

A St. Michael's CE (VA) Junior School Policy



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By God's love, we all flourish together.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. (1 John 4:16)

At St. Michael's, by God's love and through our Christian values of Love, Faith, Respect and Courage, we celebrate uniqueness and nurture curiosity, enabling each child to flourish on their own rich learning journey; whilst contributing to the wider community.

Bereavement Policy

Ratified by Pupil & Curriculum Committee:	November 2024
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Policy Statement

Our school community is committed to supporting pupils, staff, and families during times of bereavement. We recognise that the loss of a loved one can be a challenging and emotional experience, and we aim to provide a compassionate and supportive environment for those affected.

Aims

- To provide a clear framework for responding to bereavement within the school community.
- To offer appropriate emotional and practical support to pupils, staff, and families.
- To foster a sensitive and inclusive environment where grief is acknowledged and respected.

Procedures

1. Immediate Response

1. Notification of a Bereavement:

- The Headteacher should be informed as soon as possible about any bereavement affecting the school community.
- The Headteacher will verify the information and consult with the family about how they wish the news to be shared.

2. Communication:

- Share the news sensitively and appropriately with staff and pupils, following the wishes of the bereaved family.
- Provide accurate and age-appropriate information to children. Avoid euphemisms and use clear language (e.g., “died” rather than “passed away”).
 - Notify Reverend David and the Chelmsford Diocese for support
 - Headteacher to contact the crisis team

3. Privacy and Sensitivity:

- Respect the family’s privacy and cultural or religious practices.
- Avoid speculating or discussing the bereavement publicly unless explicitly permitted.

2. Support for Pupils

1. Immediate Support:

- Acknowledge the pupil’s loss and offer empathy. Reassure them that their feelings are valid and natural.
- Assign a trusted adult (e.g., a teacher, Mrs Cullen) as their key point of contact.

2. On-going Support:

- Provide quiet spaces or time out if needed.
- Consider referring the pupil to specialized counselling services if appropriate. Encourage the Parents/carers to make a referral to the YOYO Project.
- Encourage participation in normal routines to promote stability, while remaining flexible to their emotional needs.

3. Classroom Guidance:

- Educate staff on how to handle grief-related topics in class.
- If classmates are curious or ask questions, guide discussions respectfully to foster understanding and empathy.

3. Support for Staff

1. Acknowledgement:

- Recognise that staff may also be grieving and may need time and support.
- Offer flexible working arrangements or leave, if necessary.

2. Professional Support:

- Provide access to external counselling or Employee Assistance Programs (EAP).

3. Team Support:

- Encourage staff to support one another and share their feelings in a safe and respectful manner.

4. Supporting the Wider School Community

1. Parent Communication:

- Notify parents sensitively about significant bereavements that may impact the school community.
- Provide information on how they can support their children during this time.

2. Memorials and Tributes:

- Arrange appropriate memorials, such as planting a tree, creating a memory book, or holding a remembrance assembly, in consultation with the bereaved family.
- Avoid permanent tributes unless the family agrees.

5. Returning to School

1. Pupils Returning:

- Work with the family to establish a return plan.
- Provide a supportive and flexible reintegration process.

2. Staff Returning:

- Discuss any adjustments needed to their workload or schedule.
- Regularly check in to ensure their well-being.

Training and Awareness

- Staff to receive training on bereavement support and how to recognise signs of grief, when necessary.
- Teachers will have access to age-appropriate resources to discuss death and loss in the classroom when needed.

Reference to be made to:

1. 'See Saw Bereavement Pack'
2. 'Never the Same' School Leadership Faith response to the death of the Headteacher

Information Sharing Pathway following the Death of the Headteacher / Head of School

