

Christ The King Sixth Form College

Bereavement Policy

Mission Statement

We are a Catholic College dedicated to the education and development of the whole person, so that all students can realise their full potential.

To achieve this as a community we will:

- ✚ Provide the highest standards of teaching and learning.
- ✚ Expect students to show commitment to their studies and the Christian values of the College.
- ✚ Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement.
- ✚ Build and further develop a partnership with parents, schools, parishes, higher education and the local community.
- ✚ Value staff and support their professional development.

In doing this we will reflect Christ's teaching in the life and work of the whole College.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Christ The King Sixth Form College is dedicated to the education, development and support of the whole person. This is implicit in the Catholic ethos of the college and made explicit in the College Mission Statement. Such support includes provision for those who have been bereaved.
- 1.2 The college recognises that bereavement affects individuals in different ways. It is not appropriate for a single uniform approach to be taken by the college in relation to those who have been bereaved.
- 1.3 All members of the college community who are experiencing bereavement will be treated with care, compassion and sensitivity by the college. Any specific wishes he or she may have in relation to the college response to his/her bereavement will be totally respected, as far as is possible within the auspices of this policy and available resources.

- 1.4 The aim of the policy is to provide clarity regarding the procedures that should be followed in the event of a bereavement of a member of the college community, and to outline the type of support that may be offered.

2 **Procedures to be followed**

- 2.1 **In the event of the death of a student or former student of the college** the Principal should be notified immediately by whoever has received such information. In her absence, the Vice Principal should be informed.
- 2.2 Upon receipt of the news that a student or former student has died, the Principal will seek to verify that the information is correct and accurate before taking any further action. This may involve speaking directly with the source from which the information came, or contacting other members of college staff, for example.
- 2.3 Once the Principal has been able to confirm that the information received is accurate she will contact the family of the student to offer her condolences. The Principal will then arrange for other staff to be notified as appropriate. This may take the form of a verbal staff briefing or written communication. The Chaplaincy team will also be specifically informed of the situation.
- 2.4 Where the student who has died is currently on roll, all other students at the college be notified (if the Principal considers it appropriate to do so), via their tutors.
- 2.5 If the circumstances of the student's death is likely to attract attention from the press, the Principal will arrange for a brief statement to be written outlining the college reaction to the student's death and details of his/her time at the college. Information obtained from the student's file will be used for this purpose as well as details provided by individual staff.
- 2.6 A member of the Chaplaincy team will contact the family of the deceased and offer support. This may include a visit to the family home, if welcomed. The Chaplaincy team will also offer the family a Mass to be held in the college chapel.
- 2.7 The college will, if welcomed, send a representative or representatives to the deceased's funeral.
- 2.8 **Where a student/students have been bereaved** the member of staff receiving the information will inform the general office who will arrange for other relevant staff to be notified. Staff will be asked to be particularly supportive and considerate when working with students in this situation.
- 2.9 Students who are suffering a bereavement will be offered individual support by their tutor and notified of the support available from the Chaplaincy, Room4U and counselling services at the college.

- 2.10 **In the event of the death of a staff member, former staff member or governor** the Principal should be informed immediately by whoever has received such information. In the absence of the Principal, the Vice principal should be notified.
- 2.11 Upon receipt of the news that a staff member, former staff member or governor has died, the Principal will seek to verify the accuracy of the information before taking any further action. This may involve speaking directly with the source from which the information came, or contacting other colleagues, for example.
- 2.12 Once the Principal has been able to confirm that the information received is accurate she will contact the family of the deceased and offer her condolences. The Principal will then arrange for other staff to be notified as appropriate – either verbally or in writing. The Chaplaincy team will also be specifically informed of the situation.
- 2.13 If the Principal considers it appropriate to do so, students will also be informed of the death. This will normally be via tutors.
- 2.14 A member of the Chaplaincy team will contact the family of the deceased and offer support. This may include a visit to the family home, if welcomed. The Chaplaincy team will also offer the family a Mass to be held in the college Chapel.
- 2.15 The college will, if welcomed, send a representative or representatives to the funeral. Staff who wish to attend will need to request permission to do so by completing a Leave of Absence form.
- 2.16 **Where a staff member has been bereaved** he or she should arrange for the college to be notified as soon as it is practical/possible to do so. The relevant line manager should be contacted, who will then make the Principal aware of the situation.
- 2.17 Compassionate leave of absence, in line with the terms outlined in the Staff Conditions of Service, may be requested by a member of staff who has been bereaved. The ability to undertake such leave of absence and the number of days involved is determined by the nature of the relationship to the deceased.
- 2.18 Requests for compassionate Leave of Absence, including requests to attend a funeral, should be made on the completion of a Leave of Absence form where it is practical/possible to do so.
- 2.19 Staff who are suffering a bereavement will be offered individual support via their line manager and through the Chaplaincy team.

- 2.20 **In the event of the death of a member of the wider college community** the approach taken will be tailored to meet the needs of individual circumstances.
- 2.21 Members of the college wider community include, but are not limited to, staff head teachers and pupils of partner schools, clergy, contact staff at the Learning and Skills Council or local authority, Principals of other local colleges or ACVIC members.
- 2.22 Upon receipt of information that a member of the college wider community has died the Principal should be informed immediately. In her absence, the Vice Principal should be informed.
- 2.23 The Principal will seek to verify the accuracy of the information received before informing other relevant members of the college community such as senior staff and/or members of the Governing Body.
- 2.24 The Principal will arrange for a letter of condolence to be sent to the relevant organisation on behalf of the college. She may also choose to attend the funeral where it would be appropriate to do so.

3 **Support arrangements for students**

- 3.1 In addition to specific support outlined in Section 2 of this policy, students who have suffered a bereavement will be offered the following:

(a) **From the Chaplaincy team**

Students will be given opportunities to speak with member of the team and explore their feelings regarding the loss they have suffered. They will be able to make use of the Chaplaincy facilities; to enter a quiet space where prayer and reflection can be undertaken if the student so wishes. A listening ear can be provided, as well as someone to talk to.

The name of the deceased person can be entered into a Book of Remembrance that is located in the Chaplaincy area. Mass can also be dedicated to the memory of someone who has been lost.

(b) **Room 4 U**

Speaking to skilled staff members or to groups of students who have undergone similar experiences. A one-off appointment or a series of individual sessions can be arranged for students who wish to discuss the death of a loved one, friend, teacher or someone else.

Help with approaching other teaching staff can be given.

(c) **Bereavement Counselling**

Trained counsellors can offer support to individuals.

(d) **Pastoral Care**

Students can be supported by their tutor and Senior Pastoral Manager in coming to terms with his/her loss. Liaison with individual teachers or between college and home can be managed by a staff member who knows the student and who has regular contact with them.

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