



Ark Blacklands Primary Academy

BEREAVEMENT POLICY

“Death neither obeys the school timetable nor appears on it... it enters the classroom without knocking.”

Ark



2020/2021	
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Academy name	Ark Blacklands Primary Academy
Academy motto	Together, we achieve

Underlying Principles	
Our pillars	High Expectations
	Exemplary Behaviour
	Excellent Teaching
	Depth for Breadth
	Always Learning
	Knowing Every Child

Policy review dates (frequency of review: biannually)

Review Date	Changes made	By whom
September 2020	Policy Reviewed	Natalie Rankin

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I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Ark Blacklands Primary Academy is an inclusive school that strives to ensure that all children feel safe when with us. Our Ark Pillars focus on Knowing Every Child, working with the strengths of each individual child to ensure that they achieve to the best of their abilities.

Around 41,000 children are bereaved of a parent every year in the UK. That's nearly two children under 16 every hour. Many more are bereaved of a grandparent, sibling, friend or other significant person.

Experiencing a bereavement can make children more vulnerable. Bereavement, whether it is an expected death because of illness or a sudden and unexpected death or suicide, is something that can impact on members of our school community at any time.

Our school is committed to the emotional health and well-being of its staff and pupils. We wish to work towards this in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that prepares pupils for coping with bereavement.

This policy is for all staff, pupils, parents and carers, governors, visitors and partner agencies working within the school. It provides guidelines and procedures as to how our school can best prepare for, and respond to, bereavement in the school community.

We recognise that members of the school community will be affected by a range of losses including separation and divorce. Some aspects of this policy may also be helpful in these cases.

This policy was based on an exemplar developed by the national charity Winston's Wish. It has included input from our staff, our governing body, parents and carers and pupils.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This bereavement policy supports us to provide effective support to pupils and staff before and after bereavement. It covers both expected and unexpected deaths. It should be read alongside the Academy's Emergency Plan.

Empathic understanding in the familiar and secure surroundings of school may be all the bereavement support some children and staff require. However, we also need to be prepared to call on more specialist support where there is a sudden and unexpected death, or where the impact of a bereavement is complex.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- enhance effective communication at a difficult time
- clarify the pathway of support between school, family, community and services
- make best use of the support available in school, the Local Authority and the wider community.

3. OUR CHARTER FOR BEREAVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

To help us meet the objectives of this policy we have adopted the [Winston's Wish Charter for Bereaved Children](#) and will display this in appropriate staff areas and on our website.

B	Bereavement support Bereaved children need to receive support from their family, from their school and from important people around them. We will signpost them to specialist support if needed.
E	Express feelings and thoughts We will help bereaved children to find appropriate ways to express all their feelings and thoughts associated with grief, such as sadness, anxiety, confusion, anger and guilt.
R	Remember the person who has died We understand that bereaved children have the right to remember the person who has died for the rest of their lives. We will support them to share special and difficult memories.
E	Education and information All children, particularly bereaved children, are entitled to receive answers to their questions. They also need information that clearly explains what has happened, why it has happened and what will be happening. We will strive to enable children to have their questions answered, through the PSHE curriculum, on an individual basis, working with parents and carers or through support services.
A	Appropriate response from schools and colleges Bereaved children need understanding and support from their teachers and fellow students without having to ask for it. We will provide training to ensure this happens.
V	Voice in important decisions We will work with families to encourage them to involve bereaved children in important decisions that have an impact on their lives such as planning the funeral and remembering anniversaries.
E	Enjoyment We will support the bereaved child's right to enjoy their lives even though someone important has died.
M	Meet others We will try where possible to enable bereaved children to benefit from the opportunity to meet other children who have had similar experiences.
E	Established routines We will endeavour, whenever possible, to enable bereaved children to continue activities and interests so that parts of their lives can still feel 'normal'.
N	Not to blame We will help bereaved children to understand that they are not responsible, and not to blame, for the death.
T	Tell the story We will encourage bereaved children to tell an accurate and coherent story of what has happened. We know this is helpful to them particularly if these stories are heard by those important people in their lives.

4. SAFEGUARDING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDING

We follow our school's safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that the welfare of the child remains paramount throughout, and that all children are protected from harm.

