



Parental Guidance: Bereavement Support

Experiencing the loss of a loved one can affect young people in many different ways. Some children may talk openly about their feelings, while others may seem withdrawn, tired or unsettled. Grief is not a linear process, and changes in behaviour or wellbeing are often a normal part of adjustment. This guidance aims to help families understand how bereavement may present and how we can work together to provide consistent support.

How grief may present in young people

Grief can affect emotions, behaviour and physical wellbeing. Young people may experience:

- Mood changes, irritability, tearfulness or periods of seeming unaffected.
- Withdrawal from friends or reduced interest in usual activities.
- Difficulties concentrating, forgetfulness or reduced motivation in schoolwork.
- Physical symptoms such as tiredness, headaches or changes in sleep patterns.

These responses may come and go over time and may be influenced by important dates, reminders or changes in routine.

Supporting your child at home

Predictability and reassurance can help young people feel safe during periods of loss. Parents and carers may find it helpful to:

- Maintain familiar routines where possible to provide stability.
- Offer opportunities to talk, while allowing space if your child is not ready.
- Use calm, open language and acknowledge feelings without pressure to “be okay”.
- Encourage healthy outlets such as creative activities, time outdoors or connecting with trusted friends.

There is no single “right” way to grieve, and patience is key as your child adjusts.



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Changes you may notice and how to respond

You may see differences in behaviour at home or hear from school about changes in engagement. Responding calmly and consistently can help your child feel understood:

- Acknowledge emotions without judgement or immediate solutions.
- Keep expectations clear but flexible during difficult periods.
- Seek advice from school if you notice persistent withdrawal, heightened anxiety or significant changes in mood.

Additional support and external services

Some families may wish to access further support alongside school-based care. Bereavement charities, counselling services and GP referrals can offer specialist guidance where grief feels overwhelming or long-lasting. If you are unsure where to start, the Academy can help signpost appropriate services.

Support available in the Academy

Our pastoral team can offer structured support to help students feel safe and understood during periods of bereavement. This may include:

- Regular pastoral check-ins with a trusted adult to provide reassurance and a consistent point of contact.
- A formalised 12-week Guided Self-Help programme, where appropriate, focusing on emotional coping strategies and building resilience at a pace that feels manageable for the young person.

Support is always tailored to individual needs and reviewed regularly in partnership with families.

Working Together

Partnership between home and school helps ensure young people receive consistent support. Sharing relevant information allows pastoral staff to respond sensitively through check-ins, reassurance and appropriate adjustments where needed. Maintaining communication helps us monitor wellbeing and respond early if additional support is required.