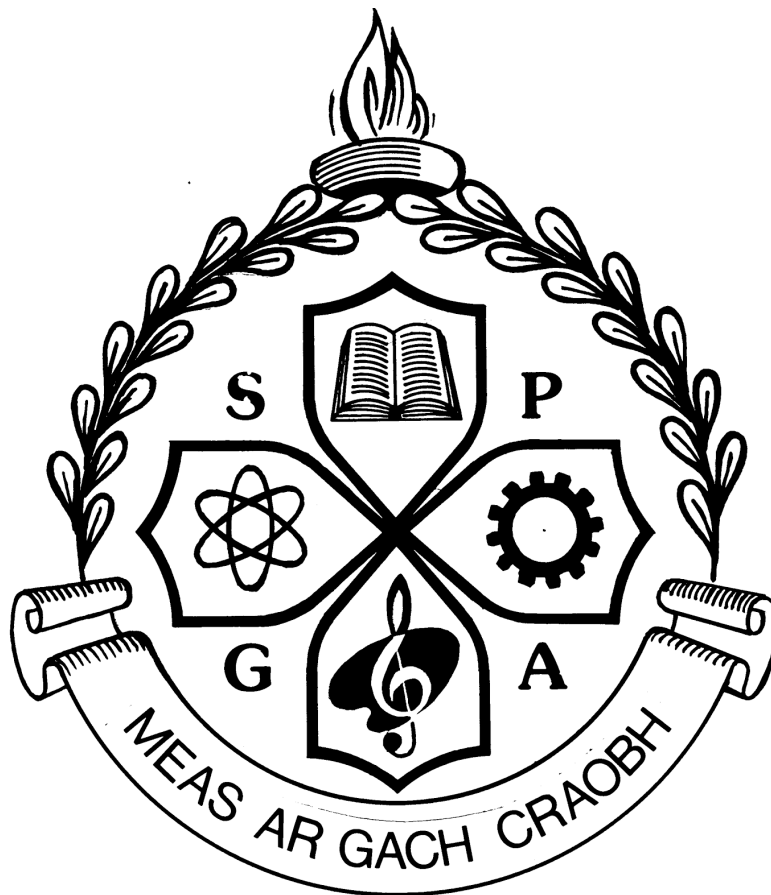


BEREAVEMENT POLICY



School Bereavement/Funerals Policy

1. Title of Policy Bereavement Policy

2. Scope
Board of Management
Teachers
Students
Parents

3. Relationship to School's Mission/Vision/ Aims

- To facilitate the creative, intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural well being of our students
- To ensure that the duty of care towards our students extends to providing appropriate supports and guidelines in dealing with a bereavement which impacts on the school community

4. Rationale:

- To facilitate continuity and progression in the learning process
- To ensure that students benefit fully from opportunities that this school offers them
- To ensure all parents/guardians, students and teachers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the care of our students
- To ensure the school fulfils its legal obligations as laid down by the Education Act and other relevant acts.
- To provide a context for establishing good practice in matters relating to bereavement and attendance at funerals while providing the appropriate and sensitive support in such circumstances

5. Goals:

- That students, parents/guardians and school staff are aware of the schools responsibilities at a time of bereavement
- That parents/guardians appreciate the vital role they play in their child's welfare at a time of bereavement

- That the school, at such times as experienced by students, is a place of support and caring whilst placing appropriate boundaries for the welfare of students by a clearly laid out set of guidelines
- That the student appreciates a sense of what is appropriate in terms of bereavement and attendance at funerals
- That Parents/Guardians would be facilitated in playing an active role in supporting their children at such difficult times

6. Policy Content:

- Clear guidelines and appropriate supports at a time of bereavement are proper given the duty of care of the school towards its students
- The existence of a clear policy for school events is a characteristic valued by the school and employers parents and students alike
- Consistent and caring supports are a crucial element for a student to thrive and succeed in the school environment.
- An ordered and consistent response at times of bereavement and the attendance at funerals is a whole school matter and as such is of primary concern to teaching staff, parents and pupils, support staff, agencies such as the Educational Welfare Office, School Completion Programme and learning support staff and the Board of Management
- Clear guidelines surrounding such events ensures that individuals take full advantage of all the offered educational opportunities
- Clear guidelines encourages parents to support the school in fulfilling its primary role in the care and education of its students
- Varied responses by the school to any event leads to a disruption of the learning process
- This policy relates to events that are not covered by the Critical Incidence Policy

