

# **BEREWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **Bereavement Policy**

**Summer 2022**

<b>Revised by School</b>	Summer 2022
<b>Responsible Person</b>	Ricky Leigh (head teacher)
<b>Responsible Committee</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Ratified by GB</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2022
<b>Next Review</b>	Summer 2025



## **BEREAVEMENT POLICY**

### **Rationale:**

Every 22 minutes in the UK a parent of dependent children dies, leaving about 41,000 bereaved children each year. Many more are bereaved of a grandparent or sibling, friend or other significant person, and, sadly, around 12,000 children die in the UK each year.

Within our school community there will almost always be some recently bereaved children who are struggling with their own situation- or sometimes the entire school community is impacted by the death of a member of staff or a pupil. We would hope to not encounter such circumstances, but the statistical inevitability of such an occurrence implies the necessity of having a Bereavement Policy in place in order that we might be proactive, rather than reactive, when responding to these sensitive situations. Empathic understanding in the familiar and secure surroundings of school may be all the bereavement support some children – or staff- require, though referral to more specialist support should be a consideration where the impact of grief is more complex. Additional information and resources can be accessed at [www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)

### **Objectives:**

The core intentions of the policy are:

- To support pupils and / or staff before (where applicable), during, and after bereavement
- To enhance effective communication and clarify the pathways of support between school, family and community
- To identify key staff within school, the Trust and the local authority, and access to support
- The Children Act 1989 aimed to ensure that the welfare of the child was paramount, working in partnership with parents to protect the child from harm ([www.careandthelaw.org.uk/eng/b\\_section2](http://www.careandthelaw.org.uk/eng/b_section2) ). All intentions of this policy endorse

that aim as we endeavour to counter any adverse effects of bereavement and maintain pupils' emotional well-being.

#### **The role of the Governing Body**

- To approve this policy and ensure its implementation, to be reviewed as part of the three year policy review cycle.

#### **The role of the head teacher:**

- To monitor progress and liaise with external agencies
- To respond to media enquiries
- To be the first point of contact for the family / child concerned
- To keep the Governing Body informed as appropriate

#### **The role of the Trust / Local Authority**

- To advise and support staff
- To advise on referral pathways
- To support school in identifying when further advice is required, for example in identifying complex grief, and signpost other agencies

#### **The role of pastoral staff and the senior leadership team**

- To have access to high quality bereavement training and to cascade learning to other members of staff

#### **Procedures:**

1. Contact with the deceased's family should be established by the head teacher and their wishes respected in communicating with others. Factual information is essential to avoid rumour and confusion, whilst being sensitive to cultural and religious considerations
2. Staff should be informed before pupils and be prepared (through prior training) to share information in an age-appropriate way, as agreed for each individual circumstance
3. Pupils who are affected should be informed, preferably in small groups, by someone who knows them well
4. A letter to all school families affected should be composed at the earliest opportunity and a decision made as to whom, and how, it should be distributed
5. The school should be aware that the timetable may need a degree of flexibility to accommodate the needs and wellbeing of children affected by the situation. However, minimal disruption to the timetable also offers a sense of security and familiarity
6. Staff affected by the death will be offered ongoing support as appropriate
7. In consultation with the bereaved family, arrangements for funeral attendance may be clarified, with the consideration of full or partial school closure in some circumstances
8. Where necessary a press statement should be prepared by the head teacher
9. School should be aware that the impact of the bereavement follows a child throughout their school life, so information should be recorded and shared with relevant people, particularly at transition points

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy was developed by staff and presented to Governors in Summer 2019 and will be reviewed as part of the 3 year review cycle.