



CYRIL JACKSON PRIMARY SCHOOL BEREAVEMENT POLICY

VISION AND VALUES:



STATEMENT OF AIMS:

- To provide a supportive, stimulating environment in which each child is enabled and encouraged to attain the highest standard of achievement of which he or she is capable.
- To ensure that the curriculum is broad and well balanced following all subjects in the National Curriculum.
- To value each individual's contribution irrespective of race, gender, religion or ability.
- To encourage children to be aware of their behaviour and how it affects other people.
- To recognise that children have a variety of special needs and endeavour to provide appropriately for the needs of individuals.
- To ensure that the curriculum reflects the richness of our multi-cultural society.
- To foster and build on relationships with parents, governors and the wider community.
- To provide a planned process of staff development

Cyril Jackson recognises the impact of bereavement on pupils, families and staff members. The following outlines the response adopted by the school.

1. How School Can Help
2. Responding to a Death
3. Supporting a Bereaved Pupil
4. Supporting Parents and Carers
5. Looking After Yourself
6. Saying Goodbye
7. Children's Understanding of Death
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1. HOW THE SCHOOL CAN HELP

Most grieving pupils do not need a "bereavement expert" they need people who care. Schools, just by carrying on with their usual day- to-day activities, can do a huge amount to support a grieving child. The following are some helpful things schools can offer children and young people experiencing loss and grief.

[Bereavement Policy – Reviewed June 2020](#)
[To be reviewed as necessary](#)

NORMALITY

For a child, or young person, whose life has been turned upside down, the routines of school life can give a sense of normality. Everything else may have fallen apart but school and the people within it are still there, offering a sense of security and continuity.

RELIEF FROM GRIEF

For young children and adolescents, school can give relief from an emotionally charged atmosphere at home. They may feel overwhelmed by a grieving family. There may be a constant stream of visitors expressing their own grief. Children and young people can find this difficult to deal with.

AN OUTLET FOR GRIEF

When a parent or sibling has died, children and young people can try to spare their surviving parent by hiding their own grief and appearing to be OK. School is often seen as somewhere safe to express this grief.

A LISTENING EAR

Children can be overlooked by family members struggling to deal with their own grief. For a child who wishes to, school staff can provide an opportunity to talk about what has happened with a familiar and trusted adult in relative peace and calm.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE A CHILD

Even when deeply sad, children still need to be children. Loss and grief are very grown up experiences. School offers the chance to play, laugh, sing and generally just be a child without feeling guilty.

GENERAL SUPPORT

Keep in contact with home. Discuss concerns but equally important are successes. The family or carers will find this reassuring. Grieving children and young people can display altered behaviours in different situations. Good communication with home will help school be aware of this and provide a more realistic picture of how the child is coping.

RESOURCES

Have in school a selection of resources on the subject. Refer to the Booklists and Resources factsheets in this pack for ideas. Stories are a wonderful way to gently introduce young children to the concept of death. Novels and poems offer young people a chance to learn through reading, listening and discussion. One example, "The Soul Bird" is given overleaf.

2. RESPONDING TO A DEATH IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The role that school plays in supporting a child or young person who has experienced bereavement is vital. The school's response will depend on

individual circumstances and each pupil's needs and feelings. Here are some general guidelines.

GIVE EACH INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP OF THEIR GRIEF.

Everyone, child or adult, will grieve in their own way. Try not to make assumptions about what they should be doing, how they should be feeling or what is going to help. When not sure, ask them what they would like to happen.

SUPPORTING THE PARENT(S) OR CARERS

Someone from school should liaise with the family. Offer to visit if the family and child would find this helpful.

Check the facts surrounding the death and what the child has been told. Conflicting information from school and home will confuse and may cause the child to lose trust in those trying to help.

A card or letter of condolence will reassure the family of your support. A card to a bereaved child from his/her class is usually appreciated and helps to keep up contact with school.

Staff and pupils may wish to attend the funeral. Check that this is OK with the family before making arrangements. Think through practical considerations such as how are pupils going to get there, and cover for staff.

TELLING THE SCHOOL OR CLASS (SEE ALSO SCHOOL POLICY FACT SHEET)

If possible, obtain the permission of a bereaved child before doing this. The child may or may not wish to be present. Consider with the family how giving the news to the school community should be done. The parent, carer or child may wish to write a letter to be read out in school. School may decide to explain in an assembly or each teacher could individually tell their class.

Avoiding the subject always makes matters worse. It is better to explain what has happened in a sensitive way to avoid rumors and whispers. Use the correct words such as "death" and "dead" rather than euphemisms such as "lost" or "gone to sleep".

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Many bereaved children and young people find returning to school a very hard thing to do, but it may also be a welcome refuge of normality after the chaos of emotion at home. Do what you can to make it as fuss free as possible. The longer it is delayed, the more difficult it will be.

Before the child returns make sure that all teaching and ancillary staff are aware what has happened. Identify someone that the child has a good relationship with to keep an eye on

them.

As soon as possible, preferably before the start of class, talk to the pupil to acknowledge what has happened. If they begin to cry, reassure them that it is natural and OK to do so. There may be no reaction at all. They may wish to push the whole thing to the back of their mind in an attempt to be "normal".

LONG TERM CONSIDERATIONS

A bereaved child will find school very tiring.

They may have difficulty concentrating, think more slowly, lack initiative and need more help than usual. It may help to allow them to work in smaller groups than normal and ease up on homework. Work rate can be affected for as long as a year or more.

Bereaved children may feel different and not "normal". They may well be teased by others. Try to keep an ear to the ground for signs of this and deal with it promptly.

Consider curriculum subjects which may be distressing. Prepare the child by discussing how he/she feels about a topic before starting it with the class.

Be aware that Christmas, birthdays, Mother's or Father's Day and other special events can be especially difficult. Again, ask the child how they feel about it.

Watch out for changes in behavior. These may surface many months afterwards. Aggression may be a way of letting out feelings of anger or anxiety. Be equally alert for a pupil who is uncharacteristically quiet.

Keep up contact with the family, especially if you suspect the child is having difficulties. Let them know your concerns.

Inform new staff of the circumstances and update current members of staff on the child's progress.

In the event of the death being an adult member of the school community the principal remains the same, but obviously it relates to 'in school'.

It is important that we consider the needs of the family in the same way as if it were a pupil.

2. SUPPORTING A BEREAVED PUPIL: GUIDANCE FOR ALL STAFF

We are often at a loss to know what to say to a child or young person who has been bereaved and what we can do to help them. The following are brief guidelines on how to offer support.

Check out the facts and familiarise yourself with the circumstances surrounding the death. Communicate with the family or lead member of staff and make sure that what you say will not conflict with the family's wishes.

ACKNOWLEDGE

Acknowledge what has happened and do not be afraid to use the word "death" "I was very sorry to hear of the death of your..." If you find words difficult you can say a lot with just a touch.

