



Greenholm Primary School Official Policy

Name of Policy: Bereavement Policy

Date Reviewed: January 2025



Greenholm Primary School Bereavement Policy

Rationale

At Greenholm Primary School, we understand that bereavement is faced by all members of our school community at different times and that this loss can be particularly difficult for those involved. Approximately 1 in 25 children and young people will experience bereavement of a parent or sibling. This policy therefore provides guidelines on how we will support the school community to have greater confidence in dealing with bereavement should it happen.

Our school is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all and therefore works towards creating a school environment that supports and prepares pupils for coping with the loss of a loved one through experiences such as death and divorce. We are committed to respecting diverse cultural, religious, and personal beliefs in addressing bereavement.

Aims

- To provide a framework to support staff, pupils, parents, and carers with guidance on handling bereavement sensitively and compassionately.
- To have clear expectations and procedures in place to create a safe and nurturing environment.
- To ensure the school community works together, including with outside agencies, to support one another.
- To enhance communication within the school community, providing opportunities for all to express their feelings and grieve.
- To safeguard the wellbeing of staff, ensuring they feel supported and confident in addressing bereavement issues.
- To provide children opportunities to express their feelings, share memories, and develop coping strategies.
- To ensure families feel supported both within and outside the school environment.

Family Bereavement

When a family experiences bereavement, the school will act sensitively to support them.

- A designated member of staff, such as the class teacher or pastoral lead, will act as the primary point of contact for the family.
- The Headteacher will provide additional support as needed and may coordinate with external agencies if appropriate.
- Practical assistance, such as flexibility in attendance or referrals to local support services, will be offered where necessary.
- The school will maintain regular communication with the family to ensure their needs are being met.



- Support will be tailored to the family's cultural and personal preferences.

Death of a Pupil or Staff Member

Following the death of a pupil or staff member:

- The school will coordinate with the bereaved family to determine an appropriate way to honour and remember the individual. Options may include a memorial assembly, planting a tree, or creating a memory book.
- Communication about the death will be consistent and age-appropriate, coordinated by the Headteacher.
- Staff and pupils will be encouraged to express their feelings and thoughts through structured activities, supported by trained staff.
- Staff who feel concerned about their or a colleague's wellbeing should notify their phase leader to access additional support.
- External counselling services will be offered where appropriate.

Terminally Ill Pupils or Staff

In cases where a pupil or staff member is diagnosed with a terminal illness:

- The wishes of the individual and their family will be respected at all times.
- If a terminally ill pupil wishes to attend school, teachers will act in accordance with the family's preferences, providing sensitive and age-appropriate communication with the class.
- An individualized support plan will be created in collaboration with the family, healthcare providers, and pastoral staff.
- Support will also be provided to classmates or colleagues to help them understand and process the situation.

Training of Staff

- Key members of the pastoral team are trained in bereavement and loss in accordance with local authority guidance.
- All staff will be familiarized with this policy as part of their induction and ongoing professional development.
- Additional training will be provided to staff to help them recognize signs of complicated grief and to handle sudden or unexpected bereavement situations.
- The school will ensure a crisis response plan is in place and reviewed regularly.



Support Resources

The following websites and organizations are available to support the school community in bereavement situations:

- [Edward's Trust](#)
- [Beyond the Horizon](#)
- [Cruse Bereavement Care](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [Child Bereavement UK](#)
- [Winston's Wish](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:** Oversees communication and ensures appropriate support measures are in place for both pupils and staff.
- **Pastoral Team:** Provides direct support to grieving individuals and coordinates external referrals if necessary.
- **Class Teachers:** Acts as the first point of contact for bereaved pupils and ensures classroom activities support the grieving process.
- **Governors:** Reviews and updates the policy annually and ensures its implementation.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body and updated as necessary to reflect changes in best practices or legislation.
- Feedback from staff, pupils, and families who have experienced bereavement will be incorporated into future revisions.