



Supporting bereavement policy

Policy Date:	January 2024	Version: 1	
Policy Review Date:	January 2027	Headteacher: Nitash Odedra	<i>N. Odedra</i>
Ratified by Governing Body:			
Chair of Governors: Sue Welford		Insert Signature	<i>Sue Welford</i>

Introduction

The main aim of this policy is to provide a framework for all staff, both teaching and nonteaching and to give guidance on how to deal sensitively and compassionately in difficult and upsetting circumstances.

This policy has been created with due regard to the following guidance:

- Winston's Wish (2019) 'A Guide to Supporting Grieving Children and Young People in Education'
- Winston's Wish (2019) 'A Strategy for Schools: Positive Responses to Death'
- Samaritans (2017) 'Help When We Needed it Most'
- Child Bereavement UK (2018) 'Schools' Information Pack'

We at Rushey Mead Primary School understand the importance of providing support to children, staff, governors and the wider school community during and after bereavement. The way in which children and young people are responded to when someone important in their lives dies has a profound effect on their future ability to manage their own lives. The caring and supportive school environment has a key role to play and we recognise that every situation is unique and demands careful handling, with the wishes of the pupil or family being of paramount importance.

This policy is not prescriptive; different strategies and procedures may be necessary in different circumstances. These must take into account the age of the pupils concerned, the relationship the bereaved had with the deceased and the relevant context in which the bereavement has occurred.

All mentions of 'the family' in this policy, refer to the family of the deceased individual. The wishes of the family will always be considered when carrying out any of the actions outlined in this policy. If the family objects to any of the procedures, the school will work to ensure reasonable adjustments are made.

Roles and responsibilities:

The role of the headteacher

- To have overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy
- To report to the local authority the death of any child through the Duty and Advice Service number 0116 454 1004 or for a member of staff the school's main LA contact.
- To liaise with external agencies as appropriate
- To respond to media enquiries as appropriate
- To be first point of contact for family/child concerned
- To inform all staff and arrange for the children to be informed, as appropriate, in line with the family's wishes

- The headteacher should also liaise with the police if there are any suspicious circumstances.
- To keep the governing body up to date and fully informed as appropriate.
- The local authority Education Psychology Service provide support for any school who has had a bereavement of a child or member of staff and will work with the school to provide appropriate support.
- If it is the death of a child then a Child Death Overview Panel meeting is convened to which the headteacher will be invited if the incident relates to school. The school may subsequently be asked to contribute to a case review and to share relevant information to inform learning and prevent recurrence.

The role of staff

- To support the Head teacher in carrying out the procedures outlined in this policy
- To support staff, children and parents following a death, as directed by the headteacher
- To support other staff members with communicating the news of a death
- Where necessary, to make referrals for children, staff and other members of the school community to receive support and counselling
- Where requested, undertake bereavement support training and share this knowledge with all other staff members

The role of the Local Authority

- To coordinate the response if it is the death of a child
- To advise and support staff.
- To provide pastoral staff e.g. to provide advice and support to the headteacher

Responding to a death:

1. Breaking the news to staff, pupils and families

The headteacher must follow the advice of the police if they are investigating the death. News of the death of a close member of a child's or staff's family, the death of a pupil or member of staff or a member of the school community must be passed to the Head teacher who will immediately try to obtain factual information, avoiding unnecessary rumour or assumption, which could only lead to further distress.

Where possible the Head teacher will liaise directly with the family involved and agree exactly what information should be passed on to staff and pupils. The family's wishes **MUST** be taken into account before any information is given to the pupils.

Staff will be informed as soon as possible, ideally before the pupils, ensuring enough time is given to enable them to discuss what has happened, how they feel and what internal and external support is available.

All this information must also be shared with part time staff, governors and those who may not be in school that day.

Where necessary a press statement should be prepared by the Head teacher and agreed with the Local Authority.

If pupils need to be told they should be told as soon as possible to avoid rumour and uncertainty. This is best done in familiar groups by someone they know, for example their class teacher, and the information shared in an age appropriate way. A large assembly is not usually ideal, particularly for young children. Opportunities should be given for pupils to ask questions and respond to the news. The bereaved child or member of staff may or may not wish to be present when the news is broken.

