

Fatality Policy

Statement

In the unlikely event of a fatality within the setting, the following procedure should be followed.

- Follow the procedures for accidents and first aid. Children will be protected from the incident by moving them into a separate area.
- When the emergency services arrive, including the police, the setting will be closed immediately, parents will be informed that there has been a serious incident, but the details will be withheld until outside agencies suggest otherwise.
- Outside agencies such as the police and Ofsted will dictate the actions of the coming days, including when it is appropriate or safe to re-open.
- An internal investigation will be carried out alongside the investigation from outside agencies, all staff are expected to comply with these investigations.

Bereavement procedure

Death of a pre-school employee or attending child

- The personnel office at County Hall and OFSTED should be contacted and informed of the death as soon as possible.
- A decision should be made as to whether the pre-school should be closed, and if so for how long. This may depend upon the circumstances surrounding the death e.g. if the death occurs at pre-school, or if other agencies are involved e.g. police or media.
- All staff should be aware of the correct facts.
- Visitors to the pre-school should be made aware that the pre-school community is grieving the death of a member of staff.
- It is recommended that the pre-school contact a bereavement organisation such as CRUSE, for advice and support for staff and families. (01761 417250, 2 Westfield Court, Third Avenue,

Westfield, Midsomer Norton, BA3 4XD). A visit to the pre-school by the organisation should be carefully considered.

- Discussion should take place with the family and their wishes taken into consideration before a decision is made on what to tell children in school.
- After this decision is made, it is recommended that the children be told of the death at the earliest opportunity. There should then be supported by an Early Years Advisor, and with permission of the parents, this will establish facts, avoid rumors and offer support to every child and member of staff.
- All children and staff in the pre-school should be allowed to grieve in an open and safe environment. This should be taken into consideration particularly in the time immediately after the death. Activities may need to be adapted in order for discussion to take place.
- On the day of the funeral it is recommended that the pre-school be closed either for the half-day or a full day for two reasons i) as a mark of respect, and ii) to give all those who wish to (both families and staff), the opportunity to attend the funeral. Although the wishes of the family must be taken into account if different.
- The settings records should be updated immediately.

Care of bereaved children

All staff should be made aware of the correct facts before the children return to the setting.

- The death should be acknowledged as soon as possible with both children and families.
- The family should be asked how much and what the child already knows, and how they have been involved. Ascertain from the family and child what they wish the rest of the class to be told.
- Previously unresolved issues of personal loss may get in the way of our ability to deal with a death in the community. Staff and children need to be listened to and supported appropriately if this is the case.

- Understand that children may find it difficult to feel motivated.
- Talk to the bereaved person about what has happened. Children may need more information, advice and education about experiencing loss.
- Realise that the child has a lot to cope with and try not to put the spotlight on them too much. They will participate when they can. Help them to cope by treating them like everyone else.
- Ask the bereaved person how they are feeling, as it may not be obvious. Never assume. However don't try to force anything out of the child. They will talk when they are ready to. The important thing to remember is that the child knows that there is someone to talk to when they are ready.
- Never expect anyone to 'put it behind them' or 'get over it'. Continued support will however allow them to learn to cope with all the changes.
- Give extra encouragement for the things children do well.