

## **Bereavement policy**

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## **1. Bereavement Policy Rationale**

Death and Bereavement Statistics UK:

‘A parent of children under 18 dies every 22 minutes in the UK; around 23,600 per year.

This equates to 111 children being bereaved of a parent every day. 1 in 29 5-16 year olds have been bereaved of a parent or a sibling’. Aug 15 2018

Added to this many more children experience the loss of a person significant in their lives – grandparents, friend, family member, teacher.

Bereavement and loss are an inevitable part of life, impacting upon everyone in different ways and for different periods of time, depending on the closeness of the relationship.

Whatever the level of understanding about bereavement, there is a duty to help support anyone, when they could be feeling their most vulnerable, in a way that best meets their needs. By adopting a planned, open and considered approach, The Ladies’ College will seek to respond to bereaved pupils, students and staff in a supportive, sensitive and professional manner within the whole College setting (including Melrose and Melrose Pre-Prep) by providing a procedure through which individual experiences can be managed, and emotional wellbeing fostered.

This policy seeks to provide a framework for The Ladies’ College to respond in the event of bereavement within their community. It will assist the College in caring for the wellbeing of pupils, students and staff at a time when they may be in shock, upset and confused. It will help to ensure effective communication takes place and that support is available for each member of the College community to ensure there is as little disruption as possible to the daily College routine.

## **2. Aims of this Bereavement Policy**

To identify key staff within The Ladies’ College, Melrose and Melrose Pre-Prep, resources, and further support services to help the whole College community work together.

To provide a framework for all staff, teaching and non-teaching, and to give guidance in how to deal sensitively and compassionately with difficult and upsetting circumstances

To have clear expectations about the way The Ladies’ College, Melrose and Melrose Pre-Prep will respond to a death, and provide a nurturing, safe and supportive environment for all.

To support pupils, students and/or staff after a bereavement, and to offer a place that they can rely on and gain much needed support.

For pupils and students to have the opportunity to tell their story, express their feelings, share their memories and develop coping strategies through support by sensitive staff.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this document mainly focus on the immediate response to when the College community, as a whole, has experienced a death, for example the death of a pupil, student, or staff member. Perhaps a more common experience for teachers, tutors or staff is that of a pupil or student experiencing the death of an immediate family member (or close family or friend). Whole College assemblies or class activities will not normally be appropriate

in this situation, but the needs of that individual pupil or student should be given careful consideration. If a pupil or student has been bereaved, many of the following guidelines can be used as a framework. It is important to involve the pupil or student in decisions about how the College manages issues relating to their loss.

### **3. Guidelines for Staff and Governors**

A death within the College community can affect people in different ways and often depends on:

- The role the deceased person had within school
- How well known they were in the local community
- Circumstances surrounding the death, particularly suicide or violent deaths

Adults and children benefit from being kept informed of a death. Rumour and gossip can be very damaging and can even lead to both young and old developing the attitude that the death is not a topic to talk about. Children and young people have a healthy curiosity, and if they are not informed of the circumstances or feel they are unable to ask questions, their normal grief process can be obstructed.

Where possible, in the first instance, The Principal of The Ladies' College would make contact with the bereaved family, and their wishes should be taken into account before any decisions are made in relation to how and what to tell staff and the wider College community. If the bereaved family belong to Melrose or Melrose Pre-Prep, the Melrose Head Teacher would make initial contact with the family.

Any cultural or religious implications should be considered, and advice sought if necessary.

ALL staff (including all support staff) should be informed as soon as possible using the normal method of communication, e.g. a whole school staff meeting or team meeting, ensuring this includes part time staff. Measures should be taken to inform absent staff over the telephone.

Give a factual explanation of how the death occurred and if applicable the circumstances of what happened leading up to the death.

Ensure the Senior Leadership Team are prepared for reactions to this news including visible upset and feelings of anger/guilt, depending on the circumstances. People may connect the incident to their own personal experience of bereavement, so feelings about past bereavements may need to be discussed. This is perfectly natural.

Ensure a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or the College Counsellor are available to members of staff, parents, pupils and students if they are finding the situation particularly hard. Seek the advice of external support services as appropriate (Appendix 1).

The College should also be prepared to arrange supply cover if necessary.

It is helpful to establish one member of the Senior Leadership Team as a point of contact for the family to ensure free flow of accurate information to and from The Ladies' College.

Bereavement support or counselling should be available to all as necessary (requesting external bereavement support if needed such as from; The Sunflower Project Guernsey, Guernsey Bereavement Service).

