St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Bereavement Policy

Adopted: 6th February 2024 Review date: Spring 2027

1. Introduction and Context

Our approach to supporting pupils experiencing bereavement is informed by and is threaded through the school's Christian vision.

"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 3:34

Unconditional love underpins all we do at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. We value and embrace the individuality of every child as they discover, learn and flourish in a place of security and love.

L*ove – We show love and care for everyone.*

O*pportunity – Our inclusive love ensures that all children have opportunities to live life to the full.*

V*alues – Our Christian values give children the character and strength to live well and make a difference.*

E*xcellence –Through our inclusive, loving care, all children flourish.*

At St Mary's C of E Primary School, our core purpose is to promote the best interests of the child, working in partnership with parents and other professional services. St Mary's is a compassionate, Christian school and we seek to model the school's Christian values through providing appropriate, effective support for individual children and the whole school community. We recognise the significant impact of bereavement on the emotional wellbeing of both children and adults in our school community. Bereavement affects everyone at different times. At St Mary's, we recognise that each person's experience of bereavement is different and any guidance or procedures put in place may need to be adapted to account for the circumstances and those affected. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Policy for Supporting Children's Mental Health and Resilience.

2. Aims

As part of our commitment to supporting their emotional wellbeing, this policy aims to:

- Provide guidance for how the school and staff members should respond to a death in our school community or that affects members of our school community;
- Share good practice in supporting those experiencing bereavement and to signpost other agencies that can support individuals and the school community;
- Set out how deaths should be communicated in a sensitive manner, balancing the wishes of family of the deceased against the need for openness;
- Raise the awareness of members of the school community about issues related to bereavement and how members of the school community may be affected;
- Help staff members recognise that pupils' behaviour may reflect their experiences of bereavement and equip staff members to identify and support children effectively;
- Enable staff members to identify children who require intervention and to take positive action to provide 'early help';
- Help staff members to develop a 'resilient' learning culture and build the resilience of individual children;
- Enable children to be understanding of their peers' needs with regard to their mental and emotional wellbeing in relation to bereavement;
- Reflect the school's distinctive Christian vision and values by developing a compassionate, caring environment and taking positive action to support individuals when required;
- Foster a culture of sensitivity, understanding and empathy, in which general supportive practices benefit all pupils;
- Set out the roles and responsibilities of specific members of the school community, while recognising that we all have a part to play in reinforcing the school's vision, values and compassionate culture.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff members share a responsibility for:

- Keeping children safe;
- Modelling the school's vision and values;

Identified staff members have additional responsibilities in relation to bereavement. Responsibilities and tasks may be delegated as appropriate.

- The Headteacher is responsible for:
    - Ensuring this policy is implemented;
    - Liaising with the family of the deceased in conjunction with the Pastoral Support Worker, including about what support would be appropriate;
    - In liaison with the family of the deceased, deciding what details of the death, if any, should be communicated to the school community;
    - Communicating with the school community as appropriate;
    - Supporting staff members through appropriate training and engaging with relevant external agencies for advice, such as the Local Authority, the St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and Educational Psychology services;

