



Crowle Primary Academy Bereavement Policy



Introduction

This policy has been constructed to guide us on how to deal professionally sensitively and compassionately with difficult matters in upsetting circumstances. It seeks to reflect the values and philosophy of Crowle Primary Academy.

Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs is different. The academy uses its discretion when taking into account requests of the family.

In order to be ready to act professionally sensitively and compassionately staff are encouraged to read material relating to bereavement and visit appropriate websites; a list of useful agencies, websites and stories to use can be found in the bereavement procedures and resources document.

Our Aims

At Crowle Primary Academy we seek to meet the needs of all our children/students/pupils and staff in all situations. When home circumstances are changed because of a death in the family all around is 'different'. We need to be a place that both the child and family can rely on and gain some much needed support.

If the death occurs of one of our pupils or of a member of staff, we will work together, with outside agencies as appropriate, to support each other.

Procedures

We always work in partnership with parents or carers. We will always listen. We sensitively support and encourage parents, carers or family to tell us of any happenings in their child's life that may affect their child's emotional state but we recognise we will never be told everything.

Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs is different. Sometimes we will only get to know that someone important to one of our pupils has died because of the emotional state, disturbed behaviour or other signs of distress we have seen and have needed to respond to in the child. Sometimes the child will confide in a member of staff or a fellow pupil. Sometimes a member or friend of the family will tell us, sometimes it will be a friend of the child.

If there has been a bereavement or significant loss in a family, we will seek their help and advice to help us avoid saying anything that could confuse or upset the child or add further to the distress of those family members most affected.

The fact that the child is bereaved should be recorded prominently on the child's profile and on the CPOMS system to make sure that professionals are aware should the child change school.

In the event of a death of a close member of a pupil's family school will ensure;

- The Headteacher or a one of our Leadership team are informed immediately when a member of staff is informed of a bereavement or loss
- All staff are then informed as quickly, quietly and sensitively as possible. It should also be noted on CPOMS but understood this may not be accessed until the day is over



Crowle Primary Academy Bereavement Policy



- A named member of staff designated by the Headteacher will make contact with the family, if appropriate. This member of staff will explain the desire to be supportive and to avoid saying or doing anything that would add further distress. For this purpose, s/he will endeavour to ascertain information about the situation and how much the child knows in as unobtrusive a way as possible
- The same member of staff will act as a link to the family to ensure good communication and facilitate implementation of the bereavement policy
- Advice is obtained about any cultural and religious issues if necessary
- The family are asked if they want the academy community to be told formally and if so the sort of arrangements that might be made to let other families know the circumstances. This might be necessary in order to alleviate any risk of rumour circulating which may not be factual and could be upsetting for the family. In some circumstances it will not be appropriate to do this, for example if the death occurred in circumstances likely to stimulate gossip
- If information is to be given to other parents formally this is done by letter home to the children's parents in envelopes. For young children this will be given to the parents at the end of the academy day when they collect their children
- Plans are put in place for the return of any child who has not attended the academy for a period following a bereavement. These will be agreed and reassurance given that the family will be contacted if the child is distressed. It may be desirable to include a visit to the child at home by the child's class teacher prior to the return
- Outside agencies are contacted if appropriate or if in doubt
- A suitable place in school is identified for pupils who need some space if too upset to stay in the classroom and people to whom they can go for support
- Good communication is maintained at all times

If the death of a pupil or member of staff occurs, it is likely to cause considerable distress to everyone in the organisation and the following additional actions will be undertaken:

- Discussions will take place with the family and their wishes taken into account on how and what to tell the academy community
- Arrangements will be made for counselling to be available if necessary. This is more likely in cases of unexpected death or road traffic accident. Appropriate agencies outside the academy will need to be contacted
- In some circumstances it may be desirable for the academy to be closed so that as many people as possible can be released to attend the funeral or memorial service if they so wish. This should also be discussed with the family if appropriate to be sensitive to their wishes



Crowle Primary Academy Bereavement Policy



- Staff and children will be supported throughout the grieving period. There will be systematic observation and monitoring for any signs of complex grieving, this will then be brought to the attention of the appropriate professional agencies
- Consider memorial activities like memory walls, memory stones and holding a memorial, this will be considered after consultation with the family

Review

We aim to regularly evaluate this policy and review it as stated except where Government or LA changes necessitate an earlier review or where a request has come from the Governors or Headteacher.

Appendix I

COVID -19

These are very different times and we may be faced with the possibility of a death within the community as a result of COVID-19. Even though the academy is not open to all children we are still here to support grieving families and children.

If help and support is needed please phone the academy during normal school hours or contact us via email on admin@crowleprimaryacademy.co.uk

There is lots of useful information on the following websites;

Helpful websites

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/coronavirus-supporting-children>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

<https://www.winstonswish.org/telling-a-child-someone-died-from-coronavirus/>

<https://rainbowsgb.org/what-we-do/>

<https://crowle-pa.secure-primariesite.net/coronavirus-1/>

B1

Reviewed by: Rhonda Blakemore/ Jane Howden