It is important to maintain confidentiality throughout the handling of any incident or disclosure. However, pupils will need to be made aware that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

To retain the trust of pupils and parents and carers, we will ensure that the sharing of appropriate information is kept to a minimum. Sensitive information will only be disclosed internally or externally with careful attention to the rights and needs of individuals and in line with general data protection regulation.

If a child is suffering from trauma, we will share this as appropriate with staff, but not necessarily the details of their experience.

We will discuss with the bereaved child and their family which adults in the school community they would like made aware of the experiences impacting on the child.

We will use our usual school system, Impero Edaware, to record when a child has experienced a close bereavement, is at risk of suicide or has made a suicide attempt.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEALING WITH BEREAVEMENT

The role of the principal and senior leadership team is to:

- lead a whole-school approach to the effective management of loss and bereavement including ensuring appropriate training and support provided for staff
- contact the Regional Director in the case of a sudden and unexpected death or suicide – key professionals would be expected to be involved – e.g. Educational Psychologist and Primary Mental Health Worker, alongside relevant colleagues and managers
- be the first point of contact for family/child/staff directly affected by a bereavement
- record bereavements affecting children
- designate liaison and support to other trained members of staff when appropriate
- monitor progress in supporting those impacted by a bereavement and liaise with external agencies
- keep the governing body appropriately informed
- deal with media enquiries.

The role of all staff in our school is to:

- access bereavement support training and cascade learning to other staff if appropriate
- know how to access support for themselves, for other staff and for the family, if advice or information is needed
- know how to report a concern if the bereavement or sudden and unexpected death has placed a child at significant risk of harm
- know how to support a child when they are distressed and how to refer to specialist support if needed
- have a basic understanding of a child's needs when facing loss and change
- provide individual support as and when needed and in consultation with the head teacher and pastoral team.

- teach about loss and bereavement as part of the planned curriculum or in the role of tutor (teachers only)
- inform the head teacher at the earliest possibility if they hear about a death of someone in the school community

Our Assistant Head for Inclusion has had more advanced training about bereavement. They can offer professional support to other members of staff etc.

The role of the Academy Trust is to:

- offer specific support when there has been an incident affecting a section of the school community, and / or a critical incident, suicide or sudden death of an adult or child, initially communicating with the principal and key lead staff in the school to discuss the immediate plan of action, with timeline outlined where possible for follow up actions
- inform appropriate colleagues within the local authority on a need to know basis
- advise and support staff who are supporting bereaved children and young people including offering and providing training on request
- ensure that any staff significantly affected by a death are made aware of the support that's available to them.

6. PROCEDURES

Pre-bereavement

In some situations, it is known in advance that a death is going to occur. This is usually because of a long illness.

In cases where this is an adult within the school community, individual conversations will be held with the head teacher in terms of support, information exchange and practical considerations.

When the expected death is of a child or a member of a child's family we will:

- contact the family to confirm factual information and explore what support could be provided to them
- Mr Higgins-Gooch, Assistant Head for Inclusion is our key point of contact in school in terms of information exchange and to update when things change
- ensure that all relevant adults are clear about what information has and needs to be shared with the pupil
- keep lines of communication open to ensure that all information is received in a timely fashion
- explore the possibility of signposting to other organisations such as Winston's Wish or a local hospice
- look to involve faith or community leaders when appropriate and with the agreement of the family
- explore what support for the pupils affected might look like in practice
- arrange training for specific members of staff to ensure all involved are confident in their ability to support the pupil
- if appropriate, consider and reflect on how to communicate with the wider school community for example the pupil's class mates
- if appropriate, begin conversations around practical considerations in the events leading up to the death and following the death

Following a bereavement

We will consider each individual situation carefully to ensure that the response from the school is sensitive, accurately reflects the gravity of the situation, and involves those affected as appropriate.

