

Bereavement Policy (Supporting Staff)



1.0 Introduction

In this policy, the term EDA will be used to cover all aspects of the Emil Dale School of Performing Arts Ltd business.

At EDA, we understand that the loss of a loved one can be an incredibly difficult and challenging time for our employees. We believe in providing a supportive and compassionate environment during these times of grief. This policy outlines the provisions and support available to our employees who experience a bereavement.

1.1 Policy aim

This policy aims to:

- a. Showcase the support and flexibility to EDA employees dealing with the loss of a loved one;
- b. Ensure that employees of EDA take the necessary time to cope with their bereavement;
- c. Create a compassionate and understand workplace environment during an employee's time(s) of grief.

1.2 To whom and where this policy applies

This applies to all full-time and part-time employees of EDA who have worked for the company under PAYE for a minimum of 1 year (365 days).

1.3 Location of policy

This policy can be accessed on the EDA website.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Paid bereavement leave

Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their family dies.

EDA acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances. EDA acknowledges that not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

EDA requires a member of staff to have worked for the company under PAYE for a minimum of 1 year (365 days) for the following to apply:

- a. In the event of the death of an immediate relative, 14 working days paid leave will be granted. An immediate relative includes a spouse, civil partner or partner (including same sex partners), child, parent, step- parent, sibling or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.
 - i. Partner includes someone with whom the employee is co-habiting but is not the employee's spouse or civil partner.
 - ii. Child includes children in respect of whom the employee is the adoptive parent and legal guardians and carers.
- b. 7 days leave will be allowed on the death of a mother/father-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, son/daughter-in-law.
- c. 3 days of leave will be allowed on the death of an uncle/aunt to facilitate attendance at the funeral.

In exceptional circumstances, 1 to 3 days leave may be granted on the death of someone outside the immediate family. These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements or has to travel abroad to attend the funeral.

An employee should notify their line manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at latest, on the first day of absence. In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence.

Line managers have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances as outlined above. Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

2.2 Annual leave

In the event of a bereavement, an employee will be able to take unpaid leave or annual leave at short notice to supplement their bereavement leave. Requests should be directed to the employee's line manager.

An employee who suffers a family bereavement while on annual leave can convert their annual leave into bereavement leave and take their annual leave at a future date.

2.3 Unpaid leave

Unpaid leave on compassionate grounds up to a maximum of 30 days may be granted after bereavement. An employee must consult with their line manager before starting unpaid leave.

2.4 Return to work

Returning to work after bereavement can be challenging. If an employee feels that they will require additional support or accommodations upon their return to work, they are encouraged to discuss this with their line manager.

In certain circumstances a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative – for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role, or where new child care arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee. In such instances EDA will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where practicable. Alternative duties may also be considered. Any such arrangement would need to be agreed in advance by the line manager, would be subject to an agreed maximum number of days and would be managed in line with EDA's flexible working/part-time working policy.

2.5 Employee support

EDA acknowledges that bereavement leave is intended to support employees in the immediate period around the death of a relative. However, the process of grief, the natural reaction and adjustment to loss and change may take a significant time and will be personal to each individual.

An employee with any concerns about the grieving process impacting on their work performance should discuss this in confidence with either their line manager or the Business & Strategy Manager, to ensure that any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary are discussed and put in place and that the employee is supported in their return to the full range of duties and responsibilities that they had prior to the bereavement or their duties and responsibilities are adjusted (as necessary) with the prior agreement of line manager.

EDA recognises that the majority of people do not require counselling to cope effectively with their grief. However, for employees wishing to avail themselves of professional help in coming to terms with a significant loss, the organisation will cover the cost of up to 4 counselling sessions with an independent counselling practice. This is a confidential service and can be accessed by speaking to the Business & Strategy Manager.

Should an employee engage in further support, EDA ask that, where possible, these support sessions are organised to take place outside of working hours. If this is not possible, the employee is required to inform their line manager of their appointment times to see if these can be approved by EDA senior management.

