



# **BEREAVEMENT POLICY**

**November 2022**

Name of policy or procedure	Bereavement Policy
Staff/student group to whom it applies	All staff, students, visitors to the school and governing body
Distribution/how to access	Via staff area and website
First Issue date	Drafted December 2020
Last review date/who reviewed	Amended - Executive Head / Head of School changed to Acting Principal 18/11/22
Next review date/who to review	December 2023
Approved by/date	Adopted by the full governing body at their meeting on 1 February 2021.
SLG responsibility	Vice Principal (Behaviour & Safety)
Contact for further information	Mental Health Lead

## Chantry Academy

### Equality Impact Assessment Tool

To be completed and attached to any procedural document when submitted for consideration and approval.

Name of Policy: **Bereavement Policy**

		Yes/No	Comments
1.	<b>Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:</b>	No	
	Race or ethnicity		
	Disability		
	Gender		
	Religion or belief		
	Sexual orientation		
	Age		
2.	<b>Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?</b>	No	
3.	<b>If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?</b>	No	
4.	<b>Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?</b>	No	
5.	<b>If so, can the impact be avoided?</b>		
6.	<b>What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?</b>		
7.	<b>Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?</b>		

## **Bereavement Policy**

Our vision is to provide learning that ensures everyone has the skills to be Versatile, the opportunities to exceed their Aspirations, the knowledge to be Learned, the empathy to be Understanding, the enthusiasm to be Engaged and the encouragement to be Determined. Our community is always VALUED.

This vision can only be realised by adhering to our five core beliefs:

- We believe every child wants to be successful
- That there are no barriers to learning
- That there are no excuses for poor progress
- That we get what we expect
- That learning is our core purpose

As a community we need to ensure that the students get the very best chance to succeed that they can.

At Chantry Academy we are fully committed to the emotional health and well-being of our children and young people and that of our staff. We are dedicated to the continual development of a healthy and thriving school community and strive to work towards this in all aspects of school life. We are passionate about providing an ethos, environment and curriculum that can provide support during difficult times, including a time of death or dying.

### **Rationale**

Every 22 minutes in the UK a parent of dependent children dies, leaving about 41,000 bereaved children each year. Many more are bereaved of a grandparent, sibling, friend or other significant person, and, sadly, around 12,000 children die in the UK each year.

Within our school community there will almost always be some children who are struggling with bereavement – or sometimes the entire school community is impacted by the death of a member of staff or a pupil. We would hope to not encounter such circumstances, but the statistical inevitability of such an occurrence implies the necessity of having a Bereavement Policy in place in order that we might be proactive, rather than reactive, when responding to these challenging situations. Empathic understanding in the familiar and secure surroundings of school may be all the bereavement support some children – or staff – require, though referral to more specialist support should be a consideration where the impact of grief is more complex.

Additional information and resources can be accessed at [www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk)

### **Objectives**

The core intentions of the policy are:

- To support pupils and/or staff before, during, and after bereavement
- To enhance effective communication and clarify the pathway of support between school, family and community.
- To identify key staff within school and clarify the pathway of support.

□ The Children Act 1989 aimed to ensure that the welfare of the child was paramount, working in partnership with parents to protect the child from harm

( <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/1> ).

All intentions of this policy endorse that aim as we endeavour to counter any adverse effects of bereavement and maintain pupils' emotional well-being.

## **Procedures**

NB: Many of the guidelines in this policy are only appropriate when the school community as a whole has experienced a death, for example a teacher, a pupil or another staff member. A more common experience for teachers and learning support staff is that of a pupil experiencing the death of a parent. Whole school or class activities will not normally be appropriate in this situation, but the needs of that individual pupil should still be given careful consideration. If a child has been bereaved, we will involve them in decisions about how the school manages issues relating to their loss. We will talk to the child about their preferred way of informing their peers about what has happened and about the support they need

1. Contact with the deceased's family should be established by the Mental Health Lead and the family's wishes respected in communicating with others. Factual information is essential to avoid rumour and confusion, whilst being sensitive to cultural and religious considerations. NB: We need to be mindful of the use of social media sites and their impact throughout this time as rumour and gossip spread quickly.

2. Staff should be informed before pupils and be prepared to share information in age-appropriate ways, as agreed for each individual circumstance.

3. Pupils should be informed, preferably in small groups, by someone known to them. A decision should be made as to whether this information should be given as part of a whole school approach or if only certain groups of pupils need to be informed.

4. The Executive Principal will ensure that a letter to all school families affected should be composed at the earliest opportunity and a decision made as to whom, and how, it should be distributed.

5. The school will be aware that the school timetable may need a degree of flexibility to accommodate the needs and wellbeing of children affected by the situation. However, minimal disruption to the timetable also offers a sense of security and familiarity.

6. Staff affected by the death will be offered ongoing support as appropriate.

7. In consultation with the bereaved family, arrangements for funeral attendance may be clarified, with the consideration of full or partial school closure in some circumstances.

8. Where necessary a press statement should be prepared by the Executive Principal

9. School will be aware that the impact of bereavement follows a child throughout their school life so information will be recorded and shared with relevant people, particularly at transition points. The school should be aware of any ongoing bereavement issues for new pupils. To this end it is important to have effective communication with 'feeder' schools.

### **The role of the Governing Body**

- To approve policy and ensure its implementation as an active document. To be reviewed every three years.

This includes:

- Reflecting on its effectiveness in practice.
- Utilising the expertise within the school and sharing responsibilities.

### **Mental Health Lead**

The Mental Health Lead has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the governing body, parents/carers, the Local Authority and other relevant outside agencies.

The Mental Health Lead will:

- Monitor progress and liaise with external agencies.
- Be first point of contact for family/child concerned.
- Identify appropriate support in school
- Liaise with school Chaplain

### **Mental Health Lead: Mrs K Rice**

### **The role of the Acting Principal**

- Respond to media enquiries.
- Keep the governing body fully informed.

### **The role of pastoral staff, Attendance Officer and all other academy staff**

- Identify students who have been affected by bereavement and record on MyConcern.
- Signpost students and/or staff to the Mental Health Lead and/or Chaplain.
- Notify the Mental Health Lead if anything they have dealt with is having an impact on their own mental health.