As an immediate response we will:

- contact the deceased's family with the aim to establish the facts and avoid rumours (head teacher)
- consider any religious beliefs that may affect the timing of the funeral or impact on other aspects of the bereavement process
- find out, if possible, how the family would like the information to be managed by the school
- allocate member(s) of staff to be the key point(s) of support for the affected child / young person or children / young people and ensure there is support in place for the staff members if required
- send letters or cards of condolence to families or individuals directly affected
- will prepare a press statement, with support from Ark's communications team if required and with due regard to the family affected (principal)
- inform staff of the death before pupils are informed, recognising that some pupils may have found out through other means. Where possible, staff will be prepared (through prior training) to share information in age-appropriate ways to make sure all staff have the same version of the event. Where this has not been possible, staff will be supported to share the information.

- inform pupils who are most directly affected (such as a friendship group), preferably in small groups, by someone known to them and in keeping with the wishes of the family and expertise of the school
- inform the wider school community in line with the wishes of the family. We would normally do this through assemblies and / or letters to parents.
- make small changes to the school timetable to accommodate the needs and wellbeing of the child or children affected by the situation. However, we will aim for minimal disruption to the timetable as this can offer a sense of security and familiarity.

For the funeral we will:

- find out the family's wishes and follow these in terms of the involvement of members of the school community (or not)
- identify which staff and pupils may want to attend if invited by the family and the practicalities of issues such as risk assessment, staff cover and transport. In some rare circumstances it may be appropriate to close the school
- organise tributes such as flowers or a collection in line with family wishes and the wishes of staff and pupils
- be sensitive to religious and cultural issues.

After the funeral we will:

- consider whether it is appropriate to visit the child and family affected at home and plan a return to school
- ensure friendships are secure – peer support can be particularly important for a bereaved child or young person
- continue regular contact with the family and show we still care about them and their child over time
- monitor the emotional needs of staff and pupils and provide listening time and ongoing appropriate support
- consider practical issues and make thoughtful and sensitive updates to parental and other contact details when needed
- continue to assess the needs of children most affected, and record and plan for support accordingly.

Longer term we will:

- be aware that the impact of bereavement follows a child throughout their school life. So, we will record information and share with relevant people, particularly at transition points. This could include ensuring significant dates and events for the child are recorded and shared with appropriate staff for future reference.
- signpost families to bereavement support including that provided by Winston's Wish <https://www.winstonswish.org/about-us/>
- ensure that learning about loss and bereavement is embedded into appropriate curriculum areas including PSHE education. When teaching about loss and bereavement we will give careful thought as to how to support those directly affected by loss and bereavement.

Following a sudden and unexpected death – suicide

Suicide is not just a really difficult event to deal with, it also presents the unique risk of potentially being the trigger for another suicide.

As described in section 5 we will seek advice from the Academy Trust. As a school community we will

make a response to a sudden death within two school days.

It is necessary to maintain the structure and order of the school routine, while facilitating the expression of grief, and reducing the risk of imitative suicide.

In the case of suicide, we will refer to The Samaritans Step by Step Guide.

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/step-step/>.

Information provided to the school community in the immediate aftermath of a sudden and unexpected death will depend on the age of the pupils but should be based on and reinforce:

- facts (not rumours)
- an understanding that death is permanent
- an exploration of normal and wide-ranging reactions to sudden and unexpected death – expressions of anger and guilt are entirely normal
- an understanding that, with support, people can cope
- an understanding that fleeting thoughts of suicide are not unusual
- an awareness of suicidal warning signs and resources available to help
- an understanding of expectations around funerals.

When discussing any suicide that has occurred, we will ensure that the information given is age appropriate and:

- is factually correct but does not include detail of the suicidal act itself does not romanticise, glorify or vilify the death
- does not include details of any suicide note
- does not include speculation over the motive for suicide
- takes care with the language used – for example using phrases such as ‘died by suicide’ or ‘ended his / her life’ rather than ‘committed suicide’ or ‘successful suicide’, and saying ‘attempted to end his / her life’ rather than ‘unsuccessful suicide’ or ‘failed attempt at suicide’.

Following a sudden and unexpected death – homicide

The Childhood Bereavement Network and Winston’s Wish estimate that around one child every day is bereaved of a parent or sibling through murder or manslaughter in Great Britain.

Children may experience profound and lasting shock, enormous anger at what has happened, rage at the person who caused their relative to die, deep fear at the perceived insecurity of the world around them. Sadly, in many cases, the person who caused the death is also known to the child, resulting in great confusion and a double loss, for example, if one parent kills the other and is then imprisoned. In some families, the child may have to move to a new house, school, area – away from familiar and comforting places and routines.