It may be appropriate for a letter to go home to all parents that same day, respecting the wishes of the family.

Children with specific needs that may influence their response to being informed about the death should be identified and told separately.

These needs include the following:

- Children that had a long-term and/or close relationship with the individual who has died
- Children with a history of loss
- Children with SEND
- Children who have difficulty managing their emotions or behaviour

2. The first few days

As far as is possible, it is best to have as little disruption as possible to the school timetable and school life should try to go on as normal, but with flexibility as necessary.

If it is a teacher who has died, the class should be covered by another teacher from the school whom the children know well and feel comfortable talking to.

Many bereaved children and young people find returning to school as soon as possible a welcome refuge of normality after the chaos of emotion at home and their return should be as fuss free as possible.

A bereaved child will require enormous support but, as far as possible, school life should go on as normally as possible.

A bereaved member of staff will need to be supported to have the appropriate amount of compassionate leave.

3. Support for pupils and staff

In supporting both the bereaved child and the other pupils, staff should act sensitively at all times, seeking advice when necessary, from both the Head teacher and the families involved.

The class teacher will be the first line of support for the child but should the child need extra support away from the classroom, extra support will be provided. Eg. if a child finds it difficult to stay in the classroom when they are upset, it may be necessary to identify with them a suitable place, where they can go for some quiet time with an adult they trust.

Both school and families need to work together to note changes in behaviour and if necessary counselling from outside agencies may be sought. Where appropriate this will involve the agreement of the families. Children and young people bereaved through suicide or violent death are likely to need skilled help and support but the informal support of familiar adults is still vital. Supporting a bereaved child is very upsetting and emotionally demanding for staff and therefore informal support between colleagues is vital.

Opportunities to discuss feelings and reactions with colleagues, in the staffroom, are necessary and important. Support and counselling is available to any member of staff and can be arranged through the headteacher.

All staff should be aware of colleagues and offer support on an individual basis where necessary and alert a member of the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) if they become concerned about a colleague's well-being. School should be aware that the impact of bereavement follows a child throughout their school life so information should be recorded and shared with relevant people, particularly at transition points.

Support for bereaved members of staff should be offered in line with their wishes and feelings and the agreed management of human resources policies and procedures.

4. Funeral and remembrance activities

In consultation with the bereaved family, arrangements for funeral attendance may be discussed, with the consideration of full or partial school closure in some circumstances.

Following the death of a member of the school community a special assembly or remembrance service may be held as a way of saying 'Goodbye' and as a celebration of their life. This may take many forms, but will always be in accordance with the wishes of the bereaved family. All remembrance activities will be planned so that they are respectful of the culture and religious beliefs of the family.

5. Supporting a child if someone dies

If a child or a parent informs staff that a close member of the family has died it is important that this information is shared with the people working with the children in school and with the Head teacher. The Head teacher will decide if this information needs to be shared more widely amongst staff – for example, if a parent or sibling dies. The school will work closely with the family to provide suitable support for the children in whatever way feels best – counselling, nurture time, somewhere quiet to talk, etc. Trained members of staff can support with bespoke activities when the time is right, School will

also signpost families to appropriate organisations for support and will assist with referrals if necessary. Information will be available on the school website. If school is closed when the death occurs, we will endeavour to continue to follow points 1-4 above with sensitivity and taking into account the wishes of the family; communication with the family is vital. Careful consideration will need to be given to how the news of the death is communicated and by what medium if we are in a situation where we cannot have face-to-face contact with pupils, staff and the school community.