    - Monitoring and supporting the wellbeing of staff members who are working with bereaved members of the school community;
    - Ensuring the school has sufficient resources to support the children's wellbeing, such as relevant picture books, and aid staff members in providing appropriate care;
    - Ensuring that the school's budget allows for necessary support for bereaved children, such as counselling and therapeutic interventions;
    - Liaising with the MAT regarding requests for information from the media and then responding as agreed;
    - Ensuring that children or staff members are supported in returning to school appropriately;
    - Liaising with St Mary's Church (and other local churches as appropriate) with regard to support that can be offered by members of the local church communities, such as prayer and someone to talk to in school;
    - Authorising discretionary compassionate leave for staff members;
    - Informing the Chair of Governors of a death of a pupil or staff member;
    - Being familiar with the range of bereavement resources available from the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich;
    - Participating in any investigations or multi-agency reviews as appropriate, such as those undertaken by police and/or social services.
- The Pastoral Support Worker is responsible for:
    - Liaising with the family of the deceased in conjunction with the Headteacher, including about what support would be appropriate;
    - Providing direct support for bereaved children, such as one-to-one sessions;
    - Monitoring the wellbeing of bereaved children, including regular 'check-ins' as appropriate;
    - Providing the space and opportunity for bereaved children to talk if they wish to;
    - Supporting bereaved children and family members through agreed actions, such as creating a tribute / memory book;
    - Supporting any other affected children who require emotional support;
    - Liaising with relevant external agencies and making necessary referrals, such as referrals for counselling, therapy or to the School Nursing Team (note that this may still be required a long time after the death and must be considered throughout the child's time at St Mary's School);
    - Helping parents and staff members by recommending resources and signposting to external support services and charities;
    - Maintaining a calendar of significant dates, anniversaries and holidays that may be traumatic for bereaved members of the school community and ensuring they are supported on those days;
    - Maintaining a 'bereavement box' of resources to support all members of the school community, such as guidance for staff members, leaflets for parents and appropriate books for bereaved children;
    - Being familiar with the range of bereavement resources available from the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich;
    - Providing additional support during difficult transitions, such as to a new school.
- Class teachers are responsible for:
    - Reinforcing the school's vision and values through their compassionate understanding, patience and support for members of the school community experiencing bereavement;

- Providing appropriate and immediate support for the bereaved as issues arise, with well-intentioned regard to the school's vision and values if unsure of the best way to offer support, while seeking advice as necessary;
- Liaising with 'receiving' staff members at transition times (both internally and when a bereaved child transfers to a new school) to ensure that key information is passed on, such as which children in the class have experienced bereavement and significant dates, anniversaries and holidays that may trigger emotional issues;
- To be mindful of significant dates, anniversaries and holidays and adapt the teaching approach and curriculum sensitively to accommodate these;
- To use sensitive language and be mindful of things that may cause offence or upset, such as assembly themes, games or activities relating to death; such things may be avoided or amended and if unsure, staff members should seek advice and agreement from relevant colleagues and the family of the bereaved;
- Recognising that emotional or mental health issues relating to bereavement may not be immediately apparent but may arise at any time that a bereaved child attends the school, even years later;
- Seeking appropriate support from the Headteacher and Pastoral Support Worker as appropriate in order to provide the best help for the bereaved child and family – class teachers should not try to tackle these issues alone;
- Following advice and guidance supplied by expert external agencies or internally, for example by the Headteacher, the Pastoral Support Worker or a colleague who has received additional bereavement training.

- The Local Governing Body is responsible for:
  - Monitoring and supporting the wellbeing of the Headteacher and having oversight of wellbeing issues affecting other members of staff;
  - Ensuring that another staff member is able to take on the Headteacher's responsibilities if the Headteacher is unavailable;
  - Having oversight of the school's approach to supporting bereaved members of the school community;
  - Supporting the Headteacher by considering bereavement and wellbeing issues when setting the school budget.

  The Chair of Governors is expected to support the Headteacher by helping to inform other members of the Local Governing Body after receiving information from the Headteacher.

- The St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is responsible for:
  - Working with MAT schools to support staff wellbeing;
  - Providing specific wellbeing support for Headteachers;
  - Being a source of support, advice and signposting for MAT schools;
  - Liaising with the school regarding releasing information to the media as appropriate;
  - Liaising with the media on behalf of the school as appropriate.

4. Wellbeing of Staff Members who Support the Bereaved

School leaders recognise that it can be traumatic for staff members responsible for helping the bereaved. Leaders take this into consideration when finding ways to support the wellbeing of staff members. Staff members supporting the bereaved will

have the opportunity to talk to a senior leader or member of the Local Governing Body. External support includes access to an Employee Assistance Programme.

5. Actions Following a Death in the School Community

The following steps may need to be adapted depending on the particular circumstances of a death. All staff members recognise that deaths may need to be handled differently if there is the potential to cause fear, anger or imitation. The death of a pupil or staff member will have a broader effect on the school community, while a more personal bereavement, such as the death of a child's close family member, requires close support for the bereaved and fostering the understanding and empathy of others.

