



## Leedon Lower School Bereavement Policy

<b>Policy written by:</b>	Nicola Harding & Gilly Bown	<b>Date:</b> December 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>	Governing Body	<b>Date:</b> July 2022
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Richard Benson	<b>Date:</b> November 2023
<b>Next review due by:</b>	November 2025	

## **Our school's policy and procedures when a pupil experiences an unexpected death of a loved one**

**Definition:** A sudden bereavement is when someone we love has died unexpectedly, due to illness, an event such as a road crash, or substance-related deaths, violence or suicide.

### **Policy**

This policy outlines our commitment to supporting families within our school community who have been suddenly bereaved.

### **Aim**

This policy aims to support the emotional and physical wellbeing of suddenly-bereaved families within our school community, from the early days of an unexpected bereavement onwards.

It can be shared with bereaved families, to help explain what our school is trying to do to help, and how we will do that.

### **Objectives**

We will have robust procedures that enable us to communicate with, and support, suddenly-bereaved families within our school community, both before, and after, a pupil's return to our school.

Our procedures will help suddenly-bereaved children and young people feel safe, feel involved and feel connected.

All sudden bereavements, in all families, matter to our school equally.

- Every sudden bereavement is unique, and results in different challenges.
- Sometimes, more than one person dies suddenly in a family, or a family faces other difficult challenges, such as injury, or another life challenge.
- Every family is unique, and their needs deserve to be understood and met.

### **Responsible staff**

The team around the bereaved family will consist of:

Nicki Sayell (Pastoral Lead)

Jo McGregor (Pastoral Support)

Richard Benson (Head Teacher)

The child's Class Teacher and the adults working in their class.

## Procedures

If a pupil is suddenly bereaved, we will commit to supporting both them and their family in the following ways.

- The designated 'Main Contact' will ensure that all relevant information is disseminated to all staff as appropriate via considered means sensitively and compassionately.
- After communication with the family involved, the school will then follow the families wishes on how / if we share the news with the wider school community.

If in our school community, we have lost a...	We will...
Child	All staff will be informed as quickly as possible - staff will be called to an emergency online meeting by the Head, Deputy or a member of SLT (if appropriate) where the news will be shared with everyone.
Staff member	All staff will be informed as quickly as possible - staff will be called to an emergency online meeting by the Head, Deputy or a member of SLT (if appropriate) where the news will be shared with everyone.
Child's family member	All staff will be informed. The family will be allocated a 'Main Contact' from our team and bereavement support will be offered to the whole family.
Staff family member	Staff will be informed on a need to know basis, and appropriate support will be given.

1. We will establish a core group of staff responsible for communication and co-ordination of support offered with a named member of the above team.
2. In the days after the death, but before a suddenly-bereaved pupil returns to education, a nominated person from the team will liaise with the family. This will include offering support and providing information on other support available to them.
3. When the pupil returns to school we will:
  - a) Determine the date of that return in discussion with the family, reflecting on the needs of the pupil;

- b) Discuss collaboratively with the pupil, family and our staff what we can do to best support them; and
  - c) Work to enable the pupil's re-integration into school routines and create a safe and secure environment for them.
4. For a bereaved pupil's remaining time in our school we will:
- a) Allow opportunities for reflecting on the death, through encouraging an ongoing and open dialogue with the pupil, and with their family; and
  - b) Consider a pupil's bereavement when planning school activities that might trigger thoughts or feelings about the bereavement and engage the pupil and their family in discussions regarding the pupil's involvement, providing information and choice.
  - c) Ensure they know who they can reach out to for support and how to access this help in ways that are easy and discreet;
  - d) Offer them opportunities to express their reactions, feelings and emotions about their bereavement, in ways they want to, safely and confidentially;
  - e) Offer a safe and supervised space where a pupil can go if they need time out from a classroom or playground because of their bereavement;
  - f) Use age-appropriate bereavement resources available to us from child or youth-specific bereavement charities
  - g) Be aware of the pupil's family circumstances, including their cultural background, and its relevance to their bereavement;
  - h) Signpost to support for the wider family, as well as the pupil, through the local authority.
5. To enable and support our staff, we will:
- a) Ensure staff involved in planning school activities and lessons are fully aware and have a sensitive approach to this.
  - b) Ensure staff have access to bereavement training and refresher bereavement training, specific to supporting children/young people, and specific to sudden bereavement care and mental health; and
  - c) Always have on going support within the school
6. If a suddenly-bereaved child or young person is showing signs of suffering from a mental health condition, or other illness, or any indicators or risks of harm, we will ensure that information is shared with the family, appropriate agencies and managed appropriately.
7. We will ensure that all children, families and staff have access to:
- a) Age-appropriate bereavement tools, such as websites, books and other resources, and ensure we have books and website lists we need;
  - b) Review a list we maintain of national and local age-appropriate services that help children and families who are suddenly bereaved, such as charities and

- mental health services, and understand what they do, so we can appropriately signpost; and
- c) Keep these lists in an accessible place with this policy and procedures.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board every two years, but can be revised as needed.