Useful websites/ telephone numbers:

- Winston's Wish Family Line - 0845 2030405 – national helpline offering guidance, information and support to anyone caring for a bereaved child, including professionals and family members
- www.winstonswish.org.uk
- Childhood Bereavement Network - 020 7843 6309 – a network of child bereavement services
- www.childbereavement.org.uk
- CRUSE Bereavement Care (0870) 167 1677
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk

Appendix 1

The developmental stages relating to an understanding of death

Age	Understanding of Death	Child's Needs	Phrases/Techniques
Infancy Birth – two years	Death as separation and /or abandonment Careful listening and watching Death is when the body stops working	Brief simple, honest explanations with familiar examples Reassurance of safety, parental support and attention	"We'll be here to take care of you.
Pre- school 2 – 6 Years Uses magical and intuitive thinking	Death as sleep, temporary, reversible, impersonal. Or as a person who comes to get you, can be catching Egocentric thinking causes feelings of responsibility or guilt	Clarification and expanded answers. Permission to attend funeral with assistance Acceptance of feelings without qualification, corrections or judgement.	Avoid euphemisms such as sleep, lost. Check and see if explanations are understood Expect repeat questions Acknowledge everyone's feelings of sadness and loss. Anticipate and counteract guilt Look out for unusual or subtle expressions of grief
School Years 6- 11 years Uses concrete thinking, begins rational thinking	Death is final, perhaps not inevitable Occurs to others Perhaps retaliatory	Reassurance that grief is OK, to feel bad is normal Open communication and opportunity to express feelings when ready. Encouragement to attend the funeral	Acknowledge adult feeling, including anger and guilt. It's OK to cry Accept fluctuating grief

Appendix 2 - Guidance for parents and carers

When supporting a bereaved family, or informing other 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 children.

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. 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 so that information is both accurate and sensitive to the wishes of the bereaved family.

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 them 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 them and the resultant loss of trust will be difficult 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 the usual rules of behaviour. Normality with love and compassion is what to aim for.

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.

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

- Change in behaviour, perhaps becoming unnaturally quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive.
- Anger is a common response at all ages and may be directed at people or events that have no connection to the death.
- Disturbed sleep and bad dreams.
- Anxiety demonstrated by clingy behaviour and a reluctance to be separated from parents or carers. Older children may express this in more practical ways, for example by expressing concerns over issues that adults may perceive as insensitive or unimportant.
- Being easily upset by events that would normally be trivial to them.
- Difficulty concentrating, being forgetful and generally 'not with it.' This makes school work particularly difficult and academic performance may suffer. Older children may feel that there is no point in working hard at school and they might lose a general sense of purpose in their lives.
- 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.

Parents and carers can call 0800 02 888 40 or email support@childbereavementuk.org for support and information.

Appendix 3 – How to help a child through a bereavement

1. Encourage the children to recognise that their feelings are normal. Show your sadness – this helps them understand that it is Ok to show their sadness too. Try not to be taken aback by their comments or reactions.
2. Support children to enable them to talk about their loss and express their feelings. However, do not force them to talk but answer questions simply and honestly. Children will not always want to talk. They will when they are ready. Doing an activity while you talk can help this.
3. Use the correct words – death, die, died, dead. Young children can become confused and frightened if phrases such as 'gone to sleep' 'gone on a journey' are used. Children have a surprising capacity to deal with the truth if information is given in simple straightforward language. Sometimes, just listening is enough.
4. Keep up routines as much as possible (although this is difficult at the present time).
5. Activities to do could include:
 - Making a memory box – collect special things together that remind you of the special person
 - Make a memory book of photographs, letters, poems, pictures etc.
 - Make something with some material of an item of clothing
 - Make a memory jar



1. Fill your jar to the brim with salt. On one of the pieces of paper write down 5 things you remember about your loved one. These could be things you know they liked – such as a football team, something they enjoyed doing, somewhere you went together or something you remember about that person.

The memories do not all have to be positive, it is important to acknowledge and grieve all aspects of your relationship with the person who has died.

2. Now you've chosen your 5 memories chose a different colour pastel or chalk to represent each one. Spread out the 5 sheets of paper and divide the salt from your jar between them.
3. Colour each pile of salt using one of your chosen chalks/pastels. Simply rub the pastel backwards and forwards over the pile of salt. The salt will then

begin to take on the colour of the chalk – the harder you rub the brighter the coloured salt will be.

4. Carefully pick up each piece of paper and pour the coloured salts into your jar one at a time. If you tilt your jar you can make waves of colour and other patterns.

