



*(Registered Charity 1023351)*

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## **Bereavement Policy**

### **Policy statement**

Bagshot Community Pre-School is committed to the emotional well-being of our children, families and staff. In the event of the death of a child, member of staff, parent or member of the community we will provide support in a sensitive and compassionate manner.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the setting**

- The manager holds the position of Bereavement Lead. The Committee Chair is the Deputy Bereavement Lead.
- We will always consult with the family regarding who will be responsible for communicating with them, acknowledging that the keyperson may be the most appropriate person if they have built a strong relationship with the family.
- News of any bereavement will be shared by the Manager in the first instance, via a method of communication which would be deemed most appropriate for staff at that time. This may be via Telephone (out of hours), staff meeting, text, email. The Manager will consider the impact of hearing the news via each method.
- The Manager and staff will be responsible collectively for sharing any news with the children, whilst taking into consideration members of staff who may have recently suffered a personal bereavement and may find this particularly difficult. They may consider preparing a script of how to break the news to the children so that staff feel prepared and confident.
- Staff have read and understood the SCC document 'Grief and Loss in the Early Years' and understand the impact of bereavement on young children. They are aware that support is available for themselves or parents via the Surrey Bereavement Guide.

### **Support for children who are bereaved**

- Staff recognise that a child's understanding of death and loss varies depending on their age and developmental stage. They communicate to children in an age appropriate way because all children are unique and will cope with death in their own way and at their own pace.
- Staff will be there to listen to them, respond to their questions and reassure them that they are there for them. The setting knows it is important to keep routines in the setting as normal as possible so that children feel safe and secure in their environment.

- We encourage children to express their feelings and provide lots of opportunities through play and activities so that they can try to make sense of what has happened.
- Staff understand that some children may communicate their feelings of sadness, worry or anger through their behaviour such as changes in eating and sleeping, being visibly upset or showing signs of separation anxiety by wanting to be with a particular adult all the time.
- Staff will remain vigilant and use strategies to support the child through this difficult time recognising that children also may regress with toileting and will deal with this sensitively.
- Regular supervisions with members of staff and an 'open door' policy allow the Manager to identify vulnerable members of staff.
- Staff are aware that some families may have different cultural and religious beliefs and that these should be taken into consideration and respected?

### **Working with parents**

- We will send a letter to all parents whose children attend the setting to inform them as soon as possible. The bereaved family will be consulted and given an opportunity to comment on the content and agree it before it is sent out.
- We will consult with the bereaved family about whether they would want representation from the setting at the funeral and who that person would be.
- The bereaved family and children will be asked for their views on how to mark the death in an appropriate way at the setting, taking into account any religious or cultural beliefs.
- The setting will continue to support the bereaved family and have regular contact with them. When a child is ready to return to the setting this will be planned well in advance and in consultation with the parents or carers.

### **Further advice and Information**

[Child Bereavement UK](#) have guidance films and information to support families and schools in supporting children during the outbreak, including staying in touch with someone who is seriously ill, supporting bereaved children during difficult times and supporting pupils.

[Winston's Wish](#) have produced guidance on topics including talking to bereaved children about coronavirus, telling a child that someone has died from coronavirus, and saying goodbye when a funeral isn't possible

[Cruse Bereavement Care](#) have produced some tips about talking to children among their wider resources about grief and coronavirus