



# ALTRINCHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## BEREAVEMENT POLICY

<b>Nominated Lead Member of Staff:</b>	<b>EH/HM</b>
<b>Last Review Date:</b>	<b>September 2021</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>September 2023</b>

### PRINCIPLES

The Bereavement Policy is closely linked with the school's Pastoral Care Policy and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

### PURPOSE

**The aims of this Bereavement Policy are:**

1. To provide pupils, staff and their families with sensitive and effective, non-intrusive support at a time of great personal stress.
2. To provide all staff and those adults who work with our pupils (e.g. supply teachers, trainee teachers, Youth Relate Counsellor, Pastoral Mentor, Connexions Adviser) with a clear framework to enable effective handling of bereavement issues.

#### **1. Death of a Pupil/Student's Family Member or Close Friend**

- 1.1** When a close family member or close friend dies, the Head, Deputy Head and the relevant Head of Year will ensure that each other are informed.

- 1.2** The Head of Year will pass on this information to the Form Tutor.
- 1.3** The Head will write a letter of condolence, in which the family is invited to seek any help from the school that may be needed. The Head of Year will send a card/note to the pupil/student and family. The [Head of Year] will also discuss with the family any time off from school that may be needed and stay in touch with the family and/or pupil/student as appropriate.
- 1.4** When the Head of Year is informed, they should send an email to advise the relevant staff.
- 1.5** A note will be posted on the noticeboard in the staffroom giving details of the bereavement but requesting that staff refrain from asking the pupil/student about the death in front of others. This is intended to support the objective that staff show they wish neither to intrude nor appear unsympathetic. If applicable, it will also be mentioned in staff briefing.
- 1.6** A representative from the school will attend the funeral where appropriate.
- 1.7** The pupil/student may choose to confide in a member of staff he knows well. This member of staff should inform the Head of Year that the pupil/student has chosen to discuss the bereavement.
- 1.8** Subject staff will be understanding of problems with concentration, homework, etc. but will provide a normal working environment for the pupil/student.
- 1.9** The Head of Year will ensure that the Admissions Manager and the SIMS manager are aware of the situation who will then make the necessary adjustments to the pupil/student's personal details on SIMS and SchoolComms and anywhere else necessary.
- 1.10** The Head of Year/Form Tutor will inform the tutor group of the situation before the pupil/student returns to school and his friends will be ready to meet him on his arrival.
- 1.11** The Form Tutor/Head of Year will give the form guidance on how to help and support their bereaved form member and how to be ready to express sympathy and to listen should the boy wish to speak.
- 1.12** The Head of Year will ensure that all relevant staff, including part-time staff are aware of the situation.
- 1.13** If a death occurs at a weekend, or during a holiday, the pupil/student may not wish/need to take time off school. In this case, the Head of Year will spend some time with the boy whilst the Form Tutor explains the situation to the form.
- 1.14** The Head of Year or Form Tutor will always see the pupil/student on his return to school, will inform him that staff and his tutor group are aware of the death and will offer to be available to the boy should he wish to discuss anything.
- 1.15** All staff will need to be prepared for episodes of acute distress. If this occurs, a friend should accompany the pupil/student to the Head of Year. If the Head of Year is unavailable, they should

go to the Deputy Head or Form Tutor. This may also apply to members of the form and friends of the pupil/student.

- 1.16 The Head of Year should then ask the Pastoral Support (A Passey) to update the pupil file as soon as possible.
- 1.17 If the pupil/student's reaction causes long-term concern, we will seek to work with the family and support services, e.g. Youth Relate Counsellor, Education Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologist and any other suitable external agencies, to assist in providing help and guidance.
- 1.18 If the pupil/student suffers a bereavement which is likely to have an impact on external examination preparation, the family will be advised to ask for a medical note or letter from his GP to support a request for special consideration. The Examinations Officer will inform the relevant examination board.

## **2. Death of a Member of Staff's Family Member or Close Friend**

- 2.1 When a close family member or close friend of a member of staff dies, the Head and SLT will be informed.
- 2.2 They will then decide to whom this information should be passed but it is likely to be that member of staff's Line Manager.
- 2.3 The Head or Deputy Head will write a letter of condolence to the member of staff and his/her family.
- 2.4 The Head or Deputy Head will also discuss and agree any time off that is appropriate.

## **3. The Death of a Pupil or Student**

- 3.1 When a pupil or student dies, the Head and SLT will ensure that each other are informed.
- 3.2 The Head should then inform the Director of Education or Head of School Improvement at Trafford.
- 3.3 The Head of Trafford Healthy Schools should be called in so the school will have the support of the Critical Incidents Team and Resources Box.
- 3.4 The Chair of Governors should be informed by the Head or Deputy Head.
- 3.5 The Critical Incident Team will support the school for as long as the school wishes. An assembly with the relevant year group should be delivered by the Head or a senior member of staff.
- 3.6 Subsequent assemblies should then be delivered to ensure all pupils/students are aware of the news.
- 3.7 Each assembly should be delivered in form time.
- 3.8 Staff should have time to prepare what they are going to say to their form.
- 3.9 Staff should not be afraid to show emotion.

- 3.10** Staff should be honest and discuss the incident, stating simple facts and use the words 'death/died'.
- 3.11** Staff should explain how, where and when the death occurred, if it is known.
- 3.12** Staff should deny any rumours.
- 3.13** Staff should talk briefly about the person who has died without eulogising them.
- 3.14** Staff should acknowledge that not everyone will feel sad, and that is all right.
- 3.15** Pupils/students who were close friends of the pupil/student who has died should be permitted to attend the funeral.
- 3.16** One or two weeks after the funeral, a memorial service for the pupil/student should be held in school, led by the Head or senior member of staff. The pupil's/student's parents and family should be invited to attend.
- 3.17** Staff who are affected by the death should be offered support from their line manager and the [School Counsellor].

#### **4. Training and Teaching**

- 4.1** Staff will be given the opportunity to participate in in-service training courses which lead to a greater understanding of loss and bereavement issues.
- 4.2** Bereavement will be addressed in the curriculum and in PHSE lessons and assemblies.

#### **Responsibility**

As a school, we accept the responsibility of recognising and dealing with a pupil's/student's or member of staff's experience of bereavement.

We will act in a supportive and sympathetic way, aiming to ease the pupil's/student's or member of staff's transition back into school.

We will act in a supportive and sympathetic way to all pupils/students and members of staff, if a pupil/student currently attending the school dies.

Trafford has produced two documents:

- Critical Incident Guidance and Protocol for Schools - [Here](#)
- Helping Schools Manage Their Response to Critical Incidents

These are held by the Head and should be referred to when any critical incident occurs.