5. When all the colours have been added, hold the jar and tap it down on a work surface to settle the salt. Do not shake the jar unless you want to mix up all the colours. Then fill any remaining space with plain salt right up to the brim. This is important as it will prevent the colours mixing.

6. Place a piece of cotton wool in the lid of the jar, this helps to keep the salt in place. Secure the lid firmly. (You can tape it down with sticky or washi tape to make it more secure).

7. You can either keep your list of memories close to your jar or you can put them in another jar to keep them safe and add to over time.

8. Put your jar somewhere you will see it often and keep your memory sheet safe so you can show it to friends and family.

Appendix 4 –Books and resources

Books and resources – early years

The suggestions below are suitable to use with very young children to introduce the life cycle including the end of life, or to use when someone they know has died.

Children under five may not fully understand the concept of death but will be very aware that something important has happened. They need simple and honest explanations, possibly repeated many times. The books below will help with this.

General books

'I Miss My Sister' by Sarah Courtauld

A young girl's sister has died and the impact on her and her family is sensitively illustrated with minimum text. Designed to be shared with an adult, it will help to start conversations, answer questions and allay any fears.

'Missing Mummy' by Rebecca Cobb

Beautifully illustrated and with moments of wonderful warmth, this is a touching, honest and helpful book about the death of a parent. With minimum text, it touches on some of the worries and fears that a young child may have after a death, offering reassurance and hope.

'I Miss You: a First Look at Death' by Pat Thomas

This helps children understand that death is a natural complement to life, and that grief and a sense of loss are normal feelings for them to have. It briefly covers a range of issues such as why people die, how you may feel when someone dies and what happens afterwards. A good one to use to introduce the subject.

'Goodbye Mousie' by Robie H Harris

The story of a young boy dealing with the death of his pet mouse is handled with the sure touch of an author familiar with children's tender emotions. Simply told by the boy, in a matter- of-fact tone with a dash of humour, he recounts his reactions to the death of his pet mouse.

'When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death' by Laurence Krasny Brown and Marc Brown

The authors explain in simple language the feelings people may have regarding the death of a loved one and the ways to honour the memory of someone who has died.

'Granpa' by John Burningham

This award-winning book is a beautifully written tale about the close and imaginative relationship between a little girl and her Granpa. The last page is an illustration of Granpa's empty chair with the little girl beside it looking very

thoughtful. No explanation is offered but his death is implied. This nondirective approach enables the book to be used for a variety of situations.

Pre-bereavement

'My Brother and Me' by Sarah Courtauld

This pre-bereavement book is designed to help children understand how they and the rest of their family might feel when someone in that family is seriously ill. It offers opportunities to share concerns and fears and ways to manage difficult feelings such as jealousy. Age 4-10 but could be used with younger children.

Sudden death

'Is Daddy Coming Back in a Minute?' By Elke Barber and Alex Barber

Alex is only three when his father suffers a heart attack. All on his own, Alex manages to get help but his beloved Daddy dies at the scene. This is a good book to explain sudden death to pre-school children using words and illustrations they will understand.

Death of a baby

'We were gonna have a baby, but we had an angel instead' by Pat Schwiebert

For age two upwards. A children's book told from a young child's perspective about the excitement and dreams of a coming baby, and the disappointment and sadness of a miscarriage. Beautiful ink and watercolour illustrations.

'Goodbye baby – Cameron's Story' by Gillain Griffiths

Cameron cannot understand why his brother died and he gets angry. He creates a special scrapbook so that he will not forget his brother. Written by the author to help her 3-year-old son understand what a miscarriage is.

'All Shining in the Spring' by Siobhan Parkinson

Matthew is looking forward to the new baby but there is bad news, the baby is not growing properly and will not live after it is born.

Workbook for pupils to use

'Someone I know Has Died' by Trish Phillips

This activity book is designed to be used with adult help by very young children who need assistance to understand what being dead means, what we do, and how we might feel when someone dies. Some pages are interactive in ways familiar to children.

