



Bereavement Leave Policy

Introduction

We understand that going through bereavement can be a very sad and distressing time for employees and that individuals will be affected in different ways. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees who are going through bereavement know how to access the support available.

We aim to create an open and supportive workplace where managers and employees can discuss any issues associated with bereavement. This policy sets out the support the nursery will offer employees in this situation and the process to request time off.

Please read our separate parental bereavement leave information in the handbook on time off and the support available if you are going through the loss of a child under the age of 18.

Entitlement

Employees are entitled to bereavement leave under this policy in the event of the loss of a:

- spouse or civil partner
- parent
- child (who is 18 or over)
- direct sibling

We recognise that employees may experience bereavement if they are going through the loss of someone other than those set out above. In this situation, we encourage you to talk to your manager if you need support or time off. We cannot guarantee that requests for time off will be authorised in these circumstances, but your manager will use their discretion when considering your request and discuss the options available with you.

Our responsibilities

Managers will maintain an open-door policy so that employees experiencing bereavement feel comfortable approaching them if they need support or time off. They will support you to talk about your current situation and will not make presumptions about how it is affecting you.

If you need additional support at any time, we encourage you to speak to your manager, Rochelle as the Mental Health First Aider or Rivka.

You also have access to completely confidential counselling through the My Healthy Advantage app which direct family members can also access.

Your responsibilities

So that your manager can fully support you if you are going through bereavement, we encourage you to speak to your manager as soon as possible, who will treat the matter with complete confidence. Any requests for time off should be agreed in advance with your manager.

For your manager to implement the most beneficial support for you, we encourage you to be as open and forthcoming as possible. We understand that these discussions may be difficult and upsetting but would like to assure you that they will be met with sensitivity, empathy and care.

However, we recognise that this is a sensitive issue so if you don't feel comfortable discussing your situation with your manager, you are encouraged to speak with another senior member of staff.

Time off

You may take up to five days paid leave if you are going through bereavement, to support you in the grieving process. If employees experience more than one bereavement during the course of their employment, there is no limit on the number of times they can take this leave. This is expected that this leave will be taken immediately after your loss.

If you need time off in excess of this amount, you should speak to your manager who may agree this with you, taking into account your personal circumstances and the needs of the business. Options for time off may include taking unpaid leave. In order to take this time off, you should give your manager as much notice as possible.

Return to work

On your return to work, your manager will talk to you to discuss what adjustments can be implemented to support you. This might include a phased return over an agreed period of time. Please be rest assured that we will do everything reasonably possible to support you and ease your transition back to work.

Training

We ensure that management are trained on the effects of bereavement, how to hold discussions with employees who are experiencing bereavement and adjustments that can be made to an employee's role to remove or lessen any effects the employee is experiencing.

Bullying and harassment

There is an expectation on all employees to conduct themselves in a supportive, sensitive and open-minded manner towards colleagues. We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment and will treat any and all complaints seriously. If you feel that you have been mistreated in any way by anyone connected to the nursery because of matters related to bereavement, please speak to your manager.

Employee Assistance Programme

We would like to remind you that you have access to a 24-hour telephone counselling service and we would like to encourage you to use it if you feel you would like to talk to someone about your loss. The service can be accessed by the instructions on the link sent to everyone or please ask Rochelle to send you the information.

As part of our Employee Assistance Programme, you also have access to an online wellbeing tool, Wisdom AI, which you can use to find fast answers to any wellbeing questions you have. You can access Wisdom AI at any time via the Health Assured portal. The link in the menu bar will take you directly to the Wisdom AI homepage, where you can ask your question. More details of this service are available from Rochelle.

Date policy was reviewed	January 2024
This policy is due for review before	March 2024