7. Roles and Responsibilities:

School

- To ensure that its duty of care towards its students is maintained
- To ensure that parents, students and staff are aware of the guidelines for attendance at funerals
- To ensure there is a controlled absence from school at such times as funerals

- To ensure the school register of all students attending the school is maintained and the school meets its legal responsibility in this regard

Year Tutor

- To be aware of the guidelines
- To monitor attendance and punctuality in the year group at such times
- To advise and organise students of the year group in the event of a bereavement amongst their peers or their family
- To inform parents of students on the school's policy
- To work in partnership with students and parents in order to ensure that the guidelines are adhered to in the interest of the care of students

Subject Teacher

- To be aware of the guidelines
- To provide an appropriate response within the classroom
- To provide a sympathetic response to students concerned
- To maintain an accurate daily roll call for each class
- To be aware of and be able to plan for the absence of students who are attending a funeral

Student

- To be aware of the guidelines and the reasons for their existence
- When wishing to attend a funeral to bring in a written explanation signed and dated by a parent/guardian prior to the funeral if this meets with the guidelines
- To advise the school of their attendance at a funeral accompanied by their parent/guardian if this is what is required
- To ensure that they are marked present on the day if they attend school prior to or following the funeral
- To seek the permission of their Class Teacher/ Year Tutor/Deputy Principal/Principal if they wish to leave the school during the school day

Parent/Guardian

- To be aware of the schools guidelines in relation to funerals
- Parents/Guardians are the prime carers of their children
- To ensure their child is supported at times of bereavement

- To always inform the school in writing of any planned or actual absence or lateness
- When possible to encourage their children to pay their respects at funeral events outside of school time

8. Implementation Procedures (Bereavement/Funeral Policy):

Senior School Students

- For funerals involving close family and relatives it is reasonable to expect that students will be absent from school from one to three days
- For funerals involving close friends it is reasonable to expect that a student is absent from school on the day of the funeral.
- For distant relatives or friends it is appropriate for students to pay their respects at funeral events outside of the school day accompanied by an adult
- Students will ensure that their parents or guardians advise the school in writing prior to any such intended absence
- It is the students responsibility to catch up on any missed class work at such times
- In the event of a known sudden or tragic death or death by suicide it is not appropriate that students should attend funerals without the support of an adult. The school Care Team, Meitheal, Students Council, School Choir and other appropriate members of staff will provide supports at such times to students
- In the event of the death of an immediate family member of one of our students then the school will organise a formal representation at the funeral mass. This formal representation may also involve the support or relevant groups referred to above.

Junior School Students

- For funerals involving close family and relatives it is reasonable to expect that students will be absent from school from one to three days
- For funerals involving close friends it is reasonable to expect that a student is absent from school on the day of the funeral

- For distant relatives or friends it is appropriate for students to pay their respects at funeral events outside of the school day accompanied by an adult
- For distant relatives or friends younger members of the school may wish to attend funerals during school time accompanied by their parents
- Parents or guardians should advise the school in writing prior to any such intended absence
- It is school policy that students from the Junior Cycle who wish to attend a funeral ceremony are not released from school unless collected from the school by a parent or guardian
- It is the students responsibility to catch up on any missed class work at such times
- In the event of a known sudden or tragic death or death by suicide not immediately connected with the school it is not appropriate that students should attend funerals without the support of an adult. The school Care Team, Meitheal, Students Council, School Choir and other appropriate members of staff will provide supports at such times to students
- In the event of the death of an immediate family member of one of our students then the school will organise a formal representation at the funeral mass. This formal representation may also involve the support or relevant groups referred to above

The priority of the school staff and management in considering the schools response to bereavement/funerals will be its duty of care to its students.

Date of Ratification by the BoM

Date of Review