

MAPLE MEDICAL PRU BEREAVEMENT POLICY

Maple Medical PRU is committed to respecting and taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs and is fully committed to the emotional health and well-being of our children and young people and that of our staff. Maple Medical PRU has an ethos, environment and curriculum that can provide support during difficult times, including a time of death or dying.

Every 22 minutes in the UK a parent of dependent children dies, leaving about 41,000 bereaved children each year. Many more are bereaved of a grandparent, sibling, friend, pet or other significant person, and, sadly, around 12,000 children die in the UK each year.

Aims

Maple Medical PRU aims to:

- Provide a framework for all staff to give guidance on how to deal sensitively and compassionately in difficult and upsetting circumstances
- Meet the needs of all its pupils and staff and to be a place where they can gain much needed support
- Ensure that the PRU works together with, and can signpost to, outside agencies

Objectives

Maple Medical PRU will:

- Have clear expectations about how the PRU will respond to dying and death and provide a nurturing, safe and supportive environment for all
- Be led by the family of the bereaved child in relation to how to support their child
- Meet the needs of pupils and staff who are bereaved by allowing them the space and time to work through their own feelings
- Provide a sensitive listening ear if pupils or staff want to talk
- Have a qualified and experienced Mental Health First Aider to advise and help pupils and staff to develop coping strategies

Procedures

1. Contact with the deceased's family should be established by the Head teacher and the family's wishes respected in communicating with others.

Any information must be shared. We will always be clear with parents beforehand about how Maple Medical PRU will respect confidentiality and share information sensitively, only with the permission of the family & where it is in the interests of the bereaved and the school community.

2. Staff should be informed before pupils and be prepared to share information in age- and understanding-appropriate ways. Staff who feel unable to do so should discuss this with the Head teacher.
3. Pupils should be informed, preferably in small groups, by their usual staff at a time agreed by the Head teacher. Factual information is essential to avoid rumour and confusion, whilst being sensitive to cultural and religious considerations.
NB: We need to be mindful of the use of social media sites and their impact throughout this time
4. The Head teacher will inform parents/carers of Maple Medical PRU pupils at the earliest opportunity.
5. The PRU will be aware that the school timetable may need a degree of flexibility to accommodate the needs and wellbeing of children affected by the situation. However, minimal disruption to the timetable also offers a sense of security and familiarity.
6. Staff affected by the death will be offered ongoing support and signposted to external support agencies as necessary.
7. Arrangements for funeral attendance should be discussed with the Head teacher who will need to consider the impact of pupil/staff absence on the PRU
8. Maple Medical PRU is aware that the impact of bereavement follows a child throughout their school life so information should be recorded and shared with relevant people, particularly at transition points.
The PRU should also be aware of any ongoing bereavement issues for newly admitted pupils.
9. In the case of terminal illness Maple Medical PRU will liaise with the family to arrange for a member of staff to be the main point of contact throughout the illness.
10. If there is any press interest in the bereavement the Head teacher will take into account the wishes of the family and follow the Local Authority guidance on press releases.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Maple policies:

Young Parents Centre Nursery Bereavement Policy

Monitoring and review

All members of staff and the Management Committee have the responsibility of implementing this policy.

Date of policy: May 2020

Date of policy review: May 2022

Head teacher signature

Management Committee signature