



St Columba's Catholic Primary School

## **ST. COLUMBA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING BEREAVEMENT POLICY**

### **Contents**

- A. Introduction/Context
- B. Policy Review
- C. The Aims
- D. Procedures
- E. Responsibilities
- F. Training
- G. Monitoring and Evaluation

### **A INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT**

St. Columba's Catholic Primary School believes in adopting a holistic approach to the support and care of its pupils. Death is not seen as an illness - it is normal and an inevitable part of human existence. When bereavement occurs, it can affect a variety of people not just the family concerned. It is inevitable that at some point St. Columba's Catholic Primary School will have to deal with the death of a member of its community. Indeed the school has dealt with six children dying - the most recent in 2008.

To this end, we recognise that work needs to be carried out to ensure that families, children and young people are given

- the opportunities to develop skills to cope with loss and grief and
- have access to appropriate information and support when needed

There is no single recipe for provision and services will always need to be organised in the light of needs, priorities and resources.



Various Government legislative and guidance documentation provide a framework to support schools covering death and bereavement. The Education Act (1996) emphasizes the importance of promoting the personal, social and spiritual development of children and young people as part of their education. The national Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship Framework (DFEE and QCA 1999 a) and b) also stress the need for schools to address bereavement specifically as well as other losses such as divorce and separation.

We recognise that, in order to fulfil our responsibilities in delivering the five outcomes outlined in the Children Act 2004, as a school we need to be proactive in preparing children for loss and grief and be reactive in supporting them through loss and grief.

The management of a bereavement situation will be a central rôle for the members of the Senior Management Team.

### B POLICY REVIEW

Consultation concerning the development of this policy was vital in ensuring all parties understand their rôle and responsibilities. The process itself also reflects the positive and caring ethos of the school.

The following people were consulted in the preparation of the policy:

- Staff
- Pupils
- Parents
- Governors
- The Local Authority

This policy will be made available to any OFSTED team in the normal way. Its existence is known to staff, pupils and parents through the consultation process.

### C THE AIMS

*This safeguarding bereavement policy is intended to reflect our positive ethos and contribute to the caring community we wish to nurture. It is hoped it will contribute considerably to the emotional health and well-being of our school community.*



## St Columba's Catholic Primary School

*The main aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils and all members of staff faced with a bereavement are provided with support.*

This support includes the opportunity for them

- to express their feelings in a safe environment,
- to be given space and time to come to terms with their loss
- to access specialist advice if necessary.

It is recognised that the situation for the child, young person and/or family will be monitored over time. It is our hope that anyone faced with bereavement will regard our community as a place where children and young people can grow and face the challenges that lie ahead. This, in turn, will contribute to our learning community.

### D PROCEDURES

Once the situation occurs concerning a bereavement the following steps will be taken:

- Contact will be made with the family to ascertain the facts and offer support
- Use will be made of the Knowsley 'Positive Responses to Supporting Bereaved Children' Pack
- Staff will be informed and decisions taken concerning the best way to inform pupils and for internal mechanisms for support to be organised and employed
- Pupils will be informed in the agreed manner
- The Local Authority and other agencies will be informed and involved as appropriate
- If appropriate, a press statement will be prepared and a strategy for dealing with the media agreed with the family
- Discussions will take place concerning attendance at the funeral and any memorial service agreed with the family
- The basic information will be recorded
- The mechanism for reviewing the situation should be agreed with the appropriate staff.

### E RESPONSIBILITIES

The management of bereavement is a whole school issue but there need to be clear lines of accountability to ensure our aims are fulfilled.



St Columba's Catholic Primary School

The following summarise the main areas of responsibility:

The Governors

To ensure the policy is implemented

Headteacher/Senior Management Team

To monitor progress and deal with external agencies

To coordinate the media's inquiries

To be the first point of contact for the individual concerned and their family

To identify appropriate support within the school community for the individual concerned

To offer support as appropriate to pupils in the wider school community

Parish Priest of St. Columba's

To advise the senior management and to offer support as required

F TRAINING

The training and development of staff is a fundamental aspect of our human resource management and as such staff will have the opportunity to undertake relevant training in the management of bereavement. This will involve general awareness-raising for all staff and more specialised training for those with specific responsibility.

Class teachers will undertake basic training in listening/counselling skills and the designated member of staff in working with the media.

The learning Mentor will purchase any resources from the Mentor budget for this purpose during the forthcoming financial year.

G MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Management Team and reported to the Governors on an annual basis.