

Policy Statement Relating to the Cremation of Babies and Infants

This Cremation Authority wishes it to be known that it considers the interests of the bereaved family and the baby or infant left in our care to be the central focus of our attention. This will be reflected in all of our administrative and operational practices and procedures.

Definition of 'ashes'

Whilst our employees 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'. There might be a small number of cases where there are no ashes remaining at the end of the cremation process. If this is the case our staff will contact the Funeral Director to advise the applicant of this.

Maximising the recovery of ashes during cremation

We have developed an approach to the cremation of babies and infants that is designed to maximise the recovery of ashes. This includes the use of a cremation tray designed to retain ashes where practicable and the maintenance of operational conditions 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 and maximise their recovery.

We will adhere to our identification procedure that guarantees that the ashes resulting from individual cremations returned to parents are those of their babies.

Shared cremations

Where a shared cremation has been authorised and hence ashes are not individually identifiable, we will take the same care throughout the cremation process, including steps to maximise the recovery of ashes, and will scatter/bury the ashes within the crematorium's designated area. The location will be recorded for future reference.

Disposal of Ashes

In relation to the disposal of ashes in the case of a private cremation, this Cremation Authority will only act upon the written instruction of the parent who is acting as the Applicant for Cremation or other person nominated in writing by the parent.

In the case of shared cremations we will only act on the written instruction of the designated person at the relevant hospital, who is acting as the Applicant.

Ashes will be held at the crematorium for up to 4 weeks to await collection by representatives or instructions as to their disposal.

Where no further instructions have been received within the four week period, the ashes will be returned to the Funeral Director.

Record-Keeping

All cremations of babies and infants will be recorded at the Bereavement Services Head offices, with all information as contained in forms and certificates being retained indefinitely.

If ashes are scattered or buried within the grounds of the crematorium, the final resting place will be recorded. Where ashes are to be collected, the details of any person authorised by the applicant to remove/collect the ashes will be recorded.

The policy of this Cremation Authority is designed to provide an audit trail from the receipt 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 Gardens of Remembrance or other such designated area.

Questions or Queries

If you have any questions or queries about the cremation of your baby, you can speak to the administration office on **0113 378 8196**