Winston’s Wish recommend taking an honest and consistent age appropriate approach to talking with children about what has happened. It is not possible to shield them from what has happened completely. Winston’s Wish can provide support to families bereaved in this way and further information can be found on their website: <https://www.winstonswish.org/death-through-homicide/>

7. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION, VALUES AND BELIEFS

We recognise that there is a range of cultural and religious beliefs, customs and procedures concerning death. It follows that bereaved children and families may have differing expectations.

Some of these may affect matters of school organisation. We will source training and guidance to develop our understanding of the range of beliefs to best support pupils.

We will present a balance of different approaches to death and loss. We will make pupils aware of differing responses to bereavement, and that we need to value and respect each one of these.

8. YOUNG ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

Many young asylum seekers and refugees have experienced the death of family members or friends, often in traumatic circumstances. This, and further traumatic experiences and losses, can have a devastating effect on their emotional and physical health, behaviour, learning and relationships.

Sudden traumatic death complicates the process of grief and mourning, as usual ways of coping may be overwhelmed. We will consult specialist mental health services where appropriate.

9. SUPPORTING STAFF

Support for bereaved staff

We are aware that staff also experience bereavement. When this happens, we will ensure they are provided with support to take care of themselves, and to know where they can go for additional help should they need it.

This could include: their GP; Cruse Bereavement Care <http://www.cruse.org.uk/>; or staff counselling, information and advice: <https://www.workplaceoptions.co.uk/member-login-2/> (username: Ark Schools, password: employee)

We will work within our leave of absence policy and if necessary, with the trust's occupational health team to ensure staff are provided with appropriate leave and support at a time of bereavement.

Teachers who are dealing with their own bereavement are encouraged to speak with their line manager about any areas of the curriculum which they feel uncomfortable to teach or want support to teach.

Staff training

We will ensure that regular training is provided to staff to support them in meeting their roles and responsibilities as identified in this policy.

We make use of Winston's Wish [training courses](#) and ensure teachers and support staff can access the [free online training course for school staff](#).

10. CURRICULUM

Children and young people explore the concept of loss, bereavement, and grief as part of the statutory elements of our PSHE curriculum. It is also addressed through cross-curricular opportunities such as body changes or life cycles, as well as through art, literacy, and religious education.

We also use assemblies to address aspects of death – such as Remembrance Day, Holocaust Memorial Day or commemorative occasions. We also observe national minutes of silence and explain the purpose of this.

When appropriate, we respond to a tragedy or serious incident by discussing this in class having discussed as a staff team the language we will use to respond to the incident.

Teachers are provided with training on how to deliver this sensitive area of the curriculum within a safe, learning environment. We also point parents and carers towards appropriate advice on how to talk to their children about these events when necessary.

We will answer any questions relating to loss or death in a sensitive, age-appropriate, honest and factual way. Children and young people will not be expected to disclose any personal experiences but will be signposted to support if they want it.

We give children opportunities to learn about and discuss cultural and religious issues around death and encourage them to express their own responses and feelings.

11. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND LINKS

As part of PSHE and our safeguarding work we will also signpost to appropriate sources of support for pupils and adults in the school community.

National support services and support resources

Winston's Wish: www.winstonswish.org Support information and guidance for bereaved children, young people and for those caring for bereaved families.

Cruse Bereavement Care: www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk Support for anyone who has been bereaved.

Childhood Bereavement Network: <http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk> Find childhood bereavement support in your local area.

Hope Again: <http://hopeagain.org.uk/> A website for young people who have been bereaved.

Papyrus: <https://papyrus-uk.org/> Support and advice for young people struggling with thoughts of suicide, and anyone worried about a young person.

Samaritans: <http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/supporting-schools> A range of guidance and support for schools.

Local support services and support resources

ESCC: https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/1655/leaflet_1.pdf A range of guidance and support for parents and carers.

ISEND: <https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/4520/2018-trauma-bereavement-loss-guidance-for-schools.pdf> Guidance for Schools in Dealing with Critical Incidents and Tragic Events

Chestnut Tree House: <https://www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk> Children's hospice for East Sussex, West Sussex, Brighton and Hove and South East Hampshire, caring for 300 children and young adults from 0-19 years of age, both at the hospice and in families' own homes.

