

Ashbourne Primary School

Headteacher: Miss Paula Whysall

Chair of Governors: Ashley Tabony



17th February 2020

Dear parent,

I am writing to tell you that Miss Nicole Barnett died in hospital yesterday. This is obviously very sad news. She will be missed by the staff and pupils in our school. Our thoughts and condolences are with her family and friends.

I wanted to let you know about this sad event so that you can support your child if they are upset. We have spoken to all the pupils and they have had an opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about her death. I have taken advice from the Educational Psychology Service about the best way to help the pupils understand what has happened, and to support them at this difficult time.

If you choose to talk to your child, the school's Educational Psychologist has offered the following advice about the best way to talk to children about bereavement:

If you do wish to talk to your child, it is important to:

- Remain calm, it is helpful for children to see that adults are in control
- Share your feelings with your child at an appropriate level, it is ok to show that you are sad or upset about what has happened
- Tell them what has happened truthfully, at a level your child can understand, but do not give them details they do not need to know or which may frighten them
- Avoid euphemisms such as 'passed away', 'lost', 'gone to sleep' etc as these can confuse children and create further difficulties, it is better to use the word 'died'
- Say 'I don't know' if they ask a question you do not know the answer to
- Keep everything else as normal as possible

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any concerns about your child's response to this news.

It is likely that Ashbourne Primary will close for the funeral and we will let you know as soon as we have further details.

Kind regards,

Miss Paula Whysall, Headteacher