Clarifying information and Liaising with the Family:

- The Headteacher is responsible for contacting the family in the first instance, both to clarify information and to determine the family's wishes regarding communication with the school community;
- Initial contact may be followed up by the Headteacher or Pastoral Support Worker;
- In the event that the family cannot be reached, the Headteacher will attempt to make contact through the alternative 'contacts' held for pupils in their school records;
- If information is spreading through the school community, such as on social media, before contact with the family can be made and their wishes established, the Headteacher will make a brief statement through the school's electronic communication systems (without identifying the bereaved family) to recognise that information is being shared and requesting that members of the school community respect the privacy of the bereaved family at this difficult time.

Sharing the News with the School Community

- The Headteacher will decide, in liaison with the family of the deceased, with whom the news of the death should be shared and what details should be made public;
- The Headteacher is responsible for deciding how the news should be shared with the school community;
- The Headteacher will communicate about the support available to those who need it when sharing news of the death, such as access to Educational Psychologist advice, members of the church community and resources that may help;
- The Headteacher will communicate in appropriate ways, which will depend upon the timing of the news being confirmed and the particular circumstances, but is likely to include:
    - *Staff members* – calling an emergency staff meeting and emailing all staff to ensure those not present are also made aware or activating a 'phone tree' if the death occurs during the school holidays (the Headteacher will determine whether full details need to be shared with all members of the school community or just with key staff);
    - *Pupils* – holding an assembly if the death is a pupil or member staff with all pupils directly affected or speaking to individual classes if appropriate (in most cases, the pupils will be informed collectively to ensure that any messages are consistent; the Headteacher will determine the most appropriate way of communicating to pupils depending upon the circumstances of the death);
    - *Parents* – writing a letter to all parents.

Key messages for the School Community

- *Staff members* – Staff members should be referred back to the school's Christian vision and values to guide their responses and decisions, particularly the need to respond with love and compassion. Staff must be told how they can access support if needed, such as through wellbeing services the school buys into. Staff members must be prepared for children to talk to them about the death and we must try to make them feel safe, secure and understood. Staff members must be told what to do if thy are approached for information by a parent, a member of the public or the media (refer them to the Headteacher). If the circumstances of death are likely to cause alarm, controversy, fear, conflict within the school community or imitation, staff members must be made aware, so that they are prepared to respond appropriately to questions or concerns.
- *Pupils* – Children should be reminded of the school's Christian vision and values to help them respond to one another with appropriate sensitivity, compassion and empathy. Pupils must be informed sensitively but using direct and simple language that is easily understood. If the deceased is a close family member of a child in school, pupils should know that he or she may speak about it and it is okay to respond and talk about it though they should avoid initiating the conversation (it is better to talk to a grown-up if they need to talk to someone about it). Pupils should be told how and where to access support if they are upset. They should know that it is okay to express themselves, to remember the deceased and to talk about the death if they wish to. An appropriate story, such as 'Rabbityness' or 'Badger's Parting Gifts' may be used to help children process the news. However, this must be selected carefully to ensure that it suits the particular circumstances of the death (suitability may depend on factors like the age of the deceased and whether the death was sudden and unexpected or not). If there is not a suitable book that reinforces the school's message and relates to the particular circumstances of the death, then it is preferable to avoid any confusion by not using a story and instead offering time for reflection and / or prayer after sharing the relevant information.
- *Parents* – Any information shared with the wider school community should be agreed in advance with the family of the deceased if possible. Parents must be made aware that their children have been informed and that they may ask questions at home or need emotional support. Any support available to pupils must be explained. Parents must be asked to respect the privacy of the bereaved family. Parents must also be reminded of the school's Christian vision and values and asked to reinforce this in their conversations with children and other members of the school community.

Responding to Specific Causes of Death and Use of Language

Generally, it is good practice to use language and terms that are clear, simple, direct and easily understood. It can be unhelpful for children if ambiguous phrases, idioms or metaphors are used. Wherever possible, it is also important to use the correct terminology. The school works with a range of external agencies and service providers and will organise counselling or therapeutic intervention for children who are close family members of the deceased with the agreement of the family. Note that it may be appropriate to consider the need for this throughout the child's time at St Mary's School as associated feelings may still need to be addressed a long time after the death. In all cases below, particular attention will need to be given to handling the media as there is likely to be greater interest in the death. Also, with the causes listed below, the school may need to manage untrue stories about the death,

increased attention on social media and unhelpful reactions from people in the community.

