

MANAGING DEATH	
DATE OF REVIEW: Summer 2024	
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Spring 2026	
TO BE REVIEWED BY: Resources committee	

We will seek to offer guidance and support to all staff and students in the rare occurrence of serious illness and death or sudden death of one of our community. The School recognises that incidents such as death and dying need to be managed in a sensitive manner and as individual instances.

The Headteacher or a named nominated member of the School Leadership Team is responsible for securing a plan of action in the event of a critical incident.

Information received about a death or dying may come from a variety of sources including Police/Emergency services, staff, parent/carer, child or member of the Hatherleigh community and in the form of email, letter, telephone call or word of mouth.

This information should be given to the Headteacher promptly to facilitate appropriate action and prevent unnecessary alarm, rumour and/or upset.

Immediate action - the Headteacher will need the initial contact to clarify:-

- What has happened?
- Who is involved?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- What is the current situation?

Once clarified the Headteacher or a nominated member of the SLT will need to take appropriate steps (not necessarily in this order) to:-

- Inform staff enabling everyone to have the facts – this will involve a staff briefing session, or a gathering of appropriate staff members.
- Inform students to enable appropriate members of the student community to have the facts, this will need to be communicated by person(s) most appropriate and able to do so using age-appropriate language. This will involve class assembly or whole school assembly.
- Inform the Chair of Governors and the Local Authority.
- Seek support and advice from the Press Officer at County Hall who acts on behalf of the LA. Contact: 01392 383855 01392 282173. Be aware that media coverage can be complex, intrusive and difficult to manage. If appropriate, prepare a press statement which gives facts and no other comments.
- Secure an appropriate procedure for staff and pupils who are not coping to seek support and guidance by engaging appropriate personnel support to care for the emotional well-being of all concerned to be offered throughout the critical time.
- Identify an appropriate room to establish a safe place for staff and pupils to go if they are overwhelmed by grief, to share feelings and offer one-to-one support. It should be a warm and welcoming space supervised by a calm and empathetic member of staff with tissues, refreshments and writing/drawing materials available.

- It should be accepted that people will be upset and there should be awareness of vulnerable groups such as friends and others who have been recently affected by bereavement.
- Once the facts have been established, and if appropriate, ensure that all lists and registers are amended with immediate effect.

Medium term action

- Ensure that daily routines are maintained throughout. The management task is to facilitate movement from an abnormal situation to normality as soon as possible.
- Expect expressions of grief to be individual ranging from being the class clown to withdrawn and non-speaking – these may manifest over a protracted period of time.
- Communicate to parents via a letter alerting them to what has happened, giving facts only.
- Ensure all telephone enquiries are managed by a key person who has empathy, good communication skills and sufficient knowledge of the incident, ensuring facts only are given.
- Maintain a written record of incidents and actions taken.
- If appropriate, the police may be involved, cooperate with them, keeping a note of any details.
- Contact the parents/carers/partners of the deceased/dying regarding their wishes and any appropriate arrangements. These should be discussed with other members of SLT and the Chair of Governors.
- Follow-up with a written letter to the parents/carers/partners of the deceased, include any other messages and cards of condolence from staff, governors and pupils.
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place regarding School closure, cancellation of lessons and who should attend the funeral.
- These arrangements need to be communicated to staff, pupils and parents through the appropriate channels.
- Any belongings that are in School need to be collected and secured. These may be requested by the parents/carers/partners of the deceased at a later date.
- Accept that pupils' work may be affected through poor concentration and exhaustion. Offer appropriate support to minimise this.
- The well-being of individuals needs to be monitored and appropriate ongoing support made available.

Long term action

- The Headteacher or nominated member of the SLT should maintain contact with the immediate family of the deceased to update and decide upon next actions.
- At a later date it may be appropriate for the School community to meet together to remember, mourn and celebrate the life of the individual. This may include the need for a long-term memorial such as a tree, a bench or memory book with an appropriate plaque.
- Awareness of anniversaries, birthdays and so on is needed to support students and staff through these difficult times.

In the Event of a Suicide

There is formal procedure for alerts when there is a suicide:

- The EP service will alert the Single Point of Access (SPA) through the following number: 03300245321
- Alternative e-mail contact: bcl.devonspa@nhs.net

This will go to a pre-referral duty box which is checked daily

A CAMHS manger will be linked to the school to create an awareness of the 'ripple effect' of suicide and possible repeats (this is linked to safeguarding).

Onward referrals may include:

Kooth Online Counselling Service:
Pete's Dragon

www.kooth.com

www.petesdragons.org.uk

Resources

Incident record

Who has called?	First or given name: Surname: Position: Relationship with the person or family affected: Contact details for getting in touch later:
What happened? What is the nature of the incident? When did it happen?	
Who has been affected? For example note the names and ages of children attending the school.	
Who else has been contacted? Who else is offering support?	
Ask the caller "what else is important for you to tell us?"	

