to talk about what has happened (i.e. speak openly and take initiative, or let the bereaved student decide when to talk about the death).
- The HOY should consult with the bereaved student's family to determine what is appropriate in terms of classmates attending the funeral and/or sending flowers.

- Following the death of a family member it can be expected that the bereaved student may have a reduced capacity for school work. The bereaved student may need extra help at a later time when there is an increase in workload.

The death of a student or member of staff while at school or on a school trip

- Should the death of a student or staff member occur during the school day or on a school trip the Headteacher will quickly assemble an Critical Incident Management Team (CMIT).
- The first priorities will be to offer support to students and staff who may have witnessed the death and to inform the family of the deceased.
- The Deputy Headteacher and the Critical Incident Management Team (CMIT) will deal immediately with issues at School including contact with accident and emergency personnel, organising support and counselling for the school community and communicating information to the school community as appropriate.
- The Headteacher will consult with the police and emergency personnel in determining the most appropriate and timely method of informing the immediate family of the death.

Contact Numbers

Referral to Childrens' Social Care (to seek advice)	01905 822666
Out of hours team	01905 768020
Worcestershire CC Critical Incident Line	01905 728848
Board Manager Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board Susan Haddon	01905 843316
LA Press Liaison Officer	01905 766646

Date Policy agreed	June 2020
Review Date	June 2023
Staff responsible for the Policy	Kristy Pascoe
Link Governor	Alyson Jewson