It is important to tell children the truth. Children can be provided with appropriate support to manage the truth but will struggle with untruths or confusing information. While it can be tempting to protect children from difficult truths, they are likely to find out about the death through the media or local community anyway and it is preferable for them to have been informed by familiar adults in a safe place. Discovering that information they have been given is false may also lead to issues related to trusting adults.

- *Suicide* – The Samaritans provide a step-by-step programme and offer advice via a helpline and downloadable booklet to advise on appropriate responses to suicide. It is particularly important to address this appropriately in order to avoid imitation. Information provided should be factual but without excessive detail. As this may be particularly sensitive, it may be better to inform pupils in class groups, rather than whole-school assembly, especially if the deceased is a child from a particular class. Use phrases like: *a suicide, die by suicide, take one's own life, a suicide attempt, a completed suicide*. Avoid phrases like: *a successful suicide attempt, an unsuccessful / failed suicide attempt, commit suicide, suicide victim, cry for help*. Counselling or therapy through external service providers should be considered and discussed with the bereaved child's family. Access support here: https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/step-step/step-step-resources/responding-suspected-suicide-schools-and-colleges/
- *Homicide (murder or manslaughter)* – Death caused by homicide may lead to a range of additional challenges, such as uncertainty (it is unlikely that the case will be resolved at the initial point of sharing information), blame (especially if the perpetrator is known or local to the school) and a loss of a sense of safety. As with other deaths, it is important to acknowledge what has happened and allow the time and space for both pupils and staff members to reflect, talk and pray as appropriate. Counselling or therapy through external service providers should be considered and discussed with the bereaved child's family. Further advice is provided by Child Bereavement UK here: https://www.childbereavementuk.org/sudden-death-including-accidents-suicide-and-homicide
- *Infectious disease* – In the case of a death in the school community caused by infectious disease, the school will liaise directly with local health protection teams to agree on information to be shared locally and steps to be taken to protect pupils, parents and staff members. Counselling or therapy through external service providers should be considered and discussed with the bereaved child's family.

Handling the Media

It is essential that there is only one point of contact for the media and this is the Headteacher. All other staff members must not respond to media requests and must refer media representatives to the Headteacher. This is also true of members of the public asking for information. The Headteacher will liaise with the MAT regarding statements to be released to the media. The family of the deceased will also be consulted about the agreed statement.

Prominent PR supports the MAT in managing enquiries from the press or media. When contacted by any representative of the press or media, Prominent PR advise:

1. Please do not make any personal comment or response.
2. Record their name, details of who they represent, their contact details.
3. Provide them with the contact details for Prominent PR - **01473 276127** - who will be happy to manage their enquiry. Out of hours: 07403 401387.

If media representatives contact the school prior to a statement being agreed with the MAT, the Headteacher will make no comment without the consent of the family of the deceased. With the family's consent, the Headteacher may provide very limited information, such as to confirm the death. However, the Headteacher will not release any further details of the death and its cause before a statement is agreed by the MAT. The Headteacher will not engage in any speculation or explanations in relation to the cause of death.

6. Further Actions and Considerations

Additional Support
Grief affects us all in different ways and we recognise the emotional impact on staff members who are supporting the bereaved, including school leaders and the Pastoral Support Worker. It is essential to recognise that staff members do not have to tackle bereavement alone.

In the event of a bereavement within your school community or for leadership wellbeing support, the Local Authority asks schools to contact the Schools Organisational Support Education Officers: edorgsupport@suffolk.gov.uk or phone 01473 263942.

There is a wealth of resources and advice on the website for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich here: https://www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/bereavement-resources/

The Diocesan 'Bereavement Guidelines' (https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f214e41ab1e4/content/pages/documents/1592234210.pdf) is an essential document and includes:

- Useful contacts;
- 'Information Sharing Pathways' to guide the school's communications;
- Guidelines for how to share the news;
- Helpful 'Do's and Don'ts';
- 'Developmental Cognitive Stages of Mourning' with suggested language and ways of intervening;
- Sample letters to be sent to different groups in the school community, including the bereaved family and other parents (note that these are a useful starting point but will need to be personalised and adapted depending on the particular circumstances of the death).