If sessions take place via online communications such as Zoom, Teams or phone calls, whilst the employee may be able to use their lunch allowance time to have their sessions, EDA cannot guarantee that a private space will be available for the employee to use. In most cases during term time, all EDA rooms and studios will be in use by other employees, freelancers and students.

2.6 Health and safety

Bereavement can have an impact on concentration, sleep, and decision-making. The health and safety assessment of the workplace will include consideration of the impact of bereavement on employees, their duties and responsibilities, and the context in which they are working.

Any employee who is concerned about their ability to conduct their duties safely in the weeks following a bereavement must discuss this with their line manager.

EDA reserves the right to request an employee to meet the organisation's doctor before resuming full duties.

2.7 Culture and diversity

EDA recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways.

Line managers will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible.

Line managers who are unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

2.8 Supporting Documentation

There may be some cases where employees are required to provide appropriate documentation, such as an obituary or funeral program, to verify the need for bereavement leave.

2.5 Additional Support

EDA encourage employees to seek additional support if it is needed, including the use of counselling services. Should an employee engage in additional support such as counselling sessions, EDA ask that, where possible, these sessions are organised to take place outside of working hours. If this is not possible, the employee is required to inform their line manager of their appointment times to see if these can be approved by EDA senior management.

If sessions take place via online communications such as Zoom, Teams or phone calls, whilst the employee may be able to use their lunch allowance time to have this meeting, EDA cannot guarantee that a private space will be available for the employee to use. In most cases during term time, all EDA rooms and studios will be in use by other employees, freelancers and students.

2.6 Notification

The bereaved employee is asked to communicate with their line manager at the earliest opportunity if they have suffered a bereavement.

It is essential that relevant staff are informed as soon as possible, and a plan is put in place to either cover the bereaved staff member's workload and to communicate their wishes with regards to telling other people as they wish/require.

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2.7 Review and update

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness remains.

3.0 Death occurrences within the EDA community

3.1 Death of an EDA student

In the case of the death of a student appropriate support should be provided for the whole college community. A book of remembrance could be set up in an appropriate location where the bereaved can come to express their grief and loss. If appropriate a meeting of remembrance may be held.

Support for staff who are directly involved with grieving students is important, and staff should have the opportunity to meet to provide an opportunity to share feelings and reactions.

If the press is involved in reporting on the death, the Business, Compliance & Strategy Manager will consult with any necessary academic partners regarding an official statement on behalf of EDA.

In general, it is best to have a minimum of disruption to the college timetable. The structure of the college day is important to maintain, but some flexibility may be required.

3.2 Death of a member of staff

In the case of the death of a member of staff, appropriate support should be provided for the whole College community. A book of remembrance could be set up in an appropriate location where the bereaved can come to express their grief and loss. A meeting of remembrance may also be held.

Special support, including appropriate cover may be needed for staff who worked particularly closely with the deceased. The Principal will determine the appropriate period of time for these pastoral supports to continue. If the press is involved in reporting on the death, the Business, Compliance & Strategy Manager will consult with any necessary academic partners regarding an official statement on behalf of EDA.

In general, it is best to have a minimum of disruption to the college timetable. The structure of the college day is important to maintain, but some flexibility may be required. Great sensitivity and care will need to be taken in determining how lessons will be covered immediately following the death. All staff members must have emergency contact details listed in the event that any tragedies happen on site at the college.

3.3 Funeral arrangements and procedure

When a funeral has been planned for the deceased, it is essential that the college is sensitive to the family's culture and abides by the family's wishes. The family may welcome involvement of members of the college community but equally, may wish to keep the funeral private. The Principal will identify which staff and students may want to attend and the practicalities of issues such as staff cover. The Principal will also consult with staff and students in determining what is appropriate in terms of sending flowers, a collection and/or any further more permanent remembrance.

Version number	Date of issue	Review date	Author	Changes made/detail
01	21 st August 2023	July 2024	Sarah Beale and Eden Tinsey	First issue