Planning Checklist

Task	Who?	When?	Key contact and details	Completed (date)
Obtain the facts	HT/ senior leader	Immediately		
Contact management team		First hours		
Contact DCC		Within hours		
Notify governors		As above		
Seek additional health guidance where needed and follow public health guidance		As above		
Reconsider RAG rating of risk to children attending the school/ setting		As above		
Contact immediate family to discuss the information they consent to share		First day		
Seek advice on any media interest		As soon as possible		
Alert Educational Psychology Service		First day		
Consider whether involvement with Early Help is appropriate				
Identify those individuals in greatest need of support		First/ second day		

Agree on factual communications To all staff To families To pupils		First day if possible		
Seek consent for support for pupils		Before support can be delivered		
Arrange debriefing for all staff affected		First / second day		
Be alert to those whose memory of past trauma and loss might be triggered and seek support as the need arises				
Discuss acts of remembrance with family and those most affected Implement any which are immediate e.g. web page for condolence messages. Commit to plans which are for the longer term		First week		

Emergency contact details

Role	Name	Phone & email
Headteacher	Alan Monger	01837810248 head@hatherleigh-pri.devon.sch.uk
SENDCo & Leadership Team	Sunita Chauhan	01837810248 schuahan@hatherleigh-pri.devon.sch.uk
SBM	Jane Rice	01837810248 sbm@hatherleigh-pri.devon.sch.uk

Chair of Governors	Adam Hill	01837810248 ahill@hatherleigh-pri.devon.sch.uk
LA Emergency Contact		01392 383369 peopleandschoolsemergency-mailbox@devon.gov.uk
LA Press Office		01392 383855 01392 282173
Educational Psychology		01392 287233 LDP-EducationalPsychology@babcockinternational.com
School nurse		South 0333 234 1901 North 0333 234 1904 Exeter 0333 234 1902 East 0333 234 1903
Social services		https://www.devon.gov.uk/help/contact-us/local-offices/childrens-social-care/
Education Welfare		01392 287223 LDP-EducationWelfare@babcockinternational.com
Early Help		Northern Devon: Earlyhelpnorthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk Southern Devon: Earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk Mid and East Devon: Earlyhelpmideastsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk Exeter: Earlyhelpexetersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Sample Letter

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Post Code

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

It is with great sadness and regret that I am writing to inform you about the death of (name and details of deceased, include outline details of what happened).

I want to reassure you that telephone support and guidance is available to help the staff and pupils who are attending school. For children who are not currently attending, parents and carers should contact the school to access support.

There is guidance attached to this letter for ways of talking to your child and maintaining a routine as far as possible.

The Educational Psychologist will be available to provide additional support.

If you have any concerns then you are most welcome to make contact with the school.

Yours sincerely

Your Name
Headteacher

Bereavement charities

Winston's Wish
Charity for bereaved children.
www.winstonswish.org.uk

Jeremiah's Journey
Plymouth based charity for bereaved children.
www.jeremiahsjourney.org.uk

CRUSE
Bereavement Care
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Hope Again
Website designed for young people by young people. Youth website of CRUSE.
www.hopeagain.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends UK
Support for siblings.
www.tcfsiblingsupport.org.uk

BALLOONS (Bereavement and Loss Looking Onwards)

Charity covering Exeter, East and Mid Devon .

www.balloonscharity.co.uk

Advice for Teenagers and Young People

<https://www.balloonscharity.co.uk/teenagers/>

FIG (Families in Grief, including Teens in Grief)

Charity supporting grieving families in North Devon. Tel: 01237 479027

www.familiesingrief.org.uk

Support after Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM)

<http://www.samm.org.uk>

Child Bereavement UK

Child **Bereavement** UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby, child or young person of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing **bereavement**. It also provides advice for Young People

<https://childbereavementuk.org>

Mind

Mental Health Charity. Gives information about where you can get support with

bereavement

<https://www.mind.org.uk>

Kooth Online Counselling Service:

www.kooth.com

Pete's Dragon

www.petesdragons.org.uk

Books for Children under 5 Years:

I Miss You - A First Look at Death

P. Thomas ISBN 0764117645

Goodbye Mousie

R.H. Harris ISBN 978-0689871344

Goodbye Grandma

D. Brauna ISBN 1405219017

Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine: Your Activity Book to Help When Someone Has Died

D.Crossley and K.Sheppard ISBN-10: 1869890582

The Day the Sea Went Out and Never Came Back: A Story for Children Who Have Lost

Someone They Love: 2 (Helping Children with Feelings)

M. Sunderland ISBN-13: 978-0863884634

Books for Children Aged 5-8 Years:

Badgers Parting Gifts

S. Varley ISBN 978-0006643173

Always and Forever
A. Durant ISBN 978-0552548779

Flamingo Dream
D.J. Napoli ISBN 978-0688167967
(About a father who is ill then dies)

The Sunshine Cat
M. Moss ISBN 978-1841215679
(A child's cat gets killed in a road accident)

When Dinosaurs die
L.K. Brown and M. Brown ISBN 031611955
(A factual book exploring issues about why someone dies and feelings about death)

Books for Children Aged 9-12 Years:

Michael Rosen's SAD BOOK
M. Rosen ISBN 978-1406313161
(Refers to Michael Rosen's son dying and how it affects him)

Milly's Bug Nut
J. Janey ISBN 978-0-9539123-4-6
(About a girl whose father dies)

Water Bugs and Dragonflies
D. Stickney ISBN 978-0264674414
(A pocket book explaining death)

What on Earth to do when someone dies
T. Romain ISBN 978-1575420554

Books for Young People Aged 13-16:

Help for the Hard Times
E. Hipp ISBN 1-56838-085-5
(Refers to different types of loss and grief and skills to help teenagers)

The Spying Game
P. Moon ISBN 978-1842750049
(About a boy whose father dies and reveals the boys response)

Vicky Angel
J. Wilson ISBN 978-0440865896
(A girl's friend is run over and killed)

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone you Love
E.A. Grollman ISBN 978-0807025017

Associated documents:

School Emergency Plan

Critical incident pack