



Valuing Potential; Creating Opportunities
HARTSBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL
BEREAVEMENT POLICY

POLICY REVIEW

This policy has been agreed by staff and Governors and will be regularly reviewed:

DATE OF POLICY:	September 2025	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	September 2028
MONITORED BY:	Head of School, Mental Health Lead, Pupil Progress Committee		

VISION

We aim to be a school where the children are at the centre of everything that we do. Decisions that we make around the curriculum and school life are carefully considered to reflect the current needs of the children. Mental health is balanced with their academic needs to nurture the whole child.

1. Introduction

At Hartsbourne Primary School, we recognise that bereavement is a difficult and sensitive issue which can significantly impact children, families, and staff. Every bereavement is unique, and our school is committed to providing a compassionate, consistent response that supports emotional well-being while maintaining a safe, stable learning environment.

This policy sets out how the school will respond to the death of a pupil, parent/carer, staff member, or other significant individual within the school community.

2. Aims

- To provide clear guidance for staff in supporting children, families, and colleagues through bereavement.
- To ensure a sensitive, consistent, and age-appropriate response to loss.
- To work in partnership with families, respecting their cultural, religious, and personal beliefs.
- To help pupils and staff express grief in safe and appropriate ways.
- To balance the need for compassion with the importance of stability and routine.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School

- Lead contact with the bereaved family.
- Decide, in consultation with the family, what information is shared with staff and pupils.

- Coordinate the school's response, including any memorials or acts of remembrance.
- Liaise with external agencies where support may be required.

Mental Health Lead

- Provide pastoral support to bereaved pupils.
- Monitor pupils' emotional well-being and academic engagement.
- Refer to external bereavement services (e.g., Winston's Wish, Child Bereavement UK) if appropriate.

Class Teachers and Support Staff

- Acknowledge the loss sensitively in class.
- Provide stability through routine while being flexible to meet the child's emotional needs.
- Inform Head of School or Mental Health Lead of any concerns.

Governors

- Ensure this policy is in place, reviewed, and followed.

4. Supporting Pupils

- The Head of School or Mental Health Lead will meet with the family to discuss how the child should be supported in school.
- Adjustments may include:
 - Flexible attendance or a phased return.
 - Reduced academic expectations for a period.
 - Providing a quiet space or pastoral support when needed.
- Pupils will never be pressured to talk about their grief but will be given safe opportunities if they wish.
- Peer groups may be supported in understanding and responding appropriately.

5. Supporting Staff

- Staff experiencing bereavement will be treated with compassion and offered time off in line with BSJT guidance and compassionate leave arrangements.
- Staff supporting bereaved pupils will be given guidance and, where appropriate, access to professional advice.
- Wellbeing support and signposting to external counselling will be available.

6. Communication

- Information about a death will be shared with staff and pupils using clear, age-appropriate, and sensitive language. Where euphemisms such as 'passed away' are used, efforts should be made to explain these terms to children who tend to have a literal interpretation of language.
- Confidentiality will be respected in line with the family's wishes.
- The Head of School will manage any contact with the media.
- Cultural and religious practices will always be respected.

7. Memorials and Remembrance

- The school will consult the bereaved family before organising any memorial or act of remembrance.
- Options may include assemblies, moments of reflection, memory books, or quiet spaces.
- Staff will be mindful of anniversaries and significant dates, offering additional support where needed.

8. Training

- Key staff will receive emergency training in bereavement awareness as and when relevant.
- Resources and guidance will be available to all staff to build confidence in supporting grieving children.

9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner following a bereavement, to ensure it remains appropriate.
- Feedback from staff, pupils, and families will inform future updates.