**Bereavement Policy**

Nursery children and their families may experience grief and loss of close family members or friends whilst with us in the nursery. We understand that this is not only a difficult time for families but it may also be a confusing time for young children, especially if they have little or no understanding of why their parents are upset and why this person is no longer around.

We aim to support both the child and their family and will adapt the following procedure to suit their individual needs and wants:

 we ask that if there is a loss of a family member or close friend that the parents inform the nursery as soon as they feel able to. This will enable us to support both the child and the family wherever we can and helps us to understand a potential change in behaviour in a child who may be grieving themselves.

 the key person and or the Manager / Deputy Manager will talk with the family to ascertain what support is needed or wanted from the nursery. This may be an informal discussion or a meeting away from the child to help calm a potentially upsetting situation.

 the child may need extra support or one-to-one care during this difficult time, the nursery will adapt their staffing arrangements so they are fully supported by the most appropriate member of staff on duty, preferably the child’s key person.

 The nursery will be flexible wherever possible to adapt the sessions the child and family may need during this time.

 the death of family pets is also an area that children and their families may need support with. We will follow the above procedure wherever it is appropriate to support the child to understand their loss and support their emotions through this time.

 Jordans Village Nursery School will endeavour to supply any resources that we can, such as lists of trained counsellors, literature or other available services if required.

**In the event of the death of a child:**

The Nursery will act in a planned and agreed manner, so that all staff know

what is expected and can contribute their part in a way that is consistent with the

values that have been adopted.

The Nursery will nominate a Bereavement contact who, in partnership with the practitioners, will co-ordinate the Nursery’s response and be fundamental in liaising with bereaved family. This person will be aware of the needs of bereaved children and will have collated resources in order to support them.

As far as possible, all staff should be told together by the named person. By

creating a list of people to be told, the Nursery can be sure that no one

close to the situation will find out by chance.

All the parents/carers will be told in writing at the same time and as promptly

as circumstances will allow.

Following this the children in Nursery will be told at a time previously notified

to the parents. A letter template is attached as an outline if necessary.

**Staff will be consistent in their use of terminology to ensure clear**

**understanding of the concept of death.**

Absentees from Nursery will also need to be informed at the earliest

opportunity. The Nursery will have procedures to track that is informed,

when and by whom, to ensure that no one is missed.

The Nursery will have a range of strategies that it may adopt in the days

and weeks that follow any significant loss. Decisions about which to

undertake will be determined following discussions with the family concerned

and will take into account the cultural/religious beliefs of the family.

The child’s key person or other named member of staff will be identified to

keep in touch with the family so contact from the family’s perspectives is

manageable. This person will co-ordinate the sending of a card.

Attendance at the funeral and other forms of remembering will be agreed by

the staff team. If the decision to close the setting in term time is made,

prior agreement with BCC, due to funding regulations, will be made.

Staff will have ongoing opportunities for peer support in order to maintain their

wellbeing.

The Nursery bereavement contact will take responsibility for recording

details of bereavement on the child’s records and ensuring this

information is passed to the next setting, **with parents’ permission**.

The Nursery will provide ongoing support.

**Curriculum**

In the event of bereavement or significant loss the Nursery has identified

activities that will support the child/children to explore their feelings and

memories. Some opportunities may include:

• Use puppets

• Use toys

• Use stories

• Use playdough

**Remembering**

• Memory box

• Photo albums

**Parents/carers**

In acknowledging the role of the Nursery in supporting children with

bereavement and loss, the Nursery will work alongside the parents/carers in

this process.

The parents/carers remain the most significant support to young children in

understanding death. The Nursery can support parents/carers in this by:

Sharing information with families about other sources of support e.g.

Winston’s Wish Family Line

Keeping parents/carers fully informed about the actions of the Nursery

throughout the immediate period of grieving.

Parents/carers will be invited to be involved in any Nursery response that

occurs after the death, e.g. a remembering time. The format of this will take

into account the beliefs and wishes of the bereaved family.

**Outcomes**

By adopting a planned and considered approach the Nursery can with some

degree of confidence support the emotional wellbeing of the child. As a result:

**Staff**

Feel equally valued.

Have an opportunity to prepare themselves for the supportive role they adopt.

Be given time and space to work through their own feelings.

Become aware of the needs of bereaved children, and be offered training, to

develop strategies to support them.

**Children**

Be offered support by sensitive, trained staff working together.

Have the opportunity to tell their story, express their feelings, share their

memories and develop coping strategies.

**The Nursery**

Have clear expectations about the way that it will respond to the death, not

simply react.

Provide a nurturing, safe and supportive environment where there are no

expectations in their responses to the children’s grief.

**The family**

Feel supported.

Be given an opportunity to express their feelings of loss.

Have opportunities to understand and communicate with their child about

their loss as a result of the activities provided by the Nursery.

**The parents/carers**

Be offered information about how to support their child/children.

Be aware of the support offered and understand the processes that will follow

bereavement

*This policy was adopted at a meeting of the nursery school held on*

*(date) ……………………….*

*Signed on behalf of the Nursery school……………………..*