Bereavement

Grief is a complex process at any time, but in the current situation, there are greater challenges. The following resources and ideas may help you and your child if you are sadly bereaved. Be kind to yourself and remember there is support available, all be it remotely.

There is a lot of useful information on following websites. **Winston's Wish** is specifically about supporting bereaved children and **Cruse** has advice and support for everyone.

WINSTON'S WISH
Giving hope to grieving children

https://www.winstonswish.org/
Free helpline **08088 020 021**
ask@winstonswish.org

Cruse Bereavement Care

https://www.cruse.org.uk/
Free helpline **0808 808 1677**
helpline@cruse.org.uk

NHS

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement

Other Resources

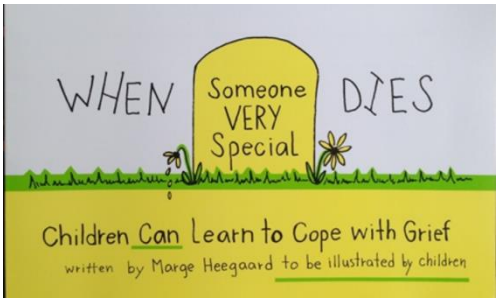
There are a number of picture books which can help you explore the idea of bereavement with your child.

Badgers Parting Gifts by Susan Varley is a lovely book to share and there is an online version you can listen to with you child. **https://youtu.be/tRTRABhJTbo**

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst explores to how to manage feelings of loneliness and separation.

Sad by Michael Rosen is a thought provoking book that can be interpreted by a child at their own level, but may equally resonate with adults.

When someone very special dies: children can learn to cope with grief by Marge Heegaard.
This is a work book that children can illustrate themselves and therefore express their grief.



Key Points

- Encourage your child to talk about the person who has died and their feelings.
- Use language and concepts that are appropriate to the level of your child's understanding. Children can be quite factual, so they might seem a bit blunt at times, but they will be creating a narrative for what has happened.
- Try and answer questions honestly but also recognise that it's ok if you don't have all the answers.
- It is best to avoid metaphors such as 'Grandma went to sleep forever' or 'Grandad went away' as this can be taken literally by children and they may then be worried about going to sleep for example.
- Try not to hide your emotions from your child. It is important that children see adults express emotions and share feelings. If your child seems worried about your emotional response, be honest and say 'I am feeling so very sad that .....has died. I will miss them so much'.

Practical Ideas

- Make a Memory box – Use any box to collect special items that remind your child about the person who died. For example, photographs, letters, cards, objects that represent an activity they did together etc. Encourage your child to decorate the box and talk about what is inside the box.
- Drawing pictures – encourage your child to draw a picture of themselves and the person who has died. As they draw, encourage your child to talk about the person, their memories about them and anything they are feeling.
- Have a simple memorial at home – listen to a special piece of music whilst thinking about the person who died. Encourage a sharing of memories and positive times to celebrate the life of the person.
- Decorate a stone or pebble which your child can have in their pocket, or on display that reminds them of the person.

Please do contact me via the school office if I can offer any further support.

Best Wishes
Mrs Lawes