



Ravenbank Primary School Bereavement Policy

1. Introduction

This policy outlines how our school will respond to and support the school community in the event of a bereavement. We recognise that bereavement can have a profound and lasting impact on pupils, families, and staff. Our aim is to provide a safe, supportive environment in which grief can be expressed and managed appropriately.

2. Aims

- To provide a supportive and compassionate response to bereavement.
- To promote healthy grieving in line with the developmental stage of children.
- To ensure staff are prepared and confident in supporting bereaved pupils and colleagues.
- To maintain clear communication and a consistent approach across the school community.

3. Scope

This policy covers:

- The death of a pupil, parent/carer, sibling, member of staff, or close school community member.
- Situations where pupils or staff experience bereavement outside the immediate school context.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

- Acts as the lead professional in the event of a significant bereavement.
- Liaises with the family and external agencies.
- Informs staff, governors, and (as appropriate) parents and pupils.
- Coordinates support for staff and pupils.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) / Pastoral Lead

- Monitors the emotional wellbeing of bereaved pupils and staff.
- Ensures access to appropriate support and counselling services.
- Maintains up-to-date resources on bereavement support.

Class Teachers and Support Staff

- Provide day-to-day emotional support for pupils.
- Monitor changes in behaviour, attendance, or academic performance.
- Liaise with the DSL and SLT regarding any concerns.

5. Responding to a Bereavement

Initial Actions

- Confirm facts to avoid the spread of misinformation.
- Contact the family to offer condolences and ascertain wishes around communication and school involvement.
- Inform staff and pupils in a timely and sensitive manner.
- Consider age-appropriate ways of informing pupils, including small group discussions or assemblies.

Communication

- Respect the family's wishes regarding the sharing of information.
- Use clear, age-appropriate, and honest language (e.g., using “died” rather than euphemisms).
- Provide guidance to staff on how to talk about death and answer pupils’ questions.

Supporting Pupils

- Provide time and space for children to talk and express their emotions.
- Offer opportunities for remembrance, such as a memory book or school garden.
- Adjust academic expectations if necessary and ensure regular check-ins.
- Refer to external bereavement services when appropriate.

Supporting Staff

- Provide time off if needed (see Leave of Absence Policy).
- Offer supervision, wellbeing support, and access to external counselling.
- Hold debrief meetings following a significant event.

6. Memorials and Funerals

- The school will respect the wishes of the bereaved family regarding staff or pupil attendance at funerals.
- Consider holding a school memorial or commemorative activity in line with the family's and community's wishes.

7. Training and Resources

- Staff will have access to regular training on how to support grieving children.
- The school will maintain a bank of age-appropriate books, activities, and resources related to bereavement.

8. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- All information relating to a bereavement will be treated sensitively and in line with the school's safeguarding and data protection policies.
- Support offered and any significant concerns will be documented on the child's pastoral file.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed biennially by the Senior Leadership Team and governing body, or sooner if circumstances necessitate.

Reviewed: July 2025

Next Review Due: July 2027