Members of the Diocesan staff team can offer support. Likewise, the Local Authority offers support through its Education Officers. It is good practice to inform them of a death of a pupil or staff member and they can signpost other services.

Tributes and Condolences
The Headteacher will liaise with the family of the deceased regarding any tributes or condolences. The Headteacher will establish what physical memorials will be

permitted and when the family would like to receive these or where they should be located. Contributing to a physical tribute can be helpful for the children and staff in school. This could take the form of a book of condolences, written prayers (for a book or display), written memories or pieces of art work.

Members of the local church community may be invited to support the school in creating appropriate tributes and condolences. They are also actively encouraged to support pupils and staff members through prayer.

Funerals

In the case of a death of a pupil or member of staff, the Headteacher will liaise with the family of the deceased to establish whether members of the school community are welcome at the funeral or memorial service. If staff members are welcome and wish to attend the funeral, they should submit a request for leave of absence in writing to the Headteacher. In keeping with the school's Christian vision and values, the Headteacher will be sympathetic to such requests. However, the Headteacher will need to consider whether staff members can be covered and pupils in school can be adequately supervised before granting permission. Please refer to the separate staff absence policy for further information.

If the deceased is a member of staff or a pupil, it is expected that at least one staff member will represent the school, so long as the family agrees.

If parents want their child to attend a funeral, they should request a leave of absence in the usual way. When the deceased is a child, however, there may be many requests for a leave of absence. In this instance, the Headteacher, with the family's consent, may send out a message to multiple parents regarding authorisation, rather than responding to each individual request. It would be expected that any children attending a funeral are accompanied by a parent as it would be inappropriate for the school to undertake supervision of pupils at a funeral.

Absence and Re-integration

Children may be absent from school for a period of bereavement. In keeping with the school's Christian vision and values, the school will manage such absence on a case-by-case basis and from a position of understanding and compassion. While sympathetic to parents' wishes to keep children off school, we would not encourage prolonged absence in most cases as many children will benefit from usual routines, a return to 'normal' and being surrounded by friends.

The Pastoral Support Worker will liaise with the family of the deceased to discuss the best approach to reintegrating a bereaved child after a period of absence. In most circumstances, this would be a face-to-face meeting. They will agree:

- When the child is emotionally ready to return to school;
- Whether there needs to be any adjustments to the timetable, such as a phased, part-time return;
- Any additional support that may be required, such as a referral to the School Nursing Team;
- Whether any specific vulnerabilities, such as Special Educational Needs, mean that additional or different support is required;
- How the bereaved child should communicate feelings or seek support during the school day;
- How and when school and the bereaved family will continue to communicate.

The Pastoral Support Worker will check in with the bereaved children regularly following re-integration to ensure that they settle back in as successfully as possible.

Staff members may request a leave of absence due to bereavement. The Headteacher can authorise up to ten days for discretionary compassionate leave for a close family member, which includes a day to attend the funeral. In exceptional circumstances, additional absence may be approved but there is not an entitlement for this to be paid leave. It is accepted that in the difficult circumstances around the death of a family member, a leave of absence may not be requested in writing in the usual way. In such circumstances, staff members are asked to contact the Headteacher as soon as practicable, by telephone if necessary. Staff members may also request a leave of absence to attend the funeral of someone who is not an immediate family member. Although there is no entitlement to paid leave for this, and the school's staff absence policy allows up to a day unpaid, the Headteacher will consider such requests sympathetically in keeping with the school's Christian vision and values and exercise appropriate discretion on a case-by-case basis. Please see the separate policy for staff absence for further information.

On returning to school after a period of compassionate leave, a school leader will meet the staff member to discuss whether he or she is ready to return and the best way to make the reintegration successful. This may include temporary adjustments to duties or a phased return. It is important to agree how a phased return should be monitored and reviewed and the best ways for the staff member to communicate with school leaders. The Headteacher may seek the support of the school's Human Resources Caseworker regarding the nature and length of the re-integration period or if the staff member feels unable to return to work. The Headteacher will ensure that re-integrated staff members are aware of any Employee Assistance Programmes that the school buys into.

