

The Children's Workshop

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

Bereavement can be felt by all of us and is probably least understood by children. It is not confined to a death in the immediate family and can extend to a friend, a class mate, a member of the pre-school staff, even a close member of the family or neighbour.

Should such an event occur in a child's life whilst in our care we have a clearly defined procedure designed to enable the child to cope and come to terms with their own emotions and to begin the process of healing. We believe that the child's class mates need to understand what has happened and to be encouraged to act in an appropriate manner.

Process

- Our Bereavement Officer is **Helen Rowling**.
- As soon as we are notified of a death all of the staff will be advised. As far as possible, all staff should be told together. By creating a list of people to be told, the pre-school can be sure that no one close to the situation will find out by chance.
- Our Bereavement Officer will be aware of the needs of bereaved children and will have collated resources in order to support them.
- Helen Rowling in partnership with the practitioners will co-ordinate the pre-school's response and be fundamental in liaising with bereaved family.
- All the parents/carers will be advised as quickly as possible and as promptly as circumstances will allow.
- Following this the children in pre-school will be told at a time previously notified to the parents. We will also provide help and guidance to the pre-school children to help them act in an appropriate manner towards the bereaved child.
- Staff will be consistent in their use of terminology to ensure clear understanding of the concept of death.
- Absentees from pre-school will also need to be informed at the earliest opportunity. We will have procedures to track who is informed, when and by whom, to ensure that no one is missed.
- We will have a range of strategies that we may adopt in the days and weeks that follow any significant loss. We will proceed only after full approval of the family and will take into account the cultural/religious beliefs of the family.
- The child's key worker or other named member of staff will be identified to keep in touch with the family so contact from the family's perspectives is manageable
- Attendance at the funeral and other forms of remembering will be agreed by the staff team. *(If we decide to close the setting in term time, this will need to be with the prior agreement of Surrey C.C. due to funding regulations).*
- Staff will have ongoing opportunities for peer support in order to maintain the child's well being.

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- Helen Rowling will take responsibility for recording details of bereavement on the child's Record of Transfer and ensuring this information is passed to the next setting, with parent's permission.
- We will provide ongoing support and will ensure that the anniversary of the death is remembered subject to the wishes of the family.

Parents/carers

In acknowledging the role of the pre-school in supporting children with bereavement and loss, the pre-school will work alongside the parents/carers in this process at all times. The parents/carers remain the most significant support to young children in understanding death. We can support parents/carers in this by:

- Sharing with parents/carers the intentions of the pre-school to act in a particular way in the event of a death.
- Offering guidance to parents/carers on how they might support their child.
- Sharing information with families about other sources of support e.g. Winston's Wish Family Line. (www.winstonswish.org.uk)
- Keeping parents/carers fully informed about the actions of the pre-school throughout the immediate period of grieving.
- Parents/carers will be invited to be involved in any pre-school response that occurs after the death, e.g. a remembering time. The format of this will take into account the beliefs and wishes of the bereaved family.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the pre-school	Date for review
<i>Oct 2018</i>		<i>Oct 2019</i>