

St Columba's P.S. Newbuildings



Bereavement Care Policy

- *Reviewed by staff May 2017*
- *Presented to BOG for Ratification June 2017*

Review due: Prior to June 2020

St. Columba's primary school
Newbuildings

Bereavement Care Policy

Aims of Policy

1. To foster a caring attitude to those suffering a bereavement.
2. To encourage a sympathetic and flexible approach.
3. To inform all those involved, including teaching staff, ancillary staff, general assistants and parents of possible strategies.

Guidelines

These guidelines are particularly relevant and appropriate in cases where the loss concerned is of a close relative or friend but can and should be adapted according to individual circumstances.

1. Children should be allowed time to grieve. Acknowledge their grief, reassuring them that what they are feeling is normal.
2. It should be made known that staff will find the time to listen and talk and will do their best to comfort when necessary.
3. Children should be aware that staff will try to help them come to terms with their feelings and attempt to answer any questions they have.
4. All staff and assistants involved in the care of a bereaved child should be aware of the situation.
5. The possible fears, insecurities and emotions of other children which may arise from this situation should be recognised and addressed sympathetically.
6. Religious, Cultural and Social backgrounds, as well as parental wishes, should be taken into account when considering appropriate responses.
7. Use of loss and critical incident training resources from EA support officers.
8. If deemed necessary and in consultation with the parents/guardians the school can access support for the child through referral to outside agencies for support e.g. SEBD, Foyle Hospice Counselling or Action for Children
9. School Staff may wish to signpost parents to appropriate agencies to support their own grief and loss and that of their child and family and liaise with these agencies if requested.

Conclusion

A bereaved child, especially if the death is that of a close relative, parent, sibling or friend, is likely to be feeling confused, anxious and insecure. At school we should aim to provide a stable and supportive environment in which he/she is able to gradually come to terms with the loss. It is recognised that this process may be lengthy and support may be required long term.