Children and young people need honesty. Although sometimes difficult, it is better to answer awkward questions truthfully.

Allow them to express emotion and feelings and do not be afraid to share your own feelings of sadness.

Do talk about the dead person and share any memories. The bereaved child may well need to do this. Ignoring the dead person is a denial that they ever existed.

Recognise the full tragedy. Do not try to comfort with comments such as "at least it is not as bad as". You might think this is helpful, it is not.

REASSURANCE

Reassure them that they are not responsible. It is very common for children and young people to feel that in some way they caused the death.

SUPPORT

Give bereaved pupil's time. It may be many months before they can fully cope with the pressures of school work. Remember that they will be grieving for life and the loss will always be with them.

Don't assume that a lack of reaction means that they do not care. Initially, the full reality may not have sunk in. Young people can feel that they have to be seen to be coping as a sign of maturity.

Try not to judge, grief is a very personal experience, every child and young person will do it their way.

This applies to members of staff too, who are grieving.

SUPPORT IDEAS AND RESOURCES

1. Time Out Cards

The pupil is given permission to leave the class when beginning to feel out of control or just to get some "personal space" when upset. A card giving permission is carried in the pocket and the pupil may leave the room without having to ask. It is important that staff are made aware of the situation to avoid embarrassing scenes for either pupil or teacher. It is essential that the pupil does not just wander around the school but goes to a designated place and person for as long as required. Ensure the child is aware of the designated member of staff or area they can go to during this time. The designated staff member must acknowledge the child's presence but allow the child to take ownership as to whether they wish to discuss their feelings or purely have some time alone.

2. Pocket Comforter

A pupil can discretely carry in their pocket a soft piece of fabric or a pebble or stone. Holding onto something solid such as a smooth pebble can help a pupil to remain grounded and in control if upset. Equally, touching a soft piece of garment that belonged to the dead person can provide a comforting memory.

Secret Diary

A way to communicate with a bereaved child who finds it difficult to verbalise feelings is using a notebook. The pupil just leaves it on the teacher's desk having written or drawn whatever they wish. The teacher responds in the diary and either discretely returns it to the pupil or just leaves it to be picked up from the desk again.

3. Happy/Sad faces

The bereaved pupil has a sheet of paper/paper plate or even a stone with two drawings of faces on either side, one happy, one sad. The pupil shows the side that reflects how they are feeling on a particular day. This gives the teacher an idea of how they are and therefore what approach to use.

4. I Can ... You Can ...

A series of four postcards for bereaved children and young people with ideas for how others can help them. Titles include TO MY TEACHER ... what you can do ...

Available from The Childhood Bereavement Network Tel:020 7843 6309.

Workbooks

See "Resources for Staff" factsheet for workbooks to use as a support tool and communication aid with bereaved pupils.

3. SUPPORTING PARENTS AND CARERS

When informing families of a death within the school community, parents and carers may appreciate guidance to help them respond to questions and better understand reactions from their own children. Below are some suggestions that they may find helpful.

Most children and young people affected by a death just need adults who care about them. You cannot take away their sadness, but you can acknowledge it and support them through the experience. Reactions will vary. If they were not close to the person who died, they may be unaffected. However it is best not to make assumptions. Any death may make children and young people anxious, as they become more aware of their own mortality and that of those around them.

ANSWERING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Questions are healthy, as is curiosity. A good approach with any age is to acknowledge what has happened and then answer questions as they arise. Having accurate information will enable you to answer questions with facts rather than rumour. Try to obtain this from a reliable source such as a school. Remember to be sensitive to the wishes of the bereaved family. It is vital to check how much information they wish to be given out.

Young children often do not have adult inhibitions surrounding death and you may be taken aback by some of their comments and reactions. It is not unusual for them to act out funerals or play at being dead. It is their way of trying to make sense of what has happened. Teenagers may become withdrawn and difficult to engage with. Respect their need for personal space whilst gently reminding that you are there if they need you.

Children often have a surprising capacity to deal with the truth, if given information in simple, straightforward language, appropriate for their age and understanding. Young children tend to make up what they do not know and their imaginings are often worse than the reality. Adolescents and teenagers will resent a lack of honesty in the adults around and the resultant loss of trust will be hard to regain.

Maintain routines, such as going to school. Familiar situations and contact with friends brings security and a sense of normality.

Continue to expect usual rules of behaviour. Normality with love and compassion is what to aim for.

SHARING GRIEF

Do not think that you have to hide your own sadness. Seeing adults expressing emotion can give a child of any age "permission" to do the same, if they feel they want to. Hearing how you are feeling may help them to consider their own feelings.

Be ready to listen but don't expect your child to always want to talk. They usually will when ready, and often to people who are not immediate family. One way to create opportunities for sharing thoughts and memories is with a joint activity. Young people especially, tend to talk when they do not feel under pressure to do so.

BEHAVIOUR

You may notice some of the following which are all normal as long as they do not go on for too long:

1. Change in behaviour, perhaps becoming unnaturally quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive.
2. Anger is a common response at all ages and may be directed at people or events which have no connection to the death.
3. Disturbed sleep and bad dreams.
4. Anxiety demonstrated by clinging behaviour and a reluctance to be separated from parents or carers. Older children may express this in more practical ways, with concerns over issues that adults may perceive as insensitive. such as lifts to activities.
5. Being easily upset by events that would normally be trivial.
6. Difficulty concentrating. being forgetful and generally "not with it" This makes school work particularly hard and academic performance may suffer. Older children may feel that there is no point in working hard at school and might lose a general sense of purpose in their lives.
7. Physical complaints. such as headaches, stomach aches and a general tendency to be run down and prone to minor illness.

Grief is a natural and necessary response to a death. However, if concerned about your child, do not hesitate to seek advice.

This section can be copied and given to parents /carers in order to support their child.

4. LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Being alongside anyone experiencing a loss is emotionally demanding, but supporting a bereaved child, particularly so. The need for support is not an inability to cope or of professional incompetence but a recognition that everyone needs help to carry out this demanding role. Below are some ideas for ways to look after yourself.

SHARE FEELINGS

Use friends and colleagues to talk about how you are feeling and share experiences. Just knowing that others are affected can help you to feel less alone and more able to care. Informal peer support in the staffroom, can be a welcome opportunity to talk through issues and concerns and reduce feelings of inadequacy by jointly talking through helping strategies.

Anticipate that you may experience an emotional reaction

It is perfectly normal and OK to be emotionally affected. However, recognise that in order to help others, you need to feel reasonably strong yourself. You may become aware of previous losses in your own life that have resurfaced. If it all feels too close to home, do not be afraid to say so. This is not a sign of weakness but merely recognising that we all have our limits.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

When working in a school environment, it is very easy to let the carer in us take over and forget our professional boundaries. Getting over involved is not helpful to either yourself or the bereaved child or adult. Remember that you cannot carry their grief for them, but you can share their journey by being there and being aware.

