



## Alternative Provision Service

(Encompassing the 3 PRU Bases, Launchpad Tuition, and Launchpad Alternative)

### Bereavement Policy 2023

#### Vision

To provide a high quality, personalised educational experience that meets learners' needs and leads to success for all.

#### Mission

A positive and inclusive community where young people are encouraged to achieve high standards of progress and succeed in a supported, safe environment.

#### Our Values / Principles

Individuals Aspirations Raised  
New Experiences  
Safety and Support  
Personalised Programmes  
Individuals Feeling Valued  
Respect  
Excellence in Learning

**Approved by:** PRU Management Committee

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**Last reviewed on:** 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Next review due by:** March 2026

## **Rationale**

Launchpad understands that bereavement is an experience which will be faced by all members of our school community at some point. It will be a more difficult experience when the loss is of a member of that school community – a child or staff member.

We believe that it is an issue to be addressed openly and guiding principles need to be outlined and developed in an objective manner. This policy will deal with bereavement following the death of a school pupil or staff member and will also address the procedures which will be followed should a child become terminally ill or die whilst at school. This is practice that has been seen to have been supportive and helpful by those affected.

## **Following a Bereavement:**

- We believe that children and adults alike have the right to:
- Be given space and time to grieve.
- Be given support from whichever source is deemed the most appropriate – if possible, of their own choice.
- Encounter a caring environment in which they feel safe to demonstrate grief without fear of judgement.

## **We recognise:**

- That grief may not always be apparent to the onlooker, but its invisibility makes it no less real.
- That differing religions/culture's view death and bereavement from different perspectives and all viewpoints should be taken into consideration and given equal value in the school environment.
- That the death of a child has huge repercussions beyond the immediate teaching/care team of that child and every effort should be taken to inform and deal sensitively with the far-reaching contacts.

## **The Management of Bereavement in School**

The purpose of this policy is to give all staff a confidence in recognising and adopting a particular procedure. It should be noted that a universally accepted procedure outline will, in itself, not enable everyone to feel comfortable in dealing with the practicalities of death and bereavement.

One of our main concerns must inevitably be the immediate family of the deceased and as a school we state our commitment to any such family as may need practical, emotional and ongoing support.

## **Upon notification of the death of a pupil:**

The school may be notified in an infinite number of ways. If death occurs during school hours parents may let the school know directly and the person answering the phone will put them through to the most senior member of staff on site.

## **Dissemination.**

It is important to agree, if possible, with the parent that the school will take on the role of informing concerned parties.

There can be no exact list of people to contact. It will be different for each child. The school should ensure that all people who are close to the child are told in a sensitive and supportive manner rather than risk them hearing it 'on the grapevine.' Bereavement is very difficult, and the school needs to ensure it does not add to the sorrow by leaving people feeling marginalised.

If school is in session the Head Teacher will inform the SLT and admin staff as they need to help in the next part of the process. She will then immediately inform the child's staff.

These staff then need to be given as much time as they need to process the news and start to grieve. Should a member of staff be so distressed, then an appropriate private space will be dedicated to these people and to anyone else in the school who had a close relationship with the child.

The Teacher in Charge will arrange cover for the staff member and the Head Teacher will begin the process of informing staff who have been working with the child.

The next step will be informing people not at school. Again, there can be no definitive list but these should include:

- Current school staff not in school that day – including therapy staff.
- Previous school staff who worked closely with the child
- Social Work team
- SEN team
- Chair of governors
- Respite centres
- Other professionals who work with the child

Telling the other pupils will be a decision for the Head Teacher and the class teachers. With different aged pupils there will be different decisions made. The Teacher in Charge of the unit with the loss may be the best person to tell the rest of the children in that unit.

Children must be allowed to ask questions at this time or at any point in the following days or weeks. Staff must answer honestly and to the best of their knowledge.

## **The Funeral**

The Head Teacher will make sure that all staff are asked if they wish to attend the funeral. It may be that the school could not run safely if everyone were granted their wish and in that case difficult decisions will be made according to how close people are to the child and family.

The Head Teacher, or in her unavoidable absence, the deputy, will always attend as a mark of respect.

## **If a Child Dies in School**

If staff have concerns, they will contact the school trained first aider who will call an ambulance. This decision can be taken by the first aider. If she/he requires a second opinion she will talk to the head or most senior team member on site.

The first aider will assess the situation and telephone for the ambulance service. They will immediately inform the Head Teacher or most senior member of staff on site.

The Head Teacher will then telephone the parents and agree that they will meet the ambulance at the hospital or come to school, whichever is quickest.

If the child stops breathing the trained school staff will administer CPR.

**Once the ambulance has arrived at school, the child is given over to their care and it is the ambulance team's decision as to where the child is taken or which form of treatment is administered.**

## **If a Child Dies on a School Trip.**

If a crisis situation occurs whilst a child is out on a trip, then the adult with the child or the trip leader should telephone for an ambulance first and then contact the school to inform the Head Teacher. The school will take the responsibility of contacting the parents.

Again, once the ambulance team reaches the child, the child becomes the responsibility of the ambulance team and they will direct any subsequent actions.

The off sites visits protocols give guidance for such situations and should be followed.

The LA must be informed and the Head Teacher will do this.

## **The Death of a Member of Staff:**

All the same principles and procedures apply as they do for the death of a pupil.

In addition to the above the school will notify the LA as employer.

## **List of online resources and information**

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk) – a useful website offering practical ideas for helping those bereaved in the family and school community.

[www.keech.org.uk](http://www.keech.org.uk) – the website of Keech Hospice Care, our local Children's Hospice. Gives details of its facilities and the support it offers.

[www.chums.info](http://www.chums.info) – a bereavement support service for children who have suffered a loss.

[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk) - a bereavement support service for children who have suffered a loss.

[www.juliesplace.com](http://www.juliesplace.com) – a support resource for bereaved siblings

[www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature](http://www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature) British Heart Foundation site to help children come to term with loss using cartoon creatures. An animated film and we have a printed pack to go with it.

[www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement\\_helpchildren.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement_helpchildren.shtml) Information on the way bereavement affects children.

<http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk/> An organisation offering bereavement support.

<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/index.htm> federation of organisations