



Crisis and Bereavement Response Policy for Waldorf International School Copenhagen

This plan outlines a comprehensive framework for Byens Steinerskole to respond with care and efficiency to crisis situations, including accidents, bereavement, or other significant events affecting the school community.

Situations Covered by the Plan

This plan applies to the following situations:

- [1. Responding to the Loss of a Student](#)
- [2. Supporting a Student Who Has Lost a Parent or Sibling](#)
- [3. Responding to the Loss of a Staff Member](#)
- [4. Supporting Students in Crisis](#)

1. Responding to the Loss of a Student

Initial Actions

- The staff member who first becomes aware of a student's passing must immediately inform the school leadership.
- The leadership informs the class teacher, after-school program staff, and other relevant personnel.

Class Teacher's Responsibilities

Initial Contact with the Family

- The class teacher ensures that the family is contacted first and offers a home visit.
- The purpose of the contact includes:
 1. Gathering specific details about the incident.
 2. Clarifying what information can be shared with the school and students.
 3. Discussing how the school and the after-school program can support the family.
 4. Informing the family about the school's planned actions.
 5. Determining whether the family wishes to participate in the school's response.
 6. Clarifying the family's expectations of the school.



Subsequent Actions

1. Deliver flowers and a letter from the school and teachers.
2. Obtain information about the funeral and coordinate attendance by teachers and classmates if desired.
 - At a minimum, the class teacher and a representative of the leadership will attend.
 - Coordinate with parents if classmates' attendance is requested.
3. Plan how the situation will be addressed in the classroom.

In the Classroom

- The class teacher and an additional teacher are present when students arrive. The deceased student's desk may be marked with a candle.
- Teachers remain with the class throughout the day, including during breaks.
- Facilitate a detailed discussion about the loss and encourage students to share both positive and negative memories about the deceased.
- Collaborate with the class to decide how the student will be commemorated.
- Offer activities unrelated to the grief, such as drawing or a walk in the forest.
- Ensure that no students return to an empty home. Older students can stay at school with a trusted adult until their parents arrive.
- A pastor may be invited to discuss the funeral, and a visit to the gravesite can be considered.

Communication with Parents

- Parents of classmates receive detailed information via email and may be invited to a parent meeting.
- The teaching team organizes a parent meeting as soon as possible, potentially involving the school's psychologist or external support professionals.

2. Supporting a Student Who Has Lost a Parent or Sibling

Initial Actions

- The individual receiving the news first informs the class teacher, leadership, and after-school program staff.



- The leadership informs relevant staff members, and plans substitute coverage if necessary.

Contact with the Family

- The class teacher, leadership, or after-school program staff contacts the family to:
 1. Gather specific details about the incident.
 2. Clarify what information can be shared with the school and students.
 3. Discuss how the class should be informed and what support will be offered.
- Deliver flowers and a personal note to the family.

In the Classroom

- The day may be structured as a class teacher day with additional teacher support if needed.
- If the class teacher is unavailable, a trusted staff member steps in.
- Students can create drawings or letters for the grieving student.
- Support the class in processing the loss and addressing emotional needs.
- Plan for the grieving student's return to school and prepare classmates to welcome them empathetically.

Follow-Up

- The class teacher or after-school program staff provides individual support to the grieving student.
- Assign a trusted adult at the school for the student to talk to about their grief.
- Collaborate with the family to determine how the school and class can best support the student.

3. Responding to the Loss of a Staff Member

Initial Actions

- The staff member who first becomes aware of a staff member's passing notifies the leadership, who coordinates the necessary actions.

Leadership Responsibilities

1. Leadership contacts the family of the deceased staff member.
2. The family is informed of the school's planned actions and invited to express their wishes regarding the school's involvement.
3. Flowers and a condolence letter are sent to the family.



Communication

- Leadership gathers the staff for a meeting to provide information and guidance.
- Absent teachers and after-school program staff are informed as soon as possible.
- Leadership organizes a memorial event, potentially in the school courtyard or hall.

In the Classroom

- Two teachers are present in affected classes to inform students and provide support.
- Facilitate open discussions about the deceased staff member, encouraging students to share memories.
- Offer activities unrelated to grief, such as drawing or outdoor time.
- Discuss the possibility of attending the funeral with the class and parents.

4. Supporting Students in Crisis

Situations Covered by the Plan

This section applies to students experiencing significant events such as divorce, serious illness, self-harm, or the death of a close family member.

Procedure

1. Parents are encouraged to inform the class teacher about significant events affecting their child.
2. The class teacher informs relevant staff and leadership, who decide who should be informed together.
3. A trusted adult is assigned to provide individual support to the student.

Follow-Up

- The contact person maintains regular communication with the student and their family.
- Staff remain attentive to the student's well-being and create opportunities for them to express their feelings and thoughts.

Conclusion

Byens Steinerskole is committed to providing compassionate and effective support during crises, ensuring the well-being of our students, families, and staff. This plan will be regularly reviewed to reflect best practices and meet the needs of our school community.

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