HAVE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONS

Having contact details of bereavement organisations will enable you to feel that you have done something practical to support a grieving family. You will be helping by putting them in touch with people better able to offer the support they need. **See Organisations Factsheet.**

HELP OTHERS

If you become aware that a colleague is stressed or affected by a death in your school community, or know that they have experienced bereavement themselves, try to find the time to ask how they are.

Spoil Yourself

Make time to do something just for you, or give yourself a treat. Physical exercise is a great stress buster.

FACTORS THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO OVERLOAD.

Supporting bereaved children is emotionally demanding. In a study by Brown (1993), teachers from five schools cited the following factors as contributing to their stress.

- Witnessing pain and distress experienced by the families.
- Feeling unskilled in dealing with emotional responses.

- Physical exhaustion as a result of emotional trauma.
- Poor communication between themselves and families or other carers.

Brown also comments on the tensions that can arise in a school setting between personal needs and the professional role. Distancing oneself protects but may be perceived as not helpful to the bereaved individual. Being over involved can lead to attachments that are inappropriate or impossible to sustain.

MAKE IT MANAGEABLE

It does not help to offer something that you cannot deliver.

No matter how well meant or strong the desire to take the pain away, always try to be realistic with the amount of support that you can give. It is much better to offer something small but constant rather than a grand gesture that is going to be difficult to deliver. Providing a listening ear once a week and sticking to it is more meaningful than the offer of help anytime when inevitably that can not be achieved within a busy school environment. Other demands will get in the way and you will feel stressed over breaking the arrangement.

Try to recognise when you are running on empty. Working in the education profession is very much about giving in terms of time and energy, supporting a bereaved pupil may compound this, resulting in very depleted resources. It is hardest to ask for help when we most need it as to do so requires energy and strength. Some of the signs include feeling physically exhausted and overworked, an inability to delegate and generally not on top of things. Remind yourself that doing a "good enough" job is perfectly OK .

EFFECTIVE SUPPORT

You do not need to be an expert to provide effective help.

Many of us feel inadequate and out of our depth when faced with adults or children experiencing deep sadness or trauma. Being alongside hurting children can remind us of our own vulnerability and mortality. Most teachers and school staff are caring individuals who naturally have the characteristics required to support bereaved children. It is more about being there for them whilst in school and building a relationship with them in your classroom, than being bereavement professional. Seek advice from a senior member of staff if you wish for extra support on how to support a child.

5.SAYING GOODBYE

SPECIAL ASSEMBLIES

Most schools feel that organising some sort of special assembly or remembrance service after a death in a school community is a helpful thing to do. It can put back a sense of normality into what may have been a very unsettled time. Below are some ideas to help you organise something appropriate.

WHY HOLD A SPECIAL ASSEMBLY?

- To bring the school together to acknowledge what has happened.
- To reflect on, and remember, the life of the person who has died.
- To normalise and share grief.

- To give the message that it is OK to be sad but equally OK to not be affected.
- To inform pupils and staff of any support that is available.
- **To share any religious or cultural**

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Anyone who wishes to be there; staff members, pupils and any family wish to attend. In a very large school it may not be possible to get everyone together and a year group assembly might be more appropriate. Many families find comfort in other people organising something special and appreciate being there. Others may not wish to participate but should be given the opportunity to do so.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

Anyone who wants to.

Pupils have produced some very moving assemblies about friends who have died. It helps them to feel involved and gives a sense of doing something positive. Very young children will need greater amounts of adult input but can still participate in a way appropriate for their age and understanding.

HOW TO STRUCTURE A SPECIAL ASSEMBLY

Have a clear beginning, middle and an end.

BEGINNING

Start by explaining the purpose and length of the assembly. Follow with a brief reminder of the circumstances surrounding the death and when it happened.

MIDDLE

The middle section could include:

- Lighting a special remembrance candle.
- Favourite songs or poems of the person who has died.
- Pupils or staff taking it in turns to recount stories or memories.
- Photographs of the person or child who has died to give a visual reminder, but remember, a large image can be too much for a grieving family.
- Placing objects associated with the dead person into a special memory box. (This can then be given to the family.)
- Talking about a memory tree or collage made by sticking a collection of drawings that pupils have created onto a large sheet of paper or onto a tree outline. This can be added to during the assembly.

HOW TO END

This needs some thought and is better if it can leave everyone with a sense of looking forward. Some suggestions include.

- Giving a memory box or memory book to the family.
- Blowing out the remembrance candle.
- Going outside to release balloons. These could have a message attached.

- After leaving assembly, pupils who wish to, plant a bulb to create a special Memory garden.
- Asking pupils to bring a farewell message to the person who has died to put into a special memory garden.
- Asking pupils to bring a farewell message to the person who has died to put into a special box as they leave. This can help pupils to personalize a goodbye.
- Reflective but uplifting music helps to create the right atmosphere.

AFTERWARDS

It is best to arrange the assembly before a break. Pupils and staff will need space to reflect before carrying on with normal school timetable. Some schools time it for the end of lessons but the build-up throughout the day can be difficult to handle. If arranged for the end of the school day, leave time for pupils to compose themselves before leaving for home. Be prepared for different responses, some pupils may be deeply affected, others not at all, or react with out of character behaviour. Ensure they all know where to go for support if required.

6. CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH

Children and Young people mature at different rates and their understanding and responses to bereavement are likely to be based as much on their experience of life as on their chronological age. The age categories given are guidelines only and it is important to realise that responses do vary and occur at other ages. (Monroe, 1993: Monroe and Kraus, 1996)

2-5 YEARS

Young children may be beginning to understand the concept of death, but do not appreciate its finality. Some may expect the dead person to reappear - "shall we dig granny up now?" They think in literal and concrete terms and so will be confused by euphemisms for death such as "gone away" or "gone to sleep". Children of this age may well require repeated explanations of what has happened. As their thinking is very much centred on themselves, they may consider that something they did or said caused the death. They are prone to fantasize at this age and if not told what is happening may dream up something more scary than reality

5-8 YEARS

At about five years of age most children realise that dead people are different from those that are alive, that they do not feel, they cannot hear, see, smell or speak and they do not need to eat or drink. By seven years of age the majority of children accept that death is permanent and that it can happen to anyone. This can result in separation anxiety. They are more able to express their thoughts and feelings but may conceal them and outwardly appear unaffected. They need to be given an opportunity to ask questions and to be given as much information as possible to allow them to adjust. They are likely to be very interested in the rituals surrounding death.

8-12 YEARS

At this age children's understanding of death almost matches that of an adult, although they find it difficult to grasp abstract concepts. An important factor is their deepening realisation of the inevitability of death and an increasing awareness of their own mortality and the fear and insecurity that this can cause. The need to know details continues with answers sought to very specific questions.

