

Bereavement Policy

Burwell Early Learners CIO (BEL) aim to provide a positive learning environment, where children can feel safe and secure. We believe that bereavement is an inevitable part of living and aim to provide the necessary support to enable children to develop and express their emotional responses to manage these experiences. Bereavement may affect individual children and their family, individual staff members, or affect the entire setting.

Procedures

- The setting has an appointed staff member for support in cases of bereavement.
Bereavement Contact - Linda Cooksey or Belinda Revell
- BEL aims to support children and families with a consistent and compassionate approach and be sensitive to the needs and beliefs of the family.
- Where an individual child and their family are coming to terms with a death / loss in the family, the room leader should be notified, who will inform the rest of the staff team as soon as reasonably practical.
- The child and family will be given time to discuss their feelings, beliefs, and concerns with the room leader or key worker or appointed person, to ensure a consistent message is given from both the family and BEL.
- The bereavement contact can support the family with guidance on discussing and explaining death to a child, and lend resources that can be read to children to help them understand and support their grieving process.
- Where the family has strong religious belief these will be acknowledged, although BEL will focus on helping the child to feel safe and supported and help them to discuss their memories and feelings in a non-religious context.
- Where a staff member is affected by a death, the manager will liaise with them to ensure appropriate time off is given to allow them to come to terms with their loss, and the manager will notify all other staff as soon as reasonably practical so that they can support their colleague as they are best able.
- Where a death occurs which affects the whole setting, the bereavement contact, manager and chairperson will co-ordinate an appropriate response, taking into account the circumstances, needs and beliefs of the family. This will involve ensuring all staff are notified immediately, information can be cascaded via the room leaders. The children will be told by their room leaders or the bereavement contact, and a letter will be sent home to all parents to keep them fully informed. A list will be kept of all staff, children and families to

ensure everyone is notified. The family will be given support and time, and have opportunities to discuss with the pre-school their wishes.

- The bereavement contact or child's key worker will co-ordinate the sending of a card, and provide ongoing support to the family, including remembering birthdays and the anniversary.
- Support / Remembering and Strategies involved may include: -
 - Attendance at the funeral or remembrance service. (If this requires closing the setting this must be agreed in advance, due to funding regulations).
 - Creating a memory book, photo album, or memory table so children can share and hold on to positive memories.
 - Creating coping strategies for the children, sad box, worry dolls / puppets to talk to.
 - Consider staffing to allow staff members time to grieve and work through their own feelings with regards the loss.
 - Draw upon external resources as required to support staff, children and families.

External sources of support

www.talktostars.org.uk - a Cambridge and Peterborough based charity aiming to support children and young people under 25 with dealing with grief.