7. Ongoing and Long-Term Support

At St Mary's, we recognise that the impact of bereavement is likely to be ongoing or may not be immediately apparent. Emotional and welfare issues may only emerge over time. Also, grieving is highly personal and a single approach may not be appropriate. It is, therefore, extremely important to:

- Monitor a bereaved child throughout their entire time at the school, being ready to take appropriate action to support the child's wellbeing even years after the death;
- Be prepared to offer long-term support both internally, such as through the Pastoral Support Worker, or through engaging with external support services, such as the School Nursing Team throughout the bereaved child's time at the school;
- Acknowledge that significant dates, anniversaries and holidays may be challenging and keep a record of these for staff members' reference (this calendar is maintained by the Pastoral Support Worker);
- Adapt the curriculum or classroom tasks as appropriate in response to significant dates, anniversaries and holidays;
- Be understanding about how bereavement may affect a child's progress and behaviour over time and, while grief may not excuse misbehaviours, staff members must recognise that positive intervention may be required rather than a focus on negative consequences;
- Support bereaved pupils through periods of change and transition, including passing on relevant information to 'receiving' teachers and schools;
- Maintain contact with the child's parents / carers to monitor emotional wellbeing, fostering a long-term positive relationship through which the parent/carer will feel they can seek support whenever necessary.

8. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other key school policies, including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Supporting Children's Mental Health and Resilience
- Leave of Absence

It is also essential that this policy read and understood in the context of the school's Christian vision and values.

"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 3:34

Appendix 1

Contents of the school's 'Bereavement Box':

Bereavement Box Resources *Pastoral Support*

1. *St Mary's Bereavement Policy* *MAT Bereavement Guidelines*

   Sheet on The Grieving Process *Supporting a pupil followering family bereavement*

   Book – The Little Book of Bereavement for Schools

2. *Child Bereavement UK – Schools Information Pack* *St Elizabeth's Dying to Talk Pack*
   Supporting a pupil following a family bereavement

   THRIVE :- *Loss:Losing the Emotional Landscape*

   Signs of a Child's Unresolved Grief

3. *Handouts for Families*

   CBUK – When your partner dies:supporting your children

   CBUK – When someone special dies – children under 7/children 7-11

   CBUK – Talking about death to children with learning difficulties

   CBUK – Supporting bereaved children with ASD

   CBUK Cifferent cultures and beliefs

   Helping Children through Grief

4. *Suicide* *CBUK Supporting Children bereaved by suicide*

   CBUK When someone may have died by suicide

   Bereaved by Suicide service – Flyer and referral forms

5. *Books* *Tough Topics – Death* *Someone has died in a road crash*

   What's Happening Death

6. *Books* *Missing Mummy – Rebecca Cobb* *Rabbityness – Jo Empson*

   A Place in my Heart – Annette Aubrey (Grandad)

   Ellie's Book – The story of when Mummy died.

7. *Resources –* *Goodbye letter / Grief Sentence Completion* *Winnie the Pooh quote*

Memory Box/ book *I miss My PET workbook*

8. *Resouce Books – photocopy relevant pages*

Grief Journal for Kids

When Something Terrible Happens – Marge Heegaard

Waterbugs and Dragonflies

Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine.

9. *Lesson Plan – Winston's Wish*

Other Books available – Love Will Never Die *Goodbye Mog*

Beginnings and Endings with Lifetimes inbetween *Mole and Baby Bird.*

Badger's Parting Gifts

JL-S – Updated 16/01/24

Appendix 2

Useful books available in school in the Pastoral Support Library (in addition to the school's 'Bereavement Box'):

Adoption/Foster Care
Chester and Daisy move on – Angels Lidster
Anxiety
All Birds Have Anxiety – Kathy Hoopman
When My Worries Get Too Big! - Kari Dunn Buron (SEN)

Anger
The Red Beast – K.I.Al-Ghani
There's a Volcano in my Tummy -

Bereavement
Resource Box in PSR

Citizenship
Being Fair
Being Honest
Being Responsible
Following Rules
Making Friends

Diversity
All Are Welcome – Suzanne Kaufman/ Alexandra Penfold
Mixed – Arree Chung

Domestic Violence
Spark Learns to Fly – Judith Foxton

Embracing Your Uniqueness
It's Okay to be Different – Todd Parr
Julian is a Mermaid – Jessica Love
Ronald the Rhino - Twinkl
We're All Wonders – R.J.Palacio