ADOLESCENCE

The struggle for independence at this age may cause bereaved teenagers to challenge the beliefs and expectations of others as to how they should be feeling or behaving. Death increases anxieties about the future, they may question the meaning of life and experience depression. Teenagers may find it easier to discuss their feelings with a sympathetic friend or adult than close family member. They may be having difficulty coming to terms with their own mortality and that of those close to them and cope by refusing to contemplate the possibility of death with risk taking behaviour.

Children's beliefs and culture may also be a contributing factor to what they understand of death.

7. PUPILS WITH A LIFE THREATENING ILLNESS

Children who are terminally ill, whilst they are still able, may benefit enormously from normal routines such as attending school. This can present challenges for the school community. Sensitive but honest communication between the family and professionals involved, will overcome most of these, hopefully enriching the lives of all those who come into contact with the child or young person. Suggestions on how to manage such situations are given below.

ROUTINES

Children who are constantly in and out of hospital, welcome attending school as an opportunity to have some normality in their lives. Continuing to take part in school routines as much as possible can give a feeling of achievement, with the emphasis on living rather than dying. It can also give back a sense of identity as a person rather than a patient.

PEERS

Classmates who have had the situation explained to them are usually supportive. It often helps to involve them by giving jobs such as wheelchair pushing. Try to ensure these tasks are shared and do not become the responsibility of just one child.

LINKS WITH FAMILY

The school and family, including the sick child, need to decide together how to share the news that a pupil is terminally ill. Is it not easy, but an open and honest approach is usually the best way. However much adults try to hide what is happening, children instinctively know something is wrong and will often have worked out that a class member is dying before being officially told. Telling only the immediate peer group may seem like a

good idea but the grapevine will take over resulting in gossip and half-truths throughout the rest of the school.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

If the child is receiving treatment from a local hospice or hospital, there is often a nurse or social worker whose job includes visiting schools to explain to pupils about a friend's illness and treatments involved. This should help alleviate any worries that fellow pupils may have. It is helpful for the school to at least identify the key professional responsible for the ill child and how to contact them for advice and support.

SUPPORT FOR OTHER CHILDREN IN THE CLASS

Children deal with difficult situations much better when truthful explanations are given regarding absences, changing appearance, lack of energy, treatments and exclusion from activities such as sport. Being naturally curious, classmates will ask questions, these should be answered sensitively but factually. Seriously ill children are often extremely knowledgeable about their illness and may well be happy to provide the answers themselves. A sense of normality is further maintained by continuing to expect usual standards of behaviour within the child's limitations. This helps to reduce feelings of favouritism amongst other children.

PARENTS

Other parents and carers at the school may have concerns surrounding their own children being upset or made anxious by a classmate who is seriously ill. Reassurance that children and young people will have fewer anxieties if presented with the truth, rather than having to make up what is happening, may help. With consent from the family of the sick child, information on the illness and treatments will help other parents and carers to understand and feel informed. The realization that their children are contributing to an increased quality of life for the sick child may create a more positive approach. Offer information on what to say to children when someone is dying.

8.DEATH THROUGH SUICIDE

Whether supporting a pupil bereaved through the suicide of a family member, or trying to help the friends of one who has decided to take their own life, schools need to think through an appropriate response. The guidelines below may be of help.

Suicide is a traumatic, sometimes violent, event and in our society still a "taboo" subject. Suicide rates for teenagers are on the increase. In the secondary sector, it is one of the most common types of violent death in teenage boys and 75% of suicides are carried out by males.

CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR

Ironically, when someone has been suicidal, or depressed, it is often when they are feeling better that they are more likely to attempt suicide. It takes a strong character and can be a difficult physical act which requires time and planning to be successful. With rapid changes and lack of security in life, suicide can seem the only way for a young person to

take control. People who take their own life do not necessarily want to die, more that they cannot find a reason to live.

DEALING WITH SUICIDE

Suicide is a very public event and school communities tend to have active grapevines. The circumstances surrounding the death may well be common knowledge but added to with rumors and confusion over details. The children directly affected, if not told the truth, will eventually find out what really happened and consequently lose trust in the adults around them. In consultation with the family, it is important that a school communicates to staff and pupils simple facts of events as quickly as possible. Sensitive explanation of the importance of the need for honesty may help a reluctant family but whatever approach is decided upon, school should follow the family's wishes. (see over "Beyond The Rough Rock")

With suicide there are many questions but few answers. Those left behind are often desperate to try to make some sense of the events and find a reason for what might appear to them to be a meaningless and selfish act. Lack of answers can complicate the grief process. Children and young people bereaved by suicide, or any traumatic or violent death, are more likely to need professional help. If unsure, never hesitate to seek advice from your Educational Psychologist or a bereavement organisation. (see over)

Guilt and anger are common reactions in bereaved children but are likely to be felt more intensely or go on for longer with a suicide than with other causes of death. This is especially so with teenagers who may feel huge amounts of anger around the destructive effect the suicide has on themselves and the devastating consequences for others in their lives. If a family has had to cope with severe mood swings and deep depression for many years, a child may feel a sense of relief over a suicide, followed by overwhelming guilt as a result. Family tensions of one sort may be replaced by others which is extremely 'difficult for a child to deal with.

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS:

- Children and young people bereaved through suicide are more likely to need skilled help but the informal support of familiar and trusted adults such as teachers is still vital.
- Children and young people who witnessed any part of the suicide, or found the body, may experience recurrent and intrusive recollections of the event. This will have a major impact on their ability to concentrate and school work is likely to suffer.
- The overwhelming feelings of anger and guilt associated with suicide may cause challenging behavior at school. Reassure that nothing the child did or said was the cause of the death. The person who died chose to take their own life.
- Suicide is the ultimate form of rejection for a young person or child and can result in very low self-esteem. School can help a child to feel better about themselves by emphasising the positive and recognising the smallest achievements.
- It is hard to find words to use around any bereavement, let alone one through suicide. It is important to offer the same comments that might be said to any pupil

experiencing the death of someone close to them. Silence will just reinforce feelings of isolation and shame.

9. DIFFERENT CULTURES AND BELIEFS

Schools have to function within an increasingly multi-cultural society, in which various beliefs, religious and non-religious, require to be taken into account. Respect for the differing needs, rituals and practices is essential when acknowledging a death. It is this diversity that enriches our lives.

GENERAL POINTS FOR EASTERN FAITHS:

- Within a faith there are often many variations and it is wrong to be prescriptive- beliefs can be moderated by life in a Western Culture.
- This is especially so for the younger generation, who may find it difficult to fit in with the stricter requirements of older members of a family or community.
- Families tend to be much more involved in preparing the body and the funeral arrangements than in Christian faiths.
- Because of belief in an afterlife, it is important that the whole body is retained. Postmortems therefore tend to be viewed as unwelcome procedures.
- The coffin is likely to be kept at home until the funeral and may well be open. All who wish to pay their respects will be very welcome.

The following descriptions merely give an overview of the major religions and belief systems that are found in the UK.

