



## **Winterton Junior School Bereavement Policy.**

### **Introduction**

This policy will provide guidelines to be followed after bereavement. The aim is to be supportive to both pupils and adults, and for staff to have a greater confidence and be better equipped to cope when bereavement happens. Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs is different and this policy has been constructed to guide us on how to deal professionally, sensitively and compassionately with difficult matters in upsetting circumstances.

### **Our Aims**

At Winterton Junior School we seek to meet the needs of all our children and staff in all situations. We are committed to the emotional health and well-being of all pupils and staff. We recognise that home circumstances are changed because of a death in the family and Winterton Junior school needs to be a place that both the child and family can rely on and gain some much needed support.

If the death occurs of one of our pupils or of a member of staff, we will work together, with outside agencies as appropriate, to support each other.

### **Procedures**

We always work in partnership with parents or carers. We will always listen. We sensitively support and encourage parents, carers or family to tell us of any happenings in their child's life that may affect their child's emotional state.

Every death and the circumstances in which it occurs, is different, which may cause a persons' behaviour and emotional state to change. All staff will be sensitive towards this vulnerable state.

School can be notified of bereavement in a number of ways; most commonly, by a family member or friend. If there has been a bereavement or significant loss in a family, we will seek family members' advice to help avoid saying anything that could confuse or upset the child or add further to the distress of those most affected. However, staff will answer a child's questions as sensitively and as honestly as possible when dealing with bereavement.

The fact that the child is bereaved will be recorded prominently on the child's profile to make sure that professionals are aware.

### **In the event of a death of a close member of a pupil's family**

- The head teacher or the most senior available member of staff will be informed immediately by the member of staff who has been told of the bereavement or loss.
- All staff should then be informed as quickly, quietly and sensitively as possible.
- The Head teacher or the most senior available member of staff will make contact with the family. This member of staff will explain the desire to be supportive and to avoid

saying or doing anything that would add further distress. For this purpose s/he will endeavour to ascertain information about the situation and how much the child knows in as unobtrusive way as possible.

- The same member of staff will act as a link to the family to ensure good communication and facilitate implementation of the bereavement policy. Good communication between school and home is extremely important.
- Advice will be obtained about any cultural and religious issues if necessary.
- The family will be asked if they want the school community to be told formally and if so the arrangements that will be made to let other families know the circumstances. This may be necessary in order to alleviate any risk of rumours circulating, which may not be factual and could be upsetting for the family.
- If information is to be given to other parents formally, this is best done by a letter home to the children's parents in envelopes. For young children it would be preferable for this to be given to the parents at the end of the school day when they collect their children.
- If a child has not attended school for a period following a bereavement, plans for the child to return to school should be agreed and reassurance given, that the family will be contacted if the child is distressed. It may be desirable to include a visit to the child at home by the child's class teacher prior to the return.
- Outside agencies will be contacted if appropriate or if in doubt.
- A suitable place in school will be identified for pupils who need some space and time to grieve. We will provide a caring environment in which the child will feel safe to demonstrate their grief without fear of judgement.
- A child will be given support from whichever source is deemed most appropriate and if possible, of the child's own choice. Also, a staff member of the child's choice will be made available for them to go to for support.
- The PHSE co-ordinator will ensure that suitable books and other supportive materials are available to help a child deal with their loss.
- We will ensure that information regarding the child and their bereavement is passed on to the relevant persons when a child moves into a new class