Dragonflies: <https://www.fsncharity.co.uk/projects/dragonflies-bereavement-project> offers families, children and young people a safe space to share their feelings and experiences, and provides creative and therapeutic activities alongside group discussion.

12. EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include, but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.

13. APPENDIX I - LETTER TO PARENTS AND CARERS

Dear <Name>

We are so very sorry to hear the sad news of <Name's> death.

There are no words to express our sadness and we can only begin to imagine the anguish you must be going through.

As a school community, we will miss <Name> very much and we are doing our best to offer comfort and support to friends, classmates and teachers. <Name> was a <valued/cherished/.highly-regarded/popular/friendly> member of our school family.

If we can do anything to help as you plan <Name's> funeral, please let us know.

We will continue to keep in touch and will support you in any way we can.

With deepest sympathy,

Principal

14. APPENDIX 2 - INFORMING PARENTS OF THE DEATH OF A STAFF MEMBER

It is vital that parents and carers are provided with information as soon as possible so that they can support their children and help them make sense of what has happened.

Dear parents/carers,

I am sorry to inform you that a <well-respected/long-standing/well-loved/popular/ well-known> member of our staff, <Name>, died <suddenly/in hospital/after a short illness>.

The pupils were told today by their <class teacher/tutor/head of year/in assembly> and many will be reacting to this news. When someone dies, young people may experience many different feelings, such as sadness or anger. Some pupils may feel shocked and upset by the news, while others may be confused or numb. These reactions are all normal.

We have tried to answer their questions in school, using age-appropriate and honest language. For more information about speaking to children and young people about death, visit the Child Bereavement UK website www.childbereavementuk.org Further resources can be found on our website here: <https://arkblacklandsprimary.org/page-strips/bereavement>

Our thoughts are with <Name's> family at this time. We will be in touch with details of how our school will celebrate/remember <Name's> life.

Sign-off

Principal

15. APPENDIX 3 - INFORMING PARENTS OF THE DEATH OF A PUPIL

Dear parents and carers,

Your child's class teacher/form tutor/head teacher/head of year had the sad task today of informing the pupils of the death of <Name>, a pupil in <Year>.

<Name> died suddenly/in hospital/after a short illness yesterday/last week/over the weekend/during half term.

He/She was a <valued/cherished/highly-regarded/well-liked/popular/friendly> member of the class/school community and will be missed by everyone who knew him/her.

When someone dies, young people may experience many different feelings, such as sadness or anger. Some pupils may feel shocked and upset by the news, while others may be confused or numb. These reactions are all normal.

We have tried to answer their questions in school, using age-appropriate and honest language. For more information about speaking to children and young people about death, visit the Child Bereavement UK website www.childbereavementuk.org Further resources can be found on our website here: <https://arkblacklandsprimary.org/page-strips/bereavement>

Our thoughts are with <Name's> family and friends at this time. We will be in touch with details of how our school will celebrate/remember <Name's> life.

Sign-off
Principal

16. APPENDIX 4 – HOW AGE AND STAGE CAN EFFECT UNDERSTANDING AND GRIEF

Children's experience of a death can differ from adults. The following provides a guide to a developmental perspective of how a child may understand bereavement. For a child with SEND, his or her functional level of understanding (rather than actual chronological age) will be the biggest factor in how the child reacts to a death and what he or she will be able to understand. The reactions and issues described at each stage often apply equally to children at other stages of development too.

Children under 3 years old

Very young children and babies are not able to understand death but experience the loss as a separation from someone they have an attachment to. Children at this age have little language to express their loss and will react to it by crying inconsolably or become withdrawn. They will be affected by the emotional state of their care givers. They may repeatedly search for the deceased person or have an unspoken expectation that they will 'return'.

They also benefit from the same type of consistent and repeated explanations as detailed below for ages 3 to 5 and the maintenance of routine.