ISLAM

Muslims believe in life after death when, on the Last Day, the dead will come back to life to be judged by Allah. The good will reside in Paradise, the damned in Hell.

Muhammad teaches that all men and women are to serve Allah and that they should try to live perfectly, following the Qur'an. Devout Muslims believe that death is a part of Allah's plan and open expressions of grief may be viewed as disrespectful to this belief.

As cremation is forbidden, Muslims are always buried, ideally within 24 hours of the death. Ritual washing is usually performed by the family or close friends at the undertakers or mortuary. They will wrap the body in a clean cloth or shroud. The coffin is often very plain as traditionally one would not be used. The grave is aligned to enable the head of the deceased to be placed facing the holy city of Mecca. Muslim graves are unmarked but to meet UK requirements, a simple headstone is used as a compromise.

There is an official mourning period of three days when the family will remain at home and be brought food by friends and relatives. For forty days after the funeral relatives may wish to make regular visits to the grave on Fridays.

This may need to be recognised, particularly for periods of absence when supporting pupils or staff during this period of mourning.

CHRISTIANITY

Christians believe that there is just one God and that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. They believe that Jesus died on the cross (The Crucifixion), and that three days later, God raised him from the dead (The Resurrection).

Christians believe in an afterlife and also the idea of resurrection but the details around what actually happens at the time of death and afterwards, varies within the different denominations. For some, as soon as a person dies, he or she is judged by God and will immediately go to Heaven or Hell, dependent on how good or bad a life they led. For Roman Catholics, there is a half-way place called Purgatory, where an impure soul can stay until fit to enter Heaven. Others believe in the Day of Judgment, when the world will end and the dead will return to life to be judged by God.

Within the different Christian denominations, there are many variations on what happens at a funeral. When someone dies, the body is taken to an undertaker who will carry out the necessary preparations for the body to be laid out. This is to enable those who wish to view it before it is placed in a coffin. The funeral, organised by an undertaker, is about one week after the death. This usually takes place in a church, but sometimes a crematorium, or a combination of the two. The coffin will remain closed. Wreaths or bunches of flowers may be placed on the coffin. It is traditional to wear black but this custom varies. If held in a church, the funeral service may include a Holy Communion, Eucharist or Mass. The body will either be buried or cremated, dependent on the wishes of the deceased and the family. A churchyard grave is often marked by a headstone but for a cremation, the family may choose a more informal way to mark where the ashes are buried or have been scattered.

HUMANIST

Humanists are non-religious. They follow the principle that this life is the only one we have and therefore when you are dead there is no moving on to another one. The focus of a Humanist funeral is on celebrating the life of the deceased. The person people knew is talked about, stories shared, and memories recalled. Their favorite music may be played, whatever it is. This is done by friends and family who are supported by an Officiant. The ceremony, usually a cremation, will be tailored to meet the family's wishes rather than following a set pattern.

SIKHISM

Sikhs believe the soul goes through a cycle of rebirths, with the ultimate objective being to reach perfection, to be reunited with God and, as a result, break the cycle. Thus death holds no fear and mourning is done discretely. The present life is influenced by what happened in previous ones and the current life will set the scene for the next.

The deceased is cremated as soon as possible after death. The coffin is taken to the family home where it is left open for friends and family to pay their respects. It is then taken to the Gurdwara where hymns and prayers are sung. A short service follows at a crematorium, during which the eldest son presses the button for the coffin to move behind the curtain. In India, the eldest son would light the funeral pyre and no coffin would be

used. After the funeral, a meal may be held at the Gurdwara. The ashes may be taken back to India to be scattered. Here they may be sprinkled in the sea or river.

The family remain in mourning for several days after the funeral and may listen to readings from Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book).

BUDDHIST

Buddhists believe that nothing that exists is permanent and everything will ultimately cease to be. There is a belief in rebirth but not of a soul passing from one body to another. The rebirth is a state of constantly changing being rather than a clear cut reincarnation. There are few formal traditions relating to funerals and they tend to be seen as non-religious events. Cremation is the generally accepted practice and the service is kept very simple. It may be conducted by a Buddhist monk or sometimes family members.

HINDU

Hindus believe in reincarnation and a cycle of rebirths. When a person dies, the soul is reborn in a new body, returning to earth in either a better or worse form. What a person does in this life will influence what happens to them in the next, the law of Karma. Those that have performed good deeds in this life will be reborn into higher order families, those whose behaviour has been bad will be born again as outcasts.

A Hindu funeral is as much a celebration as a remembrance service. Hindus cremate their dead as it is the soul that has importance, not the body which is no longer needed. White is the traditional colour and mourners usually wear traditional Indian garments. If attending, it may be worth asking what will be appropriate dress.

During the service, offerings such as flowers or sweetmeats may be passed around and the bells rung so noise is a part of the ritual. The chief mourner, usually the eldest son, and other male members of the family, may shave their heads as a mark of respect. In India, the chief mourner would light the funeral pyre. Here, he will press the button to make the coffin disappear and in some instances, may be permitted to ignite the cremator. Ashes may be taken back to India to be scattered on the River Ganges.

In the UK, some areas of water have been designated as acceptable substitutes. The mourning may last between two and five weeks.

It is vital that the school takes into consideration the pupils or staff's religious and culture beliefs in order to effectively support their bereavement.

10. BOOKS FOR CHILDREN – KEY STAGE 1

BOOKS SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN IN KEY STAGE ONE

This is not an exhaustive list but a selection of literature. The books marked * are particularly suitable for reading during circle time. Always be prepared for children who may become upset. It is a good idea to let parents/carers know that you are introducing the subject of loss and bereavement.

1. * [Badger's Parting Gifts \(also available in Urdu and Arabic\) by Susan Varley](#)

When old badger dies, his friends think they will be sad forever. But gradually they are able to remember Badger with joy and to treasure the gifts he left behind for every one of his friends. Sensitively written, this book can help children identify and begin to understand feelings associated with the death of someone they love. Published by Collins Picture Lions.
Cost 4.99

2. * [The Goodbye Boat by Mary Joslin.](#)

Mary Joslin is the mother of three children. When a much loved grandfather of theirs died, she felt the need to find a way to talk with her children about saying goodbye forever, and to provide a message of hope during grieving. This book was written out of that experience. Richly illustrated with minimum text. Published by Lion Books.
Cost 5.99

3. [When Uncle Bob Died by Althea](#)

A helpful book which in a simple way explains the facts surrounding death. It is honest but reassuring. A good book to read to a young child to prepare them for the death of someone close. Realistic illustrations. Published by Happy Cat Books.
Cost 5.99

4. [The Saddest Time by Norma Simon](#)

Explains death as the inevitable end of life and provides three situations in which children experience powerful emotions when someone close has died. The scenarios are an uncle with a terminal illness, a classmate killed in an accident and a grandparent who dies of old age. Published by Albert Whitman Cost 5.00

5. * [Waterbugs and Dragonflies by D.Stickney](#)

Written from a Christian perspective, this acclaimed book can be used to help explain the concept of death to young children. The story illustrates that death is inevitable, irreversible but natural. It is presented as something that is sometimes difficult to understand but a happy experience for the deceased. Published by Continuum
Cost 5.99

6. [Saying Goodbye to .••.....•• by Nicola Edwards](#)

[Titles include: A Brother or Sister, A Parent, A Grandparent, A Friend, and A Pet.](#)

A series of five books with clear text and real life photographs. The aim is to help children understand and manage the facts and feelings surrounding bereavement in a sensitive, open and accessible way. Published by Chrysalis Children's Books
Cost 10.99 each.