Religion

'Pip and the edge of Heaven' by Elizabeth Liddle

Pip is very young when he first asks his mother a question about Heaven. His mother encourages him to think through an answer of his own. Together, Pip and his mother try to find their own answers to many more questions about

Heaven. As Pip grows older, his questions and answers begin to show a more mature understanding. By the time Pip is almost five years old, he and his mother have come to a view of love, God and Heaven that is both simple yet sophisticated, endearing yet profound. This book is perfect for encouraging children to formulate and answer questions about life, death, love, God and Heaven.

Books and resources – KS1

The suggestions below are suitable to use with young children to introduce the life cycle including the end of life, or to use when someone they know has died. Books can help children experiencing loss make some sense of confusing and sad emotions. They can also help children to feel less alone. Different books can be selected, appropriate for individual circumstances.

General books

'I Miss My Sister' by Sarah Courtauld

A young girl's sister has died and the impact on her and her family is sensitively illustrated with minimum text. Designed to be shared with an adult, it will help to start conversations, answer questions and allay any fears.

'Missing Mummy' by Rebecca Cobb

Beautifully illustrated and with moments of wonderful warmth, this is a touching, honest and helpful book about the death of a parent. With minimum text, it touches on some of the worries and fears that a young child may have after a death, offering reassurance and hope.

'When your mum or dad has cancer' by Ann Couldrick

This is a useful booklet for younger children (7+) to teenage children. It has an introduction for parents but then explains cancer in a simple way children can relate to. It also covers many questions children ask such as whether the person will die and what exactly happens, but tackles the answers with insight and honesty.

'The secret C' by Straight Talking About Cancer by Julie Stokes and Vicky Fullick

This illustrated guide for children provides a sensitive introduction for a child when a parent, sibling or a person close to them is diagnosed with cancer. It is aimed at children aged 7 to 10 years and will work best when an adult is present to expand on the simple messages in the text.

'Badger's Parting Gifts' by Susan Varley
(also available in Urdu and Arabic)

When old badger dies, his friends think they will be sad forever. Gradually they are able to remember Badger.

‘Josh – coming to terms with the death of a friend’ by Stephanie Jeffs and Jacqui Thomas

Josh’s friend Max has died. The book explains with simple clarity not only what happens to the body of a dead person but also the Christian belief that we will be safe in heaven.

‘The Lonely Tree’ by Nicholas Halliday

A story based on the life cycle in the natural world. The young tree is sad when his old friend the Oak dies but Spring brings joy to the little tree.

‘Lifetimes’ by Bryan Mellonie and Robert Ingpen

A beautifully illustrated book which aims to help parents/ teachers explore the subjects of life and death.

‘Dogger’ by Shirley Hughes

A sensitively written story, with which adults and children will identify. It is about a little boy who loses his favourite toy ‘Dogger’ and describes his feelings and responses as a result. Useful as a gentle introduction to the subject of loss.

‘Heaven’ by Nicholas Allan

While he is waiting for the angels to collect him, Dill the dog explains to Lily what he thinks heaven is like: hundreds of lampposts to pee against, lots of whiffy things to smell and bones everywhere. Lily completely disagrees. Luckily, they agree to disagree just in time for a poignant, last goodbye.

‘Waterbugs and Dragonflies’ by D Stickney

Written from a Christian perspective, this 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 sometimes difficult to understand but a happy experience for the deceased.

‘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

‘When Dinosaurs die: A Guide to Understanding Death’ by Laurence Krasny Brown and Marc Brown

The authors explain in simple language the feelings people may have regarding the death of a loved one and the ways to honour the memory of someone who has died.

'What does dead mean?' By Caroline Jay and Jenni Thomas

Available Jessica Kingsley www.jkp.com

A beautifully illustrated book that guides children gently through 17 of the 'big' questions they often ask about death and dying. Suitable for children aged 4+, this is an ideal book for parents and carers to read with their children, as well as teachers, therapists and counsellors working with young children.

'We will meet again in Jannah' by Zamir Hussain

This book helps children make sense of their experience following the death of a sibling and can be a valuable resource for schools in the field of bereavement care for pupils. Lesson plans can be customised according to the topic and activities adapted around the needs and backgrounds of the children. As the children work through the book they will learn about the Islamic perspective on death.

