

## **Bereavement and Loss Policy**

### **Aims**

- At Fun Foundations Day Nursery our aim is to support all those affected by loss and death in a supportive and caring environment in which everyone can respond appropriately to individual circumstances. To offer understanding of the impact of loss and grief on children and young people's physical and emotional health.
- To gain insight into children/staff reactions to loss and grief and how the nursery responds in order to meet the needs of grieving children, parents and staff;
- To give pastoral support for children, parents and staff.
- To provide effective support for all of the nursery community and access to all relevant support materials and agencies. This policy outlines practical measures to be taken when people are in shock, or upset, especially with sudden or multiple deaths or traumatic circumstances.

### **Roles And Responsibilities**

The Nursery Manager will have overall responsibility for support and liaison in event of a death or traumatic loss. In the event that this person is absent then the Deputy Manager will take responsibility.

These responsibilities are:

- Implementation of the policy and reflecting on its effectiveness in practice;
- Using the expertise within the nursery and sharing the responsibilities;
- Co-ordinating the planned action to manage nursery related incidents in and beyond the nursery;
- Decide who will be responsible for communicating with the family;
- Decide who gives news to the nursery community
- Establishing and co-ordinating links with external agencies;
- Accessing and co-ordinating training and support for staff.
- The person responsible will take into consideration the following short term support:
  - Who should break the news about a death;
  - What exactly the nursery community will be told;
  - How they will be told ( eg whole setting, groups, individually);
  - When they will be told;

- How the information will be communicated to parents and staff;
  - What question might be asked by children, staff and parents;
  - What links will be made with the family;
- Whether it is appropriate for staff to show their emotions to the pupils.

### **Staff Support And Training**

It is important that all staff feel confident in delivering support for children and mutual support for each other. Bereavement awareness training will be provided for staff. The nursery will ensure members of staff are kept up to date with developments.

### **Procedures**

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Speak to the family, if possible, offer them condolences and support before ascertaining what they would like to happen;
- Give them a direct telephone number for someone they can contact in nursery;
- Obtain factual information to avoid unnecessary speculation;
- Inform staff straight away;
- Decide where children will be told if this is necessary. The nursery will identify the most vulnerable children and give the support they might need;
- Tell the children as soon as possible in familiar groups by someone they know;
- Send a letter to families on the same day if possible;
- Give guidance to parents on supporting bereaved children.

### **The Funeral**

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Find out the families wishes and how far they wish the nursery community to be involved;
- Identify which staff and children may want to attend and the practicalities of issues such as staff cover and transport.
- Send flowers if acceptable;
- Consider the cultural and religious implications if appropriate;

### **Long Term Illness**

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Designate one person to make contact with the child/staff family to find out their wishes about staff visiting.
- Ensure they keep abreast of any developments without causing distress to the family;
- Advise staff of the family's wishes;
- Support the nursery community with accurate information and support.

## **Death of a pet**

Staff will help a child who has experienced the death of a pet by:

- Sticking to the facts when discussing the pet and using age appropriate language
- Not using the euphemism 'put to sleep' as this can scare a child
- Encouraging the child to discuss their feelings
- Sharing any personal experiences
- Memorialising the pet

## **Support For Bereaved Children**

Not all children and young people will need the support of specialist practitioners; they need familiar people who care.

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will offer:

- A routine, providing a sense of normality;
- Some space, away from an emotional intense atmosphere;
- Neutral space and people to share their feelings without the worry of upsetting a loved one;
- Time to be themselves without feeling guilty (being with friends, time to play in a safe space outside the home environment);
- Regular correspondence with home, providing reassurance about behaviour and general well-being, will ensure the child is managing their grief;
- Access to appropriate resources and agencies;
- Time for staff to be aware of changes in behaviour that may be related to the death;
- A suitable place in nursery for children who need some space

## **Support For Children Generally**

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Identify children who may be particularly vulnerable or likely to experience symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder;
- Compile and keep updated a list of outside professionals and agencies who can come into the nursery in the event of a traumatic death;

## **Support For Staff**

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Support bereaved staff and acknowledge they may be struggling with their own reactions and emotions;
- Plan for informal mutual support to give staff an opportunity to share feelings;
- Give people time to attend a funeral if appropriate;
- Be aware of resources and agencies available and give time to staff to become familiar with what is available.

## Support For Parents

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will:

- Communicate with families and offer support;
- Give out information to appropriate people depending on the families wishes;
- Send a representative to the funeral if appropriate;

## Acknowledgements

Fun Foundations Day Nursery will give the following opportunities to commemorate loss for parents/carers, staff and pupils:

- Offer support to individuals who wish to talk about their experiences;
- Offer counselling to children/ staff who need to explore and to understand their emotions;
- Create a memory box

## Inclusion And Equality

Fun Foundations recognises that there is a range of cultural and religious customs and procedures concerning death and that there may be different expectations of the bereaved.

Fun Foundations will try to present a balance of different approaches to death and loss. Children and staff will be made aware that there are a range of different responses to bereavement and that we need to value and respect each one of these.

Date of Review	Changes Made	Signatures	Date of Next Review
15/01/15	None	A. Ferguson	January 2016
18/04/2016	In red	A. Ferguson	April 2017
05/04/2017	None	A. Ferguson	April 2018