7. [Lucy's Baby Brother by Althea Hayton.](#)

This book uses straightforward text and simple line drawings to tell the story of Lucy, age 4. whose baby brother dies shortly after his birth in hospital. Lucy goes to see baby Tom, and the family take photographs of him. The story also tells of baby Tom's funeral and of how, 2 years on, Lucy has a new baby brother called Sam. Published by Eddington Press
Cost 3.99.

8. * [Dogger by Shirley Hughes.](#)

A sensitively written story. with which adults and children will identify. It is about a little boy who loses his favorite toy "Dogger" and describes his feelings and responses as a result. Useful as a gentle introduction to the subject of Loss. Published by Red Fox.
Cost 5.99.

9. * [The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Voirst.](#)

A lovely and touching book that looks at death from the perspective of a child. Though dealing with the death of a pet, it takes a child through the rituals associated with any death. It addresses the feelings children have when faced by loss, and how we all deal with those feelings, learn from them, and grow. This book does not have religious overtones, so it can be used by families with different sets of beliefs. Published by Prentice Hall.
Cost 3.50.

10. [Beginnings and Endings With Lifetimes In Between by Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen.](#)

A beautifully illustrated book which aims to help parents and teachers explore the subjects of life and death with young children.
Cost 5.99.

11. [Granpa by John Burningham.](#)

A beautiful picture book which tells the story about the death of a little girl's grandfather. A good one for early years children. Published by Puffin.
Cost 4.99.

12. [BOOKS FOR CHILDREN KEY STAGE TWO](#)

This is not an exhaustive list but a selection of literature suitable to be read by bereaved children. Books can help children experiencing loss make some sense of confusing and sad emotions. They can also help children to feel less alone. Try to select books that are appropriate for individual circumstances. The books marked with * are workbooks rather than just story books.

1. [Charlotte's Webb by EB White.](#)

A classic story about the relationship between a piglet called Wilbur and Charlotte the spider. The piglet learns about life experiences including death. Published by Puffin.
Cost 10.99.

2. [Sad Book by Michael Rosen.](#)

Michael Rosen talks of his sadness after the death of his son. A personal story that speaks to adults and children. Minimum text with moving illustrations. Published by Walker Books
Cost 10.99.

3. What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies? by Trevor Romain.

Child friendly. accessible text, this book deals with the many questions that children of this age have around death and dying. Published by Free Spirit
Cost 5.99.

4. A Taste of Blackberries by Doris Buchanan Smith.

A story about a young boy and how he deals with the sudden death of his best friend due to an allergic reaction to a bee sting. Published by Harper Collins
Cost 5.00.

5. * Finding a Way Through When Someone Close Has Died by Mood and Whittaker.

This workbook is written by young people who have experienced the death of someone close. They offer advice based on their own experiences. The activities encourage young people to express their feelings and responses to death. Published by Jessica Kingsley.

6. *Grief Encounter by Shelley Gilbert.

The aim of this workbook is to encourage conversations between adults and bereaved children about death and loss. The target age is 8-15 years but does not exclude those who are older. The focus is on losing a parent but any child or young person touched by a bereavement could find this helpful. Published by NCB publications Tel: 020 7843 6029/8.
Cost 9.99.

7. * When Someone Very Special Dies by M.Heegard.

A simple workbook designed to be used by a bereaved child with adult help. It will help a child or young person to understand and express the many feelings that they will have. Communication is increased and coping skills developed as they work their way through it. Available from Smallwood Publishing Tel: 01304 226900
Cost 7.00.

13. BOOKS FOR CHILDREN WITH SEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Bereavement affects everyone and children and young people with special educational needs are no different. Books can be a useful tool to aid communication but helping these children may present issues that mainstream literature does not address. The following are suggestions that may assist children and young people with learning difficulties to understand difficult concepts such as the permanence of death, have some knowledge of bereavement rituals, and help them to make sense of confusing feelings.

1. Understanding Death and Dying by Fiona Cathcart.

A resource to help prepare an SEN child or adult if a friend is diagnosed with a terminal illness and to help them come to terms with a bereavement. Published by The British Institute of Learning, this is a series of three booklets;
Book 1 : Your Feelings (illustrated)
Book 2: A Guide for Families and Friends
Book 3: A Guide for Carers and Other Professionals Cost 10.00 for the set

2. When Somebody Dies by Hollins, Dowling and Blackman.

Using pictures, the book tells the story of Mary who is very upset when someone she loves dies. She is encouraged by a friend to go to regular bereavement counseling sessions, which help her to feel less sad. John also loses someone he is close to. He is given comfort and companionship by friends and is shown learning to cope better with life. Published by The Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Cost 10.00.

3. When Dad Died

When Mum Died by Hollins and Sireling.

Both books take an honest and straightforward approach to death and grief in the family. The pictures tell the death of a parent in a simple but moving way. When Dad Died illustrates a cremation, When Mum Died shows a burial. The approach is non-denominational. Published by The Royal College of Psychiatrists

Cost 10.00 each.

4. When Someone Very Special Dies by Marge Heegard.

A simple workbook that could be adapted for use with SEN children and young people. With adult help, users are invited to illustrate and personalise their loss. It also encourages the identification of support systems and personal strengths. Available from Smallwood Publishing Tel: 01304226900 Cost 6.50.

5. Let's talk about DEATH

A booklet about death and funerals for young people and adults who have a learning disability. Includes some simple text on why people die, what happens at funerals and possible grief reactions. Photographs support the text. Published by and available from the Scottish Down's Syndrome Association Tel: 0131 3134225 or via www.dsscotland.org.uk Cost 1.50.

6. Interventions with Bereaved Children edited by Smith and Pennells.

A useful resource with lots of practical ideas. Twenty contributors share effective ways of supporting and helping bereaved children. Chapter 13 is titled, "Helping Families and Professionals to Work with Children who have Learning Difficulties." Published by Jessica Kingsley.

Cost 16.00.

7. Hand-in Hand

A Resource Pack for schools with practical ideas for supporting children and young people with learning difficulties through the experience of bereavement. Includes a section on using symbols to explain death and funerals. Produced by and available from SeeSaw Tel 01865 744768.

Cost £ 10.00.