Arrange staff/pupil condolences with collaborative agreement if appropriate.

Tutors/Teachers should arrange to inform their class at a mutually set time about what has happened. Discussion should take place about how this is to be done and EXACTLY what is going to be said. Identify any absent pupils.

Be prepared to follow this up with a special assembly (Appendix 2), memorial service, and/or a memorial symbol, such as a tree/garden/bench etc.

Arrange for a member of the Senior Leadership Team to be on hand at the end of the working day for staff to de-brief and reflect upon the day's events and to agree upon any further action or support that may need to be put in place.

Where possible staff who have requested to attend the funeral or memorial should be released.

#### **4. Guidelines for informing Pupils and/or Students**

People often think that children do not grieve, but even very young children will want to know what happened, how it happened, why it happened and perhaps most importantly of all, what happens next? Depending on the age of the pupil or student they will experience grief differently (Appendix 3) and age should be taken into consideration when explaining what has happened.

Identify the pupils or students who are most likely to be impacted by the news because they had a close relationship with the deceased, or are already bereaved, to be told together as a separate group. Where possible inform all other pupils/students in class or tutor groups. This should be done by their class teacher or tutor. Experience has shown that it is more beneficial if all pupils/students are informed.

Provide staff with guidelines on how to inform children; be honest, it is ok to say if you don't have the answers but remember to revisit the question at a later date when you do have the answer (Appendix 4).

Be prepared for children to say or do the unexpected, experience has shown some responses or apparent lack of response may be upsetting for adults. No apparent response does not mean that a child does not care.

End any discussion on a reflective note. Consider a prayer or a poem to remember the deceased and their family.

*Grief will last a lifetime and can surface throughout with new questions and many Reflections.*

## **5. In the days after the death**

Consider any cultural or religious implications and seek advice if necessary.

Ensure nominated staff with responsibilities for supporting staff and children, are available to do so.

It may be necessary temporarily to provide staff cover for the nominated staff member's normal activities.

Identify an allocated quiet place where the pupil/student and staff can go if necessary.

It is preferable for there to be minimum disruption to the timetable but some flexibility may be required.

Try to engender an awareness of when people need help and support, particularly those who worked closely with the person who has died and secretaries /administrative staff who are taking telephone calls, dealing with parents etc.

Through the nominated staff member who has responsibilities for liaising with the individual's family, ascertain their wishes about the school's involvement in the funeral, if any. In line with the families' wishes consider practical issues such as:

- Sending flowers to the home or to the funeral etc...
- Who will attend the funeral?
- Cover for any staff who may be going to the funeral.
- Informing the parents of those pupils or students who will be involved.
- Possible closure of The Ladies' College or Melrose/Melrose Pre-Prep.

## **6. Bereavement Flowchart**

You are informed of a bereavement



As a team identify the tasks required and identify who is best to complete them.



Principal/Head Teacher to contact family – phone call/send card/letter of condolence.



Appointed person to discuss with the family and pupil or student who they want their story shared with and make support available to them.



Inform others – staff, families, pupils and students of Melrose/Melrose Pre-Prep/The Ladies' College as agreed with the bereaved family.



Appoint a member of the Senior Leadership Team to be a point of contact for family/or in Melrose/Melrose pre-Prep, the Head Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher – discuss funeral arrangements/return to school.



The Appointed person to make contact with the pupil or student to assess their needs and level of support required at this time.



The Appointed person to liaise with the pupil or student and support their return to Melrose/Melrose Pre-Prep/The Ladies' College.



The Appointed person ensures significant dates and events for the pupil or student are recorded and shared with all staff for future reference (birthdays, anniversaries).



The Appointed person continues to assess the needs of the pupil or student. Observation, discussion with significant people, including the pupil or student regarding their concerns or worries, and signpost to outside agencies if required.



Ensure friendships are secure as peer support can be very important



Continue regular contact with the family

### **7. Guidelines for supporting a Bereaved Student's return to College**

When a pupil or student returns to Melrose/Melrose Pre-Prep/The Ladies' College they may want to get straight back into their friendship group, work and routine.

Have some action plans in place to help the child and young people return by:

Identifying a member of the team who will be the main contact point for them and their family.

Ensure **regular** contact, this may be daily or weekly depending on needs and wishes of the family. This helps you understand how they are coping, what support they may need now, and in the future, to discuss concerns and worries, and plan strategies to cope.