Family Differences/ Relationships
Heather has Two Mummies – Leslea Newman
Mustard and Custard – Nick Rolfe
The Family Book - Todd Parr

Mental Health
My Strong Mind – Niels Van Hove
Scrambled Heads – Emily Palmer

Mistake Making
Beautiful OOPS! – Barney Saltzberg
Online Safety
Goldilocks (Hashtag Cautionary Tale) – Tony Ross/Jeanne Willis

Parents Separating
When My Parents Forgot How to be Friends – Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

Recognising Emotions
How Are You Feeling Today? – Molly Potter
The Colour Monster – Anna LLenas

Relaxation
Relax Kids - The Wishing Star - Marneta Viegas Short Meditations

Tough Topics
Divorce and Separation
Illness
Moving House

Sibling in Hospital
Sometimes – Rebecca Elliott

Worries
The Huge Bag of Worries – Virginia Ironside
The Koala Who Could – Rachel Bright

Appendix 3 Useful Contacts

ORGANISATION	CONTACT DETAILS
Child Bereavement UK	Helpline: 0800 02 888 40 https://www.childbereavementuk.org/contact-us
Winston's Wish	Helpline: 08088 020 021 https://www.winstonswish.org/about-us/contact-page/
Cruse Bereavement Care	Helpline: 0808 808 1677 https://www.cruse.org.uk/about-cruse/contact-us
Mind	Infoline (information and signposting to further help): 0300 123 3393 Further contacts: https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/bereavement/useful-contacts/
Army Welfare (The Hive)	Wattishamhive@armymail.mod.uk / 01449 728263
Scotty's Little Soldiers	hello@scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk 0800 09 285 71
School Nursing Team	suffolknursing@suffolk.gov.uk SNT Hub 0345 607 8866
YMCA (play therapy provider)	Lisa.smith@ymcatrinity.org.uk
4YP (counselling provider)	enquiries@syphp.org.uk 01473 252607
St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT)	Jane Sheat CEO St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan MAT Direct Dial: 01473 298560 / Mobile: 07884 232231 e-mail: jane.sheat@cofesuffolk.org
Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (including Diocesan 'Bereavement Box')	https://www.cofesuffolk.org/schools/school-leaders/bereavement-resources/ Administrator Jacqui Studd 01473 298570 Diocesan Deputy Director of Education Sue Todd 07917 390362 / sue.todd@cofesuffolk.org
Local Authority Education Officers	EducationOfficersResolution@suffolk.gov.uk / 01473 263942
Apple Tree Psychology (ed. psychology Service)	appletreepsychology@gmail.com

Appendix 4

Ways of Remembering (taken from Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Bereavement Guidelines 2019)

Art work.

Draw pictures of the loved one.

Write a letter to the person who has died, (What I would say to. . .).

Write a poem for the person who has died.

Make a Memory Box (possibly using Winston's resources).

Write memories of the person who has died.

Create memories to send to the bereaved pupil / family, i.e. for a pupil whose father has died, the father might have been a keen cricketer and the other children could write messages on cricket balls for that pupil.

Have a place where people can respond both as individuals and collectively, e.g. a Book of Remembrance or a space in the school where people can come and light a candle.

Name a Cup after the person who has died and present it to the winners of a termly / annual competition of the person's favourite game.

Hold a 'Bank Holiday' to mark the birthday of the person who has died. On that day in school, instead of the normal school timetable, do the things that the person who has died particularly liked to do.

Have fundraising efforts / a collection in memory of the person who has died, e.g. for the hospital that cared for the person who has died / the charity that gave so much to the person who has died.

Write prayers.

Use Circle Time to say or read prayers.

Hold a Celebration / Service of Remembrance of the life of the person who has died. This can include the pupils and staff being part of the readings, sharing their prayers and memories and choosing the favourite hymns of the person who has died.

Produce a Memory Booklet to support the Celebration Service / Service of Remembrance. The booklet could be written in the favourite colours of the person who has died.

Frame some of the school's photographs of the life of the person who has died and displaying them around the school.

Create some form of visual memorial for the person who has died, e.g. a bench, sculpture, water fountain, pebbles of words display, etc.