14. RESOURCES FOR STAFF

How School can help
Responding to a death
Supporting a Bereaved Pupil
Supporting Parents and Carers

This is not an exhaustive list but a selection of literature suitable for Teachers and Staff to support children and families during their bereavement time.

1. www.iflshouddie.co.uk

A website with a link to “poems and words to comfort” which might give ideas for appropriate texts to use.

2. [A Heartbeat Away by F. Lane Fox](#)

A collection of writings, poems and extracts, from many sources that chart the journey of the bereaved from grief, rage and anguish through to hope for the future. Available from the child bereavement charity Tel 01494 446648
Cost 10.00 inc post and packing.

3. [Grief and Bereavement: understanding children by Ann Couldrick](#)

A booklet for adults to help them understand some of the ways children respond to grief. Available from The Child Bereavement Charity, telephone 01494 446648.
Cost 2.50

4. [Talking About Death: A dialogue between parent and child by Earl Grollman](#)

A guide for adults and children to read together which helps with words and explanations for some of the questions that children might ask.
Cost 9.30

5. [Child Bereavement Charity Information and Support Team](#)

Can be contacted on 01494 446648 for information, resources and sign posting to other organisations.

6. [Grief in Children: A Handbook for Adults by A. Dyregrov.](#)

A short book which looks at children's understanding of death and outlines practical ways in which adults can respond. A good one as a general school resource for teachers and support staff. Available from Jessica Kingsley Publishers, Tel: 020 7833 2307.
Cost 12.95.

7. [Children and Bereavement by W. Duffy.](#)

This sensitive guide examines the needs of bereaved children of different ages, their reactions to death and the stages of their grief. Published by Church House.
Cost 6.95.

8. Grief and Bereavement: understanding children by A. Couldrick.

A booklet for adults to help them understand some of the ways children respond to grief. Available from 'The Child Bereavement Charity,' Tel: 01494 446648. Cost 2.50 .

9. Loss, Change and Grief - an educational perspective by E. Brown.

The author explores many experiences of loss and grief within school settings and different beliefs and practices are discussed. She also provides general suggestions for ways in which the topic can be taught within the school curriculum. Published by David Fulton.

Cost 17.00.

10. Childhood Bereavement- developing the curriculum and pastoral support by Job & Francis.

Using case studies and drawing on best practice, this resource aims to help those working in schools address death, dying and bereavement from both a pastoral care and educational perspective. It provides lesson ideas for how to achieve this through the curriculum. Available from The National Children's Bureau, Tel: 020 7843 6029. Cost 15.50.

11. A Resource Bank on Loss and Grief "it hurts" by M. Harvey.

Includes guidelines on facilitating sessions around loss and grief with 11 photocopiable activities, brief information about the nature of loss and grief and its impact on young people. Good for PSHE.

Only available from Youth Clubs UK, Tel: 020 72424045.

12. Good Grief-Exploring Feelings Loss and Death with under 11' s by B Ward.

Very comprehensive, gives information, guidance and full of ideas for classroom activities. Available from Jessica Kingsley Tel: 020 7833 2307 or order online from www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk. Cost 30.00 each.

13. Supporting Young People Coping with Grief, Loss and Death by Weymont and Rae.

A complete teaching programme designed to be delivered to whole classes or groups of students age 11-18. The aim is to enable them to understand about loss, grief and death but also to promote emotional health and literacy. Information on Loss and Grief, facilitator notes and copiable activities are included for twelve sessions. Available online from www.luckyduck.co.uk.

Cost 17.99 (includes a CD-ROM).

14. Then, Now and Always by J. Stokes.

More suitable for those with pastoral care responsibilities, this guide for supporting children as they journey through grief, includes a section on enabling a school community to respond positively to a death. Published by and available from Winston's Wish Tel: 01242 515157 www.winstonswish.org.uk. Cost 15.00.

15. "Grief in Children" A Handbook for Adults by A. Dyregrov.

A short book which looks at children's understanding of death and outlines practical ways in which adults can respond. It deals with both physical and psychological responses. Available from Jessica Kingsley Tel: 020 7833 2307. Cost 12.95.

16. A Teacher's Handbook of Death by Jackson and Colwell.

Offers ideas for including death and bereavement in the curriculum, factual and informative around rituals and processes associated with death and dying. Jessica Kingsley Tel: 020 7833 2307.

VIDEO "When a Child grieves"

Available from The Child Bereavement Charity, www.childbereavement.org.uk

A two part training video, incorporating a video for children and teenagers "Someone Died- It Happened to Me". Girls and boys aged 7 to 18 years, talk about their feelings when someone special dies. Includes a primary school case study describing when two pupils died in different circumstances. Useful for promoting classroom discussion or training staff. Cost 15.00

17. VIDEO "A death in the lives of."

Available from the Childhood Bereavement Network www.ncb.org.uk lcbn

A group of young people discuss the support they needed to help them cope with bereavement. Includes a section where they talk about what was, and what was not, helpful at school. A good one for PSHE.

18. Workbooks

Finding a way through when someone close has died by Mood and Whittaker

A workbook by young people who have experienced the death of someone close. They offer advice based on their own experiences. The activities encourage young people to express their feelings and responses. Jessica Kingsley Tel: 020 7833 2307

19. When Someone Very Special Dies by M. Heegard.

A simple workbook designed to be used by a bereaved child with adult help. It will help a child or young person to understand and express the many feelings that they will have. Communication is increased and coping skills developed as they work their way through it. Available from Smallwood Publishing Tel: 01304226900. Cost 7.00.

20. Grief Encounter by S. Gilbert.

A workbook to encourage conversations between adults and bereaved children. Hands on, user friendly. with many ideas to encourage communication and provide support. Available from and published by The Grief Encounter Project Tel: 020 8446 7452. Cost 8.99.

Resources for supporting pupils with life threatening illness

1. Two Weeks With The Queen by Morris Gleitzman

Twelve year old Colin will not accept that his terminally ill brother is not going to get better. It is through his friendship with Ted that he is finally able to express his grief and

understand what he must do. He is determined to get the best help possible. He attempts to go to the top - the Queen first, and failing her, the best cancer doctor in the world. Adults reluctance to discuss the situation is well observed. Published by MacMillan. Cost 5.00

2. *Vicky Angel* by Jacqueline Wilson

Jade and Vicky are best friends, but when Vicky is killed in an accident she doesn't let a little old thing like being dead interfere with her life. Instead, she continues as normal, following Jade around, telling her what to do, how to think, how to behave and ruining any chance Jade may have to make new friends. Eventually Jade tires of it all, and although she still loves Vicky deeply, she realises she has to get on with her own life and move on. Published by Corgi Children's Books. Cost 4.99.

3. *Wenny Has Wings* by Janet Lee Carey.

A sensitively written novel that does not patronise. Written as a collection of letters, it movingly charts Will's continuing relationship with his much missed sister and the impact of her death on the entire family. Will describes how he also nearly died and his very mixed feelings around being the survivor. The story illustrates how with help and support, Will overcomes his confusion and guilt. Published by Faber and Faber. Cost 5.99.