If the pupil or student stays at home, remember them. Have cards and messages sent to them from appropriate people (peer groups and members of staff they have good relationships with). Activities such as these will give the other pupils or students the opportunity to discuss their own concerns or experiences and may help them to feel they are doing something positive to support their classmate. This death may remind others of their own experiences and so be prepared to support them. You may find out information about a pupil or student that you didn't know before. Be ready to listen.

Before the pupil or student returns ensure all staff are aware of the bereavement and the possible effects on them, their behaviour and their learning, so that appropriate care and support can be given throughout the setting. Remember bereaved children and young people have 'physical' illness, such as headaches, tummy aches and feeling sick, as well as mental sadness including lack of concentration, feeling tired, disorganised, anger and frustration. These will have an impact on workload and learning. Monitor how things are going on their return and maintain communication with all staff involved.

Maintain normal rules and expectations of behaviour. This is important for all pupils and students, as well as the pupil or student who have been bereaved. The rules and expectations are all part of the 'normal' routine and will help to provide security. Remember the impact of bereavement on the whole family when giving sanctions and the impact the sanctions may have on the whole family.

Consider ‘time out’ strategies that suit the pupil or student appropriate to the setting. Time out cards, signals or signs can help them to exit the room quickly if they are feeling vulnerable or emotional. Make sure they have a safe place to exit to.

Remember, there is no set pattern or time limit to grief. It is a unique experience and the process is a lifelong one. At different ages and during new or transitional times they will have new questions requiring answers and questions requiring a re-visit of what happened; to develop a better understanding and acceptance.

It is not unusual for a bereaved pupil or student to take time off during the early stages of their bereavement. For some, the need to be with their families will be strong, and indeed they may suffer from separation anxiety when the time comes for a return to the educational setting. For others the familiarity, stability and routines of College life may prompt an early return. The time away from school will be individual but when the pupil or student does return, they may have a number of concerns – you will only know what these are and how they might be resolved if you ask.

Some of the more common concerns might be:

**How will staff and peers react**– who has been told, what do they know, what will be said, how much will I have to say to people?

You can help by meeting with them to welcome them back, acknowledge the death and talk through any of their concerns. Saying something simple like *“I am sorry to hear that your dad died – sometimes it helps to talk about it and if so, who would you like to be there for you?”* is usually much appreciated by them. If possible offer them choices about how things should be handled and what support would be helpful. Let staff and classmates know how they want to be received and supported.

**Fear of sudden emotional outbursts** – anger, distress, panic...

You can help by normalising grief reactions and giving them choices about what strategies will help them to cope in the classroom e.g. able to leave lessons without fuss – “exit card” system, where they can go, who they can talk to.

**Fear when they realise they may not remember what the deceased person looks like**

A laminated photo of the deceased person may give enormous comfort when the visual image begins to disappear. A special teddy or other memento will often give great comfort, particularly to the younger pupil, in times of distress and upset. They may also want to show this when talking about the person who died. It should be stressed that whatever helps the child within reason should be encouraged.

**Fear of being behind with work and unable to catch up**

You can help by clarifying with other staff what is essential to accomplish and what can be left. Offer appropriate help to achieve what needs to be done.

**Inability to concentrate and feel motivated or sit still**

You can help by reassuring the pupil or student that this lack of motivation and concentration is normal and will pass. Offer shorter more manageable tasks, writing down the task and giving encouragement for small achievements can often help.

### **Family grief impacting on normal family functioning**

Disrupted routines, sporadic meals, chaotic bedtimes are possible reasons why a bereaved pupil or student may be inadequately prepared for school, does not have the necessary equipment, and/or may be tired or hungry.

You can help by talking with them to ascertain where areas of difficulty lie and try and work out strategies with them and their family to help keep things on an even keel in school. Identify their strengths and help them build on them.

### **Unable to meet homework/project deadlines because of altered responsibilities within the family and home**

You can assist by helping them work out and meet priorities. Be flexible where possible and offer additional support where needed.

### **Forthcoming examinations**

You can help by explaining the process of notifying examination boards of extenuating circumstances, and the possible outcomes.

## **8. Guidelines for providing on-going support for a bereaved student**

If the pupil/student thinks it would be helpful and friends agree, establish a peer support network – ensuring that those helping are given appropriate support themselves, or seek help outside, for example, by making a referral to the Sunflower Project, Guernsey.

Make a note of significant dates which might affect the pupil/student, e.g. date of death, birthdays, Christmas, anniversaries. Make sure other members of staff are aware of these and the possible impact these may have. Don't be afraid to acknowledge these potentially difficult times with them e.g. *"I know Christmas is coming up and it might feel a very different and difficult time for you all this year without your Dad – so don't forget, if it helps to talk you can always come and see me"*.

