



Stafford Borough Council

Bereavement Services

Policy Statement Relating to the Cremation of Babies and Infants

We, at Stafford Bereavement Services have, at all times considered the wellbeing of bereaved families and the baby or infant left in our care. This compassion has always been reflected in our administrative practices, operational procedures and will continue to do so.

Definition of 'ashes'

Whilst our staff might use the terms 'ashes' and 'cremated remains' we deem these to be one and the same and defined as *'all that is left in the cremator at the end of the cremation process and following the removal of any metal'*.

Minimising the loss of ashes during cremation

Our approach to the cremation of babies and infants has always intended to minimise the loss of ashes. This includes the use of a cremation tray where practical together with a professional, operational approach that will minimise the loss of any ashes during the process of cremation.

Our staff will be vigilant during the cremation process and adjust operational conditions when necessary in order to protect the ashes of babies and infants to reduce any loss. We will adhere to our identification procedure that guarantees the ashes resulting from individual cremations returned to parents are those of their babies.

Shared Cremations

Where a shared cremation has been chosen by parents and ashes are not individually identifiable, we will take the same care throughout the cremation process. We will scatter the ashes within the garden of remembrance or bury the ashes in the Rainbow garden. The location will be recorded for future reference.

Disposal of Ashes

In relation to the disposal of ashes, in the case of private cremation, we will only act upon the written instruction of the parent who is acting as the Applicant for Cremation.

In the case of shared cremations we will only act on the written instructions of the designated person at the relevant hospital, who is taking on the responsibility as the Applicant for the Cremation.

Record Keeping

All cremations of babies and infants will be registered at the crematorium, with all forms and documents being retained, in respect of electronic copies, indefinitely.

If ashes are scattered or buried within the grounds of the crematorium the final resting place will be registered along with any details of any person authorised by the applicant to remove/collect the ashes.

The policy of this Cremation Authority is designed to provide an audit trail from the recipient of initial funeral instructions to the final disposal of ashes, either by collection from the crematorium or by scattering or burial within the confines of the Garden of Remembrance.

Questions or Queries

If you have any questions or queries about the cremation of your baby, you can speak to a member of our Bereavement Services Team by calling in at our office, alternatively please use any of the contact methods below:

TEL: 01785 242 594

FAX: 01785 228 521

EMAIL: bereavementservices@staffordbc.gov.uk

WEB: www.staffordbc.gov.uk