# Bereavement Policy

## St Thomas' C of E Aided Primary School

1. **Introduction**:

   At St Thomas' CEA Primary School, our Christian values shape all we do and we promote a caring and supportive environment, where individuals' feelings are supported and respected. We aim to support the emotional wellbeing of all members of our school community. We recognise that bereavement is a difficult and emotional experience for pupils, staff, and families. This policy aims to provide a framework for offering support and guidance to those affected by loss, ensuring a compassionate and consistent approach.

**2. Aims**

- To offer a supportive environment where individuals feel safe to express their grief.
- To provide clear guidance on how the school will respond to bereavement.
- To ensure staff are equipped to support pupils and colleagues during times of loss.
- To maintain sensitivity and respect for cultural and religious differences.

**3. Responding to Bereavement**

**3.1 Death of a Pupil or Member of Staff**

- The Head teacher will inform staff, pupils, and parents in an appropriate and sensitive manner.
- A designated member of staff will offer support to the affected class or group.
- A school-wide response may include memorial activities, assemblies, or a book of remembrance.
- The school will liaise with the family to offer condolences and practical support.

**3.2 Death of a Close Family Member of a Pupil or Staff Member**

- The affected individual will be given time and space to grieve, with flexible arrangements for absence and workload.
- Pastoral support will be offered to pupils, including counselling referrals if needed.

- Staff will be informed on a need-to-know basis to provide appropriate support.
- Staff will be offered free counselling services, where appropriate.

**3.3 Supporting a Grieving Pupil**

- Teachers will provide a listening ear and encourage open conversations about grief if the pupil wishes to talk.
- Adjustments may be made to the pupil's workload and participation in activities.
- Referrals to specialist services may be arranged in consultation with parents.

**3.4 Supporting a Grieving Staff Member**

- Bereavement leave will be granted as per the school's HR policies.
- Adjustments to workload and responsibilities will be considered where necessary.
- Emotional support, including access to counselling services, will be provided.

**4. Memorials and Tributes**

- The school may hold a memorial service, create a book of memories, or plant a tree in honour of the deceased.
- Any tributes will be conducted in consultation with the family's wishes and with respect to cultural considerations.

**5. Communication and Confidentiality**

- Information regarding bereavement will be shared sensitively, respecting the privacy of those affected.
- Parents and guardians will be informed about any support measures available to their child.

**6. Training and Awareness**

- Specific staff will receive training on how to support pupils experiencing bereavement.
- Resources and guidance will be made available for both staff and pupils.

**7. Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents will be considered in the review process.

**8. Conclusion**

St Thomas' CEA Primary School is committed to supporting its community during times of loss, ensuring that pupils and staff receive the care and understanding they need to navigate bereavement with dignity and support.