Consider possible reactions to class/assembly topics. Discuss how these difficulties might best be managed with them e.g. if making Mother's day cards do ask them if they wish to be included in the activity too, very often the answer is 'yes' as they still have a parent, they just can no longer see them, but still want to remember them.

Look out for signs of isolation, bullying or difficulties in the playground – bereaved children/young people are often seen as vulnerable and may become a target.

Consider using books/activities to help explore feelings and ideas about death as part of the normal school curriculum (Appendix 5).

Be alert to changes in behaviour – these may be an indication that they are more affected by their bereavement than they are able or willing to say. Reactions may present themselves months or years after the event, and it may be difficult for staff and others to relate behaviour(s) to the bereavement.

Follow up absences – absence could indicate bereavement-associated problems at home or school.

At transition time make sure the new class teacher or tutor, and/or any new school are aware of the bereavement and support in situ.



## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - External Support Agencies

Appendix 2 - Holding an Assembly

Appendix 3 - Children's understanding of death

Appendix 4 - Guide on how to inform pupils or students

Appendix 5 -Suggested Books for pupils, students and staff

Appendix 6 -Template letter to bereaved parents/guardians/family

Appendix 7 -Template letter to parents /guardians - death of a pupil/student

Appendix 8 - Template letter to parents/guardians - death of a member of staff

## Appendix 1

### External Support Agencies

<a href="http://simonsays.org.uk">simonsays.org.uk</a>	Child/Adolescent Bereavement Support.
<a href="http://childbereavement.org.uk">childbereavement.org.uk</a>	Supports families and professionals when a child is bereaved or facing bereavement.
<a href="http://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk">childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk</a>	Childhood bereavement.
<a href="http://childline.org.uk">childline.org.uk</a>	Free national telephone helpline for children and young people.
<a href="http://crusebereavementcare.org.uk">crusebereavementcare.org.uk</a>	All aspects of bereavement.
<a href="http://griefencounter.org.uk">griefencounter.org.uk</a>	Helps bereaved children & young people rebuild their lives.
<a href="http://guernseybereavementservice.com">guernseybereavementservice.com</a>	Local low cost, voluntary confidential counselling service supporting bereaved adults.
<a href="http://hopeagain.org.uk">hopeagain.org.uk</a>	Specifically for young people aged 12-18.
<a href="http://papyrus-uk.org">papyrus-uk.org</a>	Provides resources & support for those dealing with suicide, depression or distress – particularly teenagers & young adults.
<a href="http://seesaw.org.uk">seesaw.org.uk</a>	Grief support service for children and young people.
<a href="http://theredlipstickfoundation.org">theredlipstickfoundation.org</a>	Support for families bereaved by suicide.
<a href="http://uk-sobs.org.uk">uk-sobs.org.uk</a>	Those who are left behind after a suicide can be helped by talking to others who have experienced a similar loss.
<a href="http://widowedandyoung.org.uk">widowedandyoung.org.uk</a>	Peer-peer network for those widowed before their 51 <sup>st</sup> birthday.
<a href="http://winstonswish.org.uk">winstonswish.org.uk</a>	Help for grieving children and their families.
<a href="http://youthcommission.gg">youthcommission.gg</a>	Sunflower Project; local support service for children and young people experiencing a bereavement.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Holding an Assembly**

These assembly ideas are designed for occasions when there has been a death within the school community, not when an individual pupil has experienced the death of a close relative.

Holding an assembly encourages the normalising and sharing of grief. It brings the College community together to jointly acknowledge what has happened, and it gives the message that it is ok to be sad but equally ok to not be affected.

Who should attend? All Staff, teaching and non-teaching and pupils/students.

### **Suggested format**

Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that this is a serious assembly and that there will be time at the end for discussion in class groups. If a student or member of staff has died, it will probably already be the subject of much speculation.

You may wish to use this as a starting point, saying something like: “Many of you may have heard a story in the playground or in the newspapers about Mr/Mrs..... There are many different stories circulating that you may have heard. Some of these stories are based on fact, others are totally made up. What I want to do right now, is tell you the truth, and as much of the story as I know. There may be other things you want to know, but that may not be possible right now, but we will try not to exclude you from anything that you do need to know. I am sorry to say that over the week-end, Mr/Mrs..... died. For some of you that may come as a real shock, and hearing those words is really difficult. For others you may feel that you already knew that. I am simply going to wait for a moment while we all think for a minute and compose our thoughts. Then I am going to tell you how he/she died, and what we are going to do to remember him/her.”