Bereavement in different cultures

1. *Death and Bereavement Across Cultures* by Murray, Laungani, Pittu and Young

Covers rites, rituals and mourning traditions for adults and children from the major religious and secular belief systems. Published by Routledge. Cost 18.99.

2. *Supporting Young People Coping with Grief, Loss and Death* by Weymont and Rae.

A programme designed to be delivered to groups or whole classes of secondary school students which includes a section on Beliefs and Customs. The session encourages students to explore how the concept of death varies according to different religions and cultures. Information is given on the main world religions and belief systems. Photocopiable work sheets and handouts are included. Includes a CD- ROM. Can be ordered online from www.luckduck.co.uk. Cost 17.99.

Resources to support 'dealing with suicide.'

1. *After a Suicide*

A workbook for children and teens who have known someone who died by suicide. Published by The Dougy Centre www.dougy.org. Available from Amazon. Cost 15.00

2. *Beyond the Rough Rock*

A sensitively written booklet which offers practical information and advice and looks at ways in which death through suicide can be explained to children and young people. Published by and available from Winston's Wish Tel: 01242 515157 Cost 4.50

3. A Special Scar Cost

Description of the author's interviews with 50 people bereaved by a suicide in their family. Includes suggestions on how survivors can be supported. Written by A Wertheimer, published by Brunner & Routledge. 16.99

4. SOBS (Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide)

A self-help organisation which runs a number of support groups around the UK. Helpline: 0870 2413337.

5. Papyrus - Prevention of Young Suicides www.papyrus-uk.org

Comprehensive website with information for parents, guidance for those worried about a suicidal friend and support for those contemplating suicide. Details of a video dramatising how various pressures ultimately cause a young man to take his own life.

HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS OFFERING RESOURCES, INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND TRAINING

1. Child Bereavement Charity

Information and Support Line 0845 357 1000. Website: www.childbereavement.org.uk. The helpline is for professionals to receive information, guidance and signposting to other organisations. Calls from schools are answered by someone with classroom experience. Comprehensive website, with a wealth of information for schools, families and young people. Publications can be bought online, and articles and leaflets downloaded for free. A discussion forum for professionals to share good practice is available with a separate one for families enabling them to share experiences. The training programme has a wide ranging selection of courses and workshops, including several specifically designed for schools. Further details 01494 446648.

2. Winston's Wish

Tel: 01242 515157, Website: www.winstonswish.org.uk
Offers a well produced range of resources and publications including activity sheets, books and leaflets. Family support line Tel: 0845 20 30 40 5. The well designed, interactive website, has a special section for young people where they can email questions to a bereavement counselor and share experiences with other bereaved children. There is an area that answers frequently asked medical questions on topics such as what is a heart attack.

3. CRUSE Bereavement Care

Publications list from Tel: 020 8939 9530 Website: www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
Offer various resources including books for children and adults, leaflets and cassettes. Nearly 200 local branches provide one to one bereavement support and social groups.

Some have specially trained children's counselors. The website has a link to the one below.

4. www.rd4u.org.uk

A website run by CRUSE for children and young people who have been bereaved and want news and information designed for them. Has details of a confidential telephone number and private email service for young people to contact a counselor. Also has a monitored message board where stories can be shared.

5. [Childhood Bereavement Network](#)

Tel: 020 7843 9309 Website: www.ncb.org.uk/cbn

Website has a link to a directory of childhood bereavement organisations in England which provide "open access" support services such as bereavement groups. Facility for county by county search for any local help.

6. [Compassionate Friends](#)

Tel: 0845 123 2304, Website: www.tcf.org.uk

An organisation of bereaved parents and their families helping others through their grief after the death of a child. (at whatever age) Offers support by befriending, one to one, group. letter/email. newsletter, useful publications. postal library and a programme of informal weekend retreats and an annual weekend gathering.

7. [SAMM \(Support After Murder & Manslaughter\)](#) Tel: 020 7735 3838, Website: www.samm.org.uk email: enquiries@samm.org.uk

SAMM offers emotional support to those bereaved through murder and manslaughter.

8. [The Way Foundation](#)

Tel: 0870 011 3450. Website: www.wayfoundation.org.uk

Provides a UK-wide self-help social and support network for men and women widowed under the age of 50 and their children.

9. [BACP \(British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy\)](#)

Tel: 0870 443 5252.

Website: www.bacp.co.uk

BACP is a professional body for counseling and psychotherapy. The website has a directory of counselors and therapists. enabling a geographic search for who is available within a given area. It lists charges and what each counselor specialises in.

10. [BrakeCare](#).

Helpline 0845 603 8570, Website: www.brake.org.uk

A road safety charity that offers emotional support and practical information to anyone bereaved, or seriously injured, in a road crash. This includes advice and information for families. friends, children and young people. An excellent booklet "Someone Has Died in a Road Crash" can be downloaded for free. This is a guide for adults and children to read together after someone close has been killed in this way.

COVID-19 AMMENDMENTS:

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, Cyril Jackson Primary School has created an operational risk assessment that must be followed. This risk assessment should be a live document reviewed on a weekly basis (minimum) throughout the pandemic.

Please be advised that all emergency changes to policies and procedure are active only during a global pandemic and activation can only be given by the head teacher and chair of governors.

All amendments to our regular procedures and processes listed in the risk assessment should be followed and implemented as soon as the pandemic is declared until the pandemic is over.

The head teacher and chair of governors will communicate to staff and parents when the period commences and ends.

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, staff completed a Dealing with Bereavement course which covered the following modules:

- the effects of grief on a child or young person
- how a death may impact school life, and how information about the death should be shared with pupils and staff
- how bereavement can be handled either
- as a whole school or individually, including remembrances and returning to school after a death
- how to manage potentially difficult topics and avoid unnecessarily painful comments when communicating with a bereaved pupil or student
- how to communicate with children and young people about tragic events in the media
- the factors relating to how children or young people will respond to a death
- how to ensure the bereaved pupil or student's needs are respected and supported by all staff who come into contact with them
- what should be included in a bereavement policy and the guidance staff need to support everyone during a potentially difficult time
- when to seek further help and support on bereavement for children or young people, their families or even staff members within the school.

Cyril Jackson has purchased comprehensive staff absence insurance with complementary wellbeing services such as stress management and counselling, financial compensation for absence may also be acquired depending on absence.

For more information on the services available please view the Staff Wellbeing Policy, speak to your line manager or speak to the Finance and Statutory Compliance Manager.

These updates link to updates made in the following policies: Child Protection, Supporting Children at School with Medical Conditions, Transfer and Transition, Lone Working, Safeguarding Children to and from School, Trips and Visits, Staff Wellbeing, E-Safety, Bereavement, Fire Evacuation, Special Leave, Sickness Procedure, Flexible Working, Behaviour, SEND and Attendance. All policies should be read in conjunction during a global