Plant a tree for the person who has died.

Appendix 5

Do's and Don'ts (taken from Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Bereavement Guidelines 2019):

Talking to the Bereaved Pupil:

Try to be available to listen and support if possible, arrange a one-to-one session with the nurture/wellbeing lead (or Family Support Worker if the school has one) or appropriate adult, as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school.

Be calm and show them that you are listening and understanding by occasionally repeating what they have said and by acknowledging their emotions.

If people feel like crying they should cry – crying is not a sign of weakness, but often a sign of deep feeling.

Beware of using platitudes e.g. "I know how you feel", (people may feel offended that you presume to know how they feel).

Do

- Let the child know that you genuinely care.
- Make time to be available and listen.
- Accept all that the child is saying.
- Allow them to express their feelings their way.
- Let them know their feelings are normal.
- Let them know that it is OK to cry.
- Talk honestly and share your feelings.
- Be honest.
- Make eye contact.
- Have appropriate physical contact.
- Let them know that it is not their fault.
- Be aware of the home situation.

Don't

- Stop the child talking.
- Tell them how they should or should not feel.
- Avoid contact.
- Change the subject.
- Deny your pain and feelings.
- Point out things for which they should be grateful.
- Be frightened of sharing your own feelings.

Appendix 6

Additional Appendix for Covid-19 Support (taken from the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)

If your school suffers a bereavement during this time of COVID-19 then implementing the bereavement guidelines in the way that is best for your community may not be possible.

Remember: To let the LA know. The Education and Learning line is manned 9-5 every week day and is looking to be manned over the Easter holidays. The number is: 01473 263942. Email: EducationOfficersResolution@suffolk.gov.uk This information will be shared with Educational Psychology colleagues and a member of the team will contact you. They have a wealth of experience in dealing with critical incidents like these so do follow their guidance.

Advice for the days ahead – to support our bereavement guidelines

While face to face contact is desirable when sharing sad news this is not always going to be practicable. It is envisioned for instance that a situation might arise where a relative of a pupil might die from contracting COVID-19 and this be relayed instantly via Facebook or other social media formats, way before a headteacher might convene a virtual meeting to share this information with governors or staff. We recommend that you consider the following:

1. CONSENT - Do ensure that you have the consent and support of the bereaved family before you do anything. Even if it is being tweeted or shared via social media, you should not share anything without first speaking to the family.
2. Who needs to know immediately? Each case will be different. If it is a central member of the community, a teacher or pupil then everyone needs to be informed. However, if it is an elderly relative of a member of your community this might not be the case. YOU KNOW BEST! INFORMING STAFF - All staff need to be informed of every death. But it might not be urgent. It may be a case of having a dissemination tree as for snow days. So, some people make one or two calls to share the news. Only headteachers will know if their staff are well enough trained and equipped to do this, not everyone is and not everyone will be able or willing to take part in this. Drawing up a telephone tree now would be prudent.
   INFORMING GOVERNORS - Ring your CoG and ask them to help you inform other governors. Sharing the burden of contact would be best where possible. INFORMING PUPILS Informing the staff and children in school can be handled as the guidance suggests. Informing those learning at home is very difficult. Again, think about the relationship of the children to the deceased. There might be a way of sharing through your online assemblies. Is this the best way? Do some people need a personal phone call – i.e. the good friends/classmates or pupils of the deceased? Can you use the website? You know your families best so you need to manage in the best way for your school. This might be best done through class teachers/tutors and possibly as part of a weekly check in call. Teachers will need time to listen to pupils and parents and will probably need the support of the wellbeing service you buy into. Be aware that some at home pupils are unlikely to get a lot of support in this situation so will need follow up calls. Ask advice and act on it.
3. Be ready to be flooded with a wide range of responses and reactions. This is a very difficult time for us all so it is hard to know how our communities will cope when the virulence of this awful disease begins to touch our communities. Use every kind of help available, from the critical incident service (Suffolk County Council) to religious leaders, our diocesan team, experienced colleagues, unions and organisations. Prepare for scrapbooks, memorial services, fundraising ideas and many other ways of showing support. We will be thinking of you.

Karen Harman
2 April 2020
Deputy Diocesan Director of Education