After this, it might seem like a good time to pause for a couple of minutes before giving pupils more information. Children react better when they all know the information. This makes it less easy to pass on and create rumours. Try to give expression to the emotions that individuals may be experiencing i.e. shock / disbelief, and explain that strong and difficult feelings are a normal part of the process of coming to terms with this sort of experience. Pupils will also want to know all about the funeral arrangements, what will happen to his / her class, will they be able to do anything to mark the occasion, and if there is any way that they can help. Re-assure pupils that further information will be provided once it has been received. Also ensure pupils know of whom they can go to for support.

## Appendix 3

### **Children's understanding of death**

Children's understanding of death will vary with their age and stage of development. Young children may not have the language or cognitive ability to tell you how they feel, so adults will have to interpret their behaviour in order to offer appropriate support. Likewise for adolescents who, although they have the understanding and language, are often unwilling to talk to the adults around them.

Pre-school children:

- Realise that someone they love is missing from their lives – but their response is more about the loss of the person, not their death. Are sensitive to the emotional atmosphere around them.
- Do not understand the finality of death – they think that the person will come back or can be visited, so often react casually to bad news and continue to ask when they will return.
- May show signs of anger or sadness, but often only for short periods before escaping into play. This is known as 'puddle-jumping'.
- May use play to act out their understanding of what happened – repeated play is often the way children try and make sense of life experiences.
- May seem to transfer their attachment to another person quickly for security.
- May regress in language and behaviour – the skills they had mastered may be lost for a while.
- May ask the same questions over and over again as they try and make sense of the "story".
- Will have a strong need for routine, structure, affection and reassurance – to feel safe.

Primary school children:

- Begin to understand the permanency of death – may lead to separation anxiety.
- Begin to fear death for themselves and others – might worry about ghosts / the dark etc.
- May feel guilt or experience "magical thinking" (i.e. my thoughts / actions caused the death).
- Still may not have mastery over language to adequately express complex feelings.
- Often need to know details of the death and will ask specific questions to try and make sense of the situation. May need to go over facts again and again.
- May exhibit acting out, attention seeking or regressive behaviour as a vehicle for their feelings.
- May suffer from minor illnesses, or mirror symptoms that the ill person experienced.

- Continue to have a strong need for routine, structure, verbal and non-verbal expressions of affection and reassurance in order to feel safe in a world which has suddenly become unsafe and scary.

Senior school children:

- Understand that death is final and irreversible – may become depressed / feel overwhelmed.
- Have appropriate language to identify feelings but may be unwilling to discuss issues.
- May become obsessed with thoughts of their own death, or that of others.
- May act recklessly in defiance of death – drugs, alcohol, sexual activity, speeding etc.
- Dislike appearing different from peers so may deny feelings and reject offers of support.
- May question / reject beliefs, values and religion as a result of experiencing loss.
- Become aware of the impact of their loss on future life events which will never be shared.
- May withdraw from academic / social activities due to changed circumstances.
- May become work focused, in an attempt to blot out pain or compensate for loss.

## Appendix 4

### Guide on how to inform pupils or students

Remember it is ok to show your emotions in moderation. It is important that we model to children and young people healthy responses to sad news and a natural response to hearing about a death is to shed a tear.

- Be honest and factual.
- Use clear language – use the person’s name, do not use euphemisms like ‘passed away’ or ‘lost’ use the words dead, died and death to avoid confusion.
- Allow the pupils/students to ask questions and answer them honestly and factually in terms they will understand.
- Allow the pupil/student to verbalise their feelings.
- Allow the pupil/student to discuss the situation and share their experiences of death.
- Ensure the pupil/student understands that the death is nothing to do with anything they have said or done. It is in no way their fault.
- Reassure them that not all people who are ill or have had an accident will die and that many people get better.
- Acknowledge some days will be harder than others
- Do not expect to go straight into maths, allow for a time of restoration preferably with a physical outlet.
- Put an appropriate time limit on the discussion. It is preferable to resume normal school activities as soon as possible thus ensuring minimal disruption within the school day which also offers a sense of security and familiarity.

Suggested scripts to use when someone dies:

“I’ve got some really sad news to tell you today that might upset you. I know most of you will have heard of cancer, and know that sometimes people with cancer get better, but other times people die from it. \_\_\_\_\_, the Geography teacher and Year 11 tutor, has been ill with cancer for a long time. I have to tell you that \_\_\_\_\_ died yesterday in hospital”.

