

DEATH & BEREAVEMENT POLICY

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<i>Approved by Principal(s)</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Modified</i>	<i>No</i>
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<i>Key Staff</i>	<i>Principal/Vice Principal/Director/Head of Welfare</i>
<i>Lead Staff to Review</i>	<i>Director/Head of Welfare</i>

Grief and mourning in some cultures is expressed very openly; death is more public, often involving whole communities grieving in public spaces together. In Western societies it is still generally a very private affair but we should be aware of the different cultural and religious traditions of grieving and mourning in order to assist students.

It is important to introduce students to feelings of loss and separation whenever an appropriate opportunity arises. Students might be encouraged to express their feelings. We need to foster an environment where they feel they can ask questions and share experiences.

Definition of terms:

- Grief describes the emotional and psychological response to loss and is experienced by people of all cultures
- Mourning denotes the act of portraying such grief and can be varied in its expression depending on culture and religion

The death of a student or member of staff is fortunately a rare occurrence in college but at CATS we will:

- Deal with first day issues, including class meetings
- Provide support after the first week and beyond, including memorials
- Give on-going support to students and staff if necessary
- De-brief staff if necessary

Involvement of students

- Differing cultures will determine to a large extent the involvement or otherwise of children in the traditions and rituals which surround death.

- It is clear that students involved in such ceremonies tend to deal with later life events with much less stress.

Being Prepared:

No matter how prepared we think we are, death is often traumatic and unexpected. Its unpredictability can severely unbalance a college whose normal working environment is one based on routine. Intervention is essential in managing and minimising any disruption.

The Emergency contingency plan can be found:

In Principals Office – Canterbury/London- Under Desk

In College Secretary office- Cambridge

1. Assemble Emergency Team (ET)

The team would include:

- The Principal, who would be the Key Member. He/she would be responsible for liaising with all parties concerned and would be first point of contact
- Deputy, who would deputise for Key Member (Vice Principal or appointed member of Senior Leadership Group)
- Media spokesperson who may if need arises liaise with media and possibly police – communicate to staff all media contact through designated spokes person
- Welfare Team to organise support for staff and students

2. First Day:

Upon hearing news of a death the members of staff should contact Key Member.

- Key Member to gather all details surrounding death. **It is vital to have all the facts.** For example:

How did you find out about the death?

Is your source accurate?

How can you check the information is correct?

When did the death occur?

Where?

What were the circumstances?

Who was with the child/staff member when it happened?

When is the funeral?

Who should you tell?

- Members of staff who are directly involved should be told individually
- Rest of staff told altogether. Try to avoid people finding out from each other. Make sure administrative staff and absent staff are also informed
- Principal, who may like to write a letter of condolence

There are different procedures to follow, depending on the person who has died.

2a. Death of relative or friend of student in college:

- If parent, relative or close friend of a student has died Key Member will decide (after speaking to students next of kin) who should approach student
- If death has been traumatic media may be involved. Essential that correct information given to all staff (assemble team if necessary)

2b. Death of Student - whether terminally ill or unexpected death

The death of a fellow student is probably the most demanding situation a student could be forced to face whilst at college.

- In the event of a student becoming terminally ill their wishes and those of the parents/guardians should always be respected. Should the student wish to attend college the Welfare team would assess the students health and a healthcare plan be put in place
- Whether the death of a student at home or school the Key Member, after consulting with deceased's family or relatives, would then inform close friends and acquaintances
- Confidentiality is paramount. To avoid rumours, it is important to be open and honest and not make assumptions about cause of death unless;

*Deceased's next of kin has given consent
There has been an official determination*

- General staff meeting called to allow private grief **before** announcing news to rest of the college, if at all possible
- It is essential that all staff and students, who are acquainted with deceased, be informed as quickly as possible
- An announcement should be made in a special assembly or ET members can go around. Teachers should be prepared for feelings of anger, disbelief and fear. It is better to have the assembly in the morning so that staff, have time to support students during the day
- After assembly, in confines of classroom, teachers should decide if talking about it is appropriate. A note should be taken of any student who appears very distressed. Staff need to contact the Welfare Team. Staff may not feel confident in these circumstances and another member of staff may well have to attend classes as necessary or as well as a teacher

- It is essential to allow students time to articulate thoughts and feelings and to support them. Sharing their grief in a supportive environment can help facilitate the grieving process
- If necessary, college may wish to enlist help of professional bereavement counsellor
- Media spokesperson will, after consulting team, decide which information to release. Information that might upset, confuse or exacerbate situation should be withheld

2c Death of a member of staff

- This is an event when the whole college should become involved in the grieving process together
- To avoid rumours it is advisable that the news is broken as soon as possible, after a private session with all staff together
- It is best to break the news to the whole college in an assembly and then allow students to discuss and grieve together
- College life has to continue and appear to be normal, to keep it the safe haven it should be

2d. Multiple death or death in college

- Multiple deaths or death in school would warrant ET team being formed
- Key Member to gather together facts and details quickly and determine likely impact on whole college
- Additional support staff may be needed eg Kent Counselling Service

2e. Death of a member of family of staff

There are various ways that the member of staff can be supported at this time of loss:

- Send a card or message in early stages
- Show genuine concern and care
- Keep in regular contact by phone or letter
- Ensure person knows about organisations that may help

2f. Follow up on welfare of students

Consideration will be given to the long term effects on the college and will be monitored by the Head of Welfare.

2g. Packing up of belongings

The following procedure should be followed:

- Lock the Room and restrict access
- Two personnel go into the room to pack it up. One to pack, one to write a list for the inventory (see template below) once you have listed everything, both sign it. (If more

people in the room everyone signs the lists) You may type it up but do not throw out the original hand written list

- One list in the boxes, seal the boxes
- One held with the Head of Welfare together with the hand written lists
- One for the parents (they may not want it all)
- Then secure all items in restricted storage
- If there is a laptop, that is not password protected or digital camera, they should have a sticky label with two signatures on them then placed over the catches or on button to prevent opening/viewing
- Make sure the list is descriptive, **do not** leave anything out or sanitize anything, some parents want to see everything
- Our policy is not to launder any clothing or bedding, but record on the inventory
- If the student has lent anything out to their friends – someone will need to ask. The same as if they borrowed someone else's clothes, CD's etc

Package x of x		
Quantity	Item	Description
2	T-shirts	1 Black 1 Blue - unwashed

2h. Restricted contents

The following items are prohibited from being packed and shipped with personal items:

- Unlicensed controlled drugs such as opium, heroin, morphine, MDMA (Ecstasy), cocaine, cannabis, amphetamines and LSD; water pipes (bongs)
- Any large amount of prescription based medicines that are not accompanied with a current valid prescription and covering the quantity of medicine prescribed
- Firearms (including gas pistols, gas canisters etc.) ammunition and explosives
- Flick knives, bayonets, double sided swords, double sided knives, butterfly knives, belt buckle knives, push daggers, hand and foot claws, death stars, blowpipes, blowguns, sword sticks, knuckle dusters, telescopic truncheons and some types of martial arts equipment
- Indecent and obscene material featuring children
- Meat, poultry and most of their products (whether cooked or not), including ham, bacon, sausage, pate, eggs and milk.
- Plants and plant related produce including trees, shrubs, soil, vegetables, fruit, bulbs and seeds



- Most animals, whether alive or dead (for example stuffed animals) and certain articles from protected species including fur skins, ivory, reptile leather, stony corals and goods made from them

Consideration should be given to a deceased student's privacy when deciding which items to send to parents. This will need to take into account age and culture of the individual student.

N.B if unsure and advice is needed contact Head of Welfare/Deputy Director of Welfare.