



## ALDERMAN JACOBS PRIMARY SCHOOL (ACADEMY TRUST)

### BEREAVEMENT POLICY

#### **Aims**

At Alderman Jacobs School our aims are:

- To prepare and support all those affected by loss and death in a supportive and caring environment in which everyone can respond appropriately to individual circumstances.
- To offer understanding of the impact of loss and grief on children and young people's physical and emotional health.
- To gain insight into children and adult reactions to loss and grief and how we should respond in order to meet the needs of grieving pupils, parents and staff.
- To give pastoral support for pupils with parental consent, and staff.
- To provide effective support for all members of the school community and access to relevant support materials.
- This policy outlines practical measures to be taken when people are in shock, or upset, especially with sudden or multiple deaths or traumatic circumstances.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The management of a bereavement situation is a whole school issue but there needs to be clear lines of accountability to ensure our aims are fulfilled. The main areas of responsibility are outlined below.

Governors are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and to provide support in terms of media enquiries.

The Head Teacher, with the support of the governors, will have overall responsibility for support and liaison in event of a death or traumatic loss. In the event that this person is absent then the Deputy Head Teacher will take responsibility.

These responsibilities are:

- To monitor progress and deal with external agencies.
- To co-ordinate media enquiries
- To identify appropriate support within the school community for the individual(s) concerned and gain parental consent to offer support as appropriate to pupils both within school in the wider school community.

## **Introduction**

Death is a subject that is difficult to address. It is almost inevitable though, that at some point the school community will be affected by a death. This might be the death of a pupil, staff member, pupil's family member, or of someone connected with the school.

Through providing a curriculum, both through PSHE and other means, that acknowledges and addresses loss, death, bereavement and grief we can improve the skills of children and young people to deal with and emerge positively from them. Our school is well-placed to help children and young people to explore and develop an awareness and understanding of death, as well as to support those personally affected by it. An important part of this is the ability to support pupils, families and staff at times of loss and bereavement, as well as helping children and young people to support their peers, decreasing the sense of isolation that can be part of it. Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs is different and this policy has been constructed to guide us on how to deal professionally, sensitively and compassionately with difficult matters in upsetting circumstances.

At Alderman Jacobs School we are committed to the emotional health and well-being of all staff and pupils. We are dedicated to the continual development of a 'healthy school'. We wish to work towards this in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that support and prepare pupils for coping with separation or loss of a loved one, either through death or divorce.

This policy is for all staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors, visitors and partner agencies working within the school.

## **Procedures**

When a bereavement or loss situation occurs the following steps will be taken:

### **In individual cases**

Contact will be made with the family to identify the facts and offer support. It is important to offer condolences but equally express our wish to support the child through the process. It may be necessary to seek further advice and support can be offered but parental consent must be sought.

### **When whole school is affected:**

- Staff will be informed and decisions taken concerning the best way to inform pupils and for the internal mechanisms for support to be organised and employed.
- Pupils will be informed in the agreed manner. If possible parents will have already been informed.
- The Local Authority, parish clergy 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. This should be discussed with the Chair of Governors before any statement is made.
- Discussions will take place concerning attendance at the funeral and any memorial service (including school assembly) agreed with the family.
- A review process will be agreed with the appropriate staff.

When/if it is considered appropriate, a short assembly will be held to pray for and remember the deceased. Parish clergy will be invited to attend and support. This assembly may be Key Stage or whole school based depending on the connection with the deceased and any school community member who has had close links with the pupil, staff or school community member will be invited. If applicable the child's parents and close family should also be invited to this.

### Training

Training and development is a fundamental aspect of our school community and appropriate staff will have the opportunity to undertake relevant training in the management of bereavement. This may include general awareness-raising for all staff and more specialised training for those with specific responsibility, such as senior staff members and pastoral staff, for example our Family Worker.

Within school we have individuals with qualifications in such areas but these should only be involved with parental consent. Further advice can be sought from the subject leader for PSHE or the Assistant Head for the phase.

Reviewed		Ratified		Review Frequency	Next Review Date	Signed by	
By	Date	By	Date			Head	Chair
Elaine Crane	March 2023	Trustee Meeting	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	3 Years	Spring 2026	<i>Cathy Carlisle</i>	<i>Utillend</i>