

Glade Primary School

Bereavement Policy 2023 - 2024



The death of a member of our school community is an event that affects all members of a school community.

It is not possible to outline specific procedures, which have to be followed after a death in our school community as the circumstances, and time of an event of this nature will inevitably vary. Following consultation with staff and parent representatives, the school will work within the following framework.

Communicating the news

Staff should be informed as soon as possible. During the day, the headteacher will arrange for as many staff to be told at the same time by calling whole staff briefing, if known before school starts, or by senior staff taking staff out of class to inform them individually if during the school day.

Class teachers take responsibility for informing the pupils, as they will know best how to approach this task. A time will be designated when this is to be done throughout the school and as soon as is practical. Whilst it is important that normal routines are established as soon as possible after the news has been passed on to pupils, some may need time to talk to staff on an individual basis. Staff will give the news of the death clearly and honestly using the most appropriate method of communication for the pupil and use the correct language of death to avoid confusing the pupil.

If a member of staff receives grave news regarding the condition of a member of the school community they should notify the Head teacher as soon as possible, so that the facts can be ascertained and therefore accurate information can be passed on to others.

The headteacher will also inform:

- The chair of governors
- Parents of pupils in the school by letter
(Letter templates on www.childbereavement.uk)
- Any staff not at work by phone where possible
- The LA, who are able to provide support if required

If a death occurs during the school holidays, then it may not be the Head teacher who is first to be informed. Any member of staff who receives news of this type should endeavour to contact the Head teacher as soon as possible, who will attempt to contact:

- Key staff and the chair of governors by phone/email
- Other staff and governors by letter/email
- Some staff may contact others if they are happy to do so.

If the Headteacher cannot be contacted, then a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be notified, in order that the above procedures can be implemented.

Other pupils and their parents will be informed as soon as possible when the school reconvenes.

The school's response to the family

It is important that the school is sensitive to the wishes and the cultural/religious practices of the family. The school will:

- Send a card on behalf of the school community.

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- Ask the family if they would like someone from the school to visit the home (not necessarily the headteacher or senior staff) or if anyone would like to visit the school
- Check on the wishes of the family regarding funeral arrangements e.g. sending of flowers, school representation.
- Offer support as desired by the family

If acceptable to the family, as many key staff as possible wishing to represent the school at the funeral are able to request attendance. Sufficient staff will however have to remain in school to maintain a safe teaching environment. If a pupil wishes to attend then this must be discussed with them and their parents/carers and the family.

If a former pupil dies, then key staff should be enabled to represent the school at the funeral.

After the Funeral

After consultation with the family, the school may wish to commemorate the death of a pupil in a number of ways. Examples:

- A special assembly or event to talk about the person, using photos, videos or other reminders as appropriate. A balloon release, bubbles or lighting of candles may follow the celebration. The immediate family and the wider school community (governors, other parents, and other professionals) can be invited.
- Creation of a memorial to the pupil- this could be placing a plaque in the memorial garden, a picture, bench, and tree, piece of equipment or sample of the pupil's work. The parents of a pupil may wish to donate something to this memorial.