



Bereavement Policy

Policy statement

Within our Home from Home Childcarers community there may on occasions be some recently bereaved children who are struggling with their loss, or sometimes the death of a member of staff or a child may have an impact on the whole setting's community. Whilst we would hope to not encounter such circumstances, we have this Bereavement Policy in place so we can be proactive, rather than reactive, in these extremely sensitive situations.

Usually, support and understanding in the familiar and secure surroundings of our setting, along with that provided by their family and friends, may be all the bereavement support most children or staff require. However, we recognise that referral to more specialist support may be necessary where the impact of grief is more complex.

Procedures

As we recognise that most children and adults can be effectively supported through bereavement and loss by those with whom they already have relationships, we want to equip our staff and others to respond effectively and confidently to a death in the Home from Home Childcarers community.

It is important too that we recognise that everyone experiences bereavement and grief differently and that there is no right or wrong way to do it. Therefore, it is our aim:

- To provide appropriate support to children and/or staff before (where applicable), during, and after a bereavement
- To provide a safe and calm environment for children and staff
- To ensure there is effective communication between home and our setting, and to provide parents with information on how to access other support (if it is required)
- To work with the local authority and other partners as appropriate
- In the event that a member of staff, child or parent dies whilst on the premises the setting will contact RIDDOR and Ofsted will be notified.

The Role of the Senior Management Team (SMT)

- To approve policy and ensure its implementation and regular reviews

- To ensure there is a whole setting approach to supporting emotional wellbeing
- To have oversight of support required and provide, liaising with external agencies as appropriate
- To advise and support staff as required

The Role of the Manager

- To be the first point of contact for the family/child concerned
- To respond to media enquires (if required)
- To keep SMT fully informed
- To signpost to referral pathways and other means of support
- To ensure staff are appropriately trained around bereavement and undertake actions set out in this policy (such as how to share sad news with children), including a deputy for the role of the Manager should the event mean she is unable to complete this role.

The Role of Staff

- To provide a safe and calm environment for all
- To act as a 'trusted adult' to support children and proactively enable them to have the time and space to talk
- To monitor the wellbeing of the children in their room, identify concerns and escalate where additional support may be required
- To ensure any safeguarding concerns are shared with the Lead Practitioner for Safeguarding

Procedure Following a Bereavement

1. Wherever possible (and if deemed appropriate), the Manager will attempt contact with the bereaved family before taking **any** other action. This is to ensure any communications to the setting (and the media) are factual, avoid rumors or confusion and are aligned with the family's wishes. Where it has not been possible to establish contact with the family, and news of the death is already in the public area, the Manager will need to manage this and will do so, taking advice from the local authority.
2. The Manager will inform staff of any death and agree how information will be shared with children, parents, and the wider Home from Home Childcarers community.
3. The Manager and staff will agree how to share information with children in a supportive and age-appropriate way (it may not always be the case that the children in the setting need to know as may not affect them).
4. The Manager will prepare a communication to all parents/carers to inform them of the death and advice about how to support their child, should they be affected.

5. The Manager will agree a statement for the media, where this is required, linking with the local authority as appropriate.
6. The Manager will adapt the setting, if necessary, to enable appropriate support to be provided.
7. The Manager will make arrangements in the setting for a book of condolence and/or an area where flowers may be placed.
8. In consultation with the bereaved family, arrangements for funeral attendance will be clarified, with the consideration of full or partial closure in some circumstances.
9. The Manager and SMT will monitor the wellbeing of all children and staff identifying any concerns and escalating where additional support may be required.
10. The setting will record any concerns about a child's wellbeing on their files to ensure any future setting is aware that additional support may be required.

Policy links

Our intention is for this policy to be read in conjunction with the following Home from Home Childcare Policies and Procedures:

- Children and Families Health and Well-Being Policy

Further Guidance

- **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Offer support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies.

Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) Website: www.cruse.org.uk

- **Home-Start**

Local community network who can help families with young children through difficult times.

Phone: 0116 464 5490. Website: www.home-start.org.uk

- **Rainbow Trust**

Offers emotional and practical support for families who have a child with a life threatening or terminal illness.

Phone: 01708 370023. Website: www.rainbowtrust.org.uk

- **Mind**

Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems

Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm). Website: www.mind.org.uk

- **Samaritans**

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline). Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

- **Happy Days Charity**

Works with local communities to provide vital breaks for individuals and families.

Phone: 01582 755999. Website: www.happydayscharity.org

- **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service for Southend, Essex and Thurrock**

<https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs>

To self-refer for support, email: NELFT-EWMHS.referrals@nhs.net

	<u>Date:</u>	<u>By Whom?</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Created	27 th May 2020	Zoe Shaw	Created due to current Covid-19 situation
Updated	28 th May 2020	Linda Reynolds and Chrissie Morley	Added links to services that provide support
Reviewed	1 st March 2021	Zoe Shaw	
Updated	5 th April 2022	Rachel Simms	Updated to include what to do if a parent, child, or staff member dies whilst at the setting.
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Next Review	March 2025		