'Remembering' by Dianne Leutner

A workbook for children when someone important to them has died. Sensitive illustrated, it will help a child to talk about their memories and make some sense of how they are feeling.

Books and resources – KS2

The suggestions below are suitable to use with children to introduce the life cycle including the end of life, or to use when someone they know has died. Books can help children experiencing loss make some sense of confusing and sad emotions. They can also help children to feel less alone. Different books can be selected, appropriate for individual circumstances.

General books

'Always and Forever' by Alan Durant

When Fox dies the rest of his 'family' are absolutely distraught. How will Mole, Otter and Hare go on without their beloved friend? But, months later, Squirrel reminds them all of how funny Fox used to be and they realise that Fox is still there in their hearts and memories.

'The Tenth Good Thing About Barney' by Judith Viorst

A short story that by dealing with the death of a pet, takes a child through the rituals associated with any death, addressing the feelings children have when faced with loss. This book does not have religious overtones, so it can be used by pupils with different sets of beliefs.

'Remembering Mum' by Ginny Perkins

A simple photo journey of a real family whose Mum died. It shows how that family coped with the anniversary of Mum's death, and how they are living without her but still including her in their daily lives. Very real and one with which children will identify.

'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. Minimal text with moving illustrations.

'Am I Like My Daddy?' Marcy Blesy

This beautifully illustrated and poignant book will help children bereaved when very young who struggle to remember the parent who died. Grace is in the process of learning about who her father was. Through the eyes of others, she learns about who she is today. This book is American, but relevant to all.

'What On Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?' By Trevor Romain

Child-friendly, accessible text, this short book deals with the many questions that bereaved children of this age have when someone dies.

'What does dead mean?' By Caroline Jay and Jenni Thomas. Available Jessica Kingsley www.jkp.com

A beautifully illustrated book that guides children gently through 17 of the 'big' questions they often ask about death and dying. Suitable for children aged 4+, this is an ideal book for parents and carers to read with their children, as well as teachers, therapists and counsellors working with young children.

'Us Minus Mum' by Heather Butler

The boys think Mum is invincible. But they're wrong. Because Mum is ill. Really ill. It's up to George and Theo to keep Mum (and everyone else) smiling – which will almost probably definitely involve willies, shepherd's pie and Goffo's victory at the pet talent show. This book is both funny and sad.

'When your mum or dad has cancer' by Ann Couldrick

This is a useful booklet for younger children (7+) to teenage children. It has an introduction for parents but then explains cancer in a simple way children can relate to. It also covers many questions children ask such as whether the person will die and what exactly happens, but tackles the answers with insight and honesty.

'The secret C' by Straight Talking About Cancer by Julie Stokes and Vicky Fullick

This illustrated guide for children provides a sensitive introduction for a child when a parent, sibling or a person close to them is diagnosed with cancer. It is aimed at children aged 7 to 10 years and will work best when an adult is present to expand on the simple messages in the text.

'The Huge Bag of Worries' by Virginia Ironside

Bereaved children and those in families where someone is expected to die often have worries they feel unable to share. This reassuring story will encourage them to voice their fears and concerns.

Workbooks to use with children

'Remembering' by Dianne Leutner

A workbook for children when someone important to them has died. Sensitively illustrated, it will help a child to talk about their memories and make some sense of how they are feeling.

'Helping Children Think About Bereavement' by Heather Butler

This fun story and related short activities are presented as four, differentiated, lesson plans including one for pupils with learning difficulties. It helps pupils develop resilience and coping skills should someone they know die.

'Someone I know has Died' by Trish Phillips

An activity book written for bereaved children to help them understand what it means when someone dies and to explore their thoughts and feelings with an adult. Although designed with preschool and early-years age groups in minds, some older children may also enjoy this book.

'Talk to My Gran About Dying – my school project' by Gina Levete

Available from www.jkp.com

Teacher resource written in an illustrated diary format. An excellent way to talk to children about dying. Questions to the reader throughout help discussions and allow the child to safely explore their thoughts and feelings. Ideal resource for teachers and parents to read with children aged 8-11.