



8th September 2022

Dear parents and carers,

Following yesterday's extremely sad news, I would firstly like to convey my condolences to the Royal Family on behalf of everyone connected with Speenhamland School. Our recent Platinum Jubilee celebrations gave the children and staff a real insight into Queen Elizabeth II's inspirational reign. I know that the children really enjoyed learning about her and celebrating with the rest of the country. In Monday's assembly, there was huge excitement when I read out a letter we had received from the Queen thanking Wisteria class for sending lovely pictures and well wishes.

It was with sadness today, that we joined together as a school and shared an assembly which about the Queen's huge contributions to our country and the Commonwealth. After a lifetime spent dedicated to service, her loss will be felt around the world. I would like to re-assure you that the staff will be prepared to support all children, as necessary, over the forthcoming days. As a school, we will of course follow any directives issued by the government.

The Department for Education has already shared a message with schools:

It is with sadness that Buckingham Palace announced today the death of Her Majesty The Queen. We have now entered a period of national mourning that will continue until the end of the State Funeral. Guidance providing the public, businesses and institutions with advice on the period of national mourning following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will be issued by the Cabinet Office and available on GOV.UK. Once details of the funeral are confirmed by the Royal Household, we will write to you with further guidance and information.

For early years providers, there is no obligation for settings to observe particular behaviours during the mourning period. Depending on the nature and location of your setting and the tone of planned events, some settings may wish to consider closing or postponing events. Schools and Further Education settings should remain open. Whilst normal attendance is expected, headteachers continue to have the power to authorise leaves of absence for pupils in exceptional circumstances. Any requests for leave of absence should be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account individual circumstances.

Education and childcare settings may want to consider conducting special activities, holding assemblies or adapting planned lessons to reflect the period of national mourning and commemorate the life of Her Majesty. They may wish to repurpose the lesson materials about the Queen's Jubilee produced by Royal Collections Trust and The National Archives. Primary schools may also wish to adapt 'Queen Elizabeth: A Platinum Jubilee Celebration', the commemorative book distributed to state-funded primary schools across the United Kingdom in 2022.

If children and young people are upset, **Minded** is a source of information to support children and young people to manage death and loss. Education and childcare settings wishing to pay their respects by flying any flags at half-mast or holding silences should follow the guidance on GOV.UK You can also visit the Palace's website for more information about the mourning period: www.royal.uk. We know teachers, lecturers, early years colleagues and social workers around the country have an important role to play in reassuring children and young people at this difficult.

I will of course inform you all of any further notifications as they arise.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Julie Lewry
Headteacher