“Sometimes people have accidents at work, at home, at school or on the road. People may be hurt or injured in the accident and they may have to go to hospital for treatment. Sadly, there are some accidents that cause people to die. I have some really sad news to tell you that might upset you. Yesterday \_\_\_\_\_, who is in Year 4, was in an accident and she was so badly injured that he died”.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Suggested Books for Pupils, Students and Staff**

#### **Early Years**

I Miss You : A First Look at Death by Pat Thomas  
Dear Grandma Bunny by Dick Bruna  
Granpa by John Burningham  
Always and Forever by Debi Gliori and Alan Durant

#### **Key Stage 1**

Badger's Parting Gifts by Susan Varley  
Waterbugs and Dragonflies by D. Stickney  
The Invisible String by Patrice Karst and Joanne Lew-Vriethoff  
Dogger by Shirley Hughes  
The Rabbit Listened by Cori Doerrfeld

#### **Key Stage 2**

Sad Book by Michael Rosen  
What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies? by Trevor Romain  
Finding a Way Through When Someone Close Has Died by Mood and Whittaker  
When Someone Very Special Dies by M. Heegard  
The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Voirst  
The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside

#### **Key Stage 3, 4 and Above**

The Grieving Teen by Helen Fitzgerald  
Facing Grief – Bereavement and the Young Adult by S. Wallbank  
Teen Grief: Caring for the Grieving Teenage Heart by Gary Roe  
Tear Soup by Pat Schwiebert

#### **Resources for staff**

The Little Book of Bereavement for Schools by Ian Gilbert and his children aged 9, 13 and 18.  
Good Grief – Exploring Feelings; Loss and Death with Under 11's by B. Ward  
Supporting Young People Coping with Grief, Loss and Death by Weymont and Rae  
'Grief in Children' A Handbook for Adults by A. Dyregrov  
A Teacher's Handbook of Death by Jackson and Colwell

## Appendix 6

### **Template letter to bereaved parents/guardians/family**

Dear

We are so very sorry to hear the sad news of <Name's> death. There are no words to express our sadness and we can only begin to imagine the anguish you must be going through.

As a school community, we will miss <Name> very much and we are doing our best to offer comfort and support to <her/their> friends, classmates and teachers. <Name> was a member of The Ladies' College family.

If we can do anything to help as you plan <Name's> funeral, please let us know.

We will continue to keep in touch and will support you in any way we can.

With sympathy

Principal



## Appendix 7

### **Template letter to parents /guardians - death of a pupil/student**

Dear parents/guardians

Your child's class teacher/form tutor/Principal/head of year had the sad task of informing the pupils of the death of <Name>, a pupil in <Year>. <Name>died suddenly/in hospital/after a short illness yesterday/last week/over the weekend/during half term.

He/She was a member of the class/College community and will be missed by everyone who knew him/her.

When someone dies, young people may experience many different feelings, such as sadness or anger. Some pupils may feel shocked and upset by the news, while others may be confused or numb. These reactions are all normal.

We have tried to answer their questions in school, using age-appropriate and honest language. For more information about speaking to children and young people about death, visit the Child Bereavement UK website [childbereavementuk.org](http://childbereavementuk.org). Locally, The Sunflower Project run through The Youth Commission, Guernsey is a useful contact.

Our thoughts are with <Name's> family and friends at this time. We will be in touch with details of how will celebrate/remember <Name's> life.

Sign-off

Principal

## Appendix 8

### **Template letter to parents/guardians - death of a member of staff**

Dear parents/guardians

I am sorry to inform you that a <well-respected/long standing/well-loved/popular/well-known> member of our staff, <Name>, died <suddenly/in hospital/after a short illness>.

The pupils were told today by their <class teacher/tutor/Year Coordinator/in assembly> and many will be reacting to this news. When someone dies, young people may experience many different feelings, such as sadness or anger. Some pupils may feel shocked and upset by the news, while others may be confused or numb. These reactions are all normal.

We have tried to answer their questions in school, using age-appropriate and honest language. For more information about speaking to children and young people about death, visit the Child Bereavement UK website [childbereavementuk.org](http://childbereavementuk.org). Locally, The Sunflower Project run through The Youth Commission, Guernsey is a useful contact.

Our thoughts are with <Name> family at this time. We will be in touch with details of how our school will celebrate/remember <Name's> life.

Sign-off

Principal