Early Years Education – aged 3 to 5 – Preschool and Reception

When a child this young experiences the death of someone important, it is important they are helped to know about the person as an integral part of their history. Young children often ask the same questions over and over again in an effort to understand their loss. They are naturally curious and they want to make sense of what is happening in their world. Their repeated questions are not a sign that our explanations aren't good enough. Reading books on death and loss, playing, drawing and giving them opportunities to identify and talk about worries and feelings will all help them deal with the loss.

At this age, they may not understand that death is permanent or that it happens to every living thing. A 4-year-old may be able to tell others confidently that 'my daddy's dead' and may even be able to explain how 'he was hit by a car and he died'. However, the next sentence may be: 'I hope he'll be back before my birthday' or 'He's picking me up tonight'. They may worry about how the person who has died will eat, breathe and keep warm.

It is important to give them simple, factual information and tell them that once someone has died, their body stops working so they don't feel pain anymore and they don't feel hot or cold and they don't need to eat or drink anything.

Children's thoughts are concrete and characterised by "magical thinking". They may struggle to understand abstract concepts (such as heaven) or roundabout ways of explaining death (e.g. 'gone to sleep'). Children may believe it was something they said or did that caused the death or they may believe their words, actions or thoughts can bring the person back. They need to be reassured that the death was not their fault and gently reminded that the person will not come back. By using concrete words such as "Mummy has died" and giving specific explanations about why the person died can help.

It is important to maintain a routine as normal as possible for the child. It is not unusual for children of this age to revert to younger behaviours such as separation anxiety, incontinence, and use of a security blanket or thumb sucking. Being tolerant and managing the separation will be helpful for the child and the family. In time, it is most likely these earlier behaviour patterns will disappear once 'new normal' family routines are established.

Key Stage 1 – Ages 5 to 7 – Years 1 and 2

Children of this age are beginning to understand that death is permanent; however, some confusion may still stand. When first told of the death, younger children may be mainly concerned with the 'when' and 'where' of the death. They may express concerns about their own future such as: 'What will happen to me? Who will meet me after school? Will I still go to Cubs?' Giving reassurance about everyday activities and arrangements continuing as normal, or clear explanations about alternative arrangements, will be helpful for the child.

Children may become clingy or more reluctant to see parents and carers leave. There may be a need to stick close to their parent to protect them from the mysterious occurrence that made their dad disappear or at least to be with them if it happens again. Children at this stage may complain of a sore tummy, headaches or just generally not feeling well. These are what we call 'somatic' complaints, where unexpressed feelings and emotions can lead to physical symptoms or discomfort. Somatic complaints are normal, but it is important that routines are maintained while gently acknowledging when someone important dies we feel things like sadness and worry in our bodies too.

They can also feel that in some way they were responsible for the death, e.g. 'I was angry with him and shouted at him when he left for work because he wouldn't fix my bike. I refused to give him a hug. And then he never came home again. It's my fault.' It can be worth saying something like: 'You do know, don't you, that nothing you said or did made this happen?'

Key Stage 2 – Ages 7 to 11 – Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

As children begin to understand more about death and dying, a death in the family may make them anxious about the health and safety of surviving members of the family. They may feel very responsible for their parent(s) and younger siblings and feel the need to keep a close eye on their safety.

Children this age can find it difficult to talk about their bereavement and express their feelings behaviourally, such as withdrawing from others or showing increased aggression. They may experience difficulties in their interactions with their peers, particularly as the death of someone important can make them feel different at the very time they want to be the same as everyone else. It is important to avoid clichés like "You're being so brave" as children can interpret this as they should not share their feelings. They may need a safe space or quiet area away from peers to calm down or express their emotions with an adult.

Children of this age also show curiosity about issues such as what a dead body looks like and what happens to a body after a person has been dead for some time. This curiosity is natural and they will benefit from clear, factual explanations. Children can also think of death as something spooky, like a zombie, or a spirit that comes to get you. Normalising feelings, talking about or drawing specific worries and sharing bad dreams can be reassuring, giving children skills and confidence to feel more in charge of them.

By the age of 10, children will usually have all of the bits of the jigsaw puzzle of understanding. They will even understand that they are able to cause their own death. They will appreciate clear and detailed information – beyond 'when', 'where' and 'how' the death happened, they will be interested in 'why'.

For more information see <https://www.winstonswish.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Guide-to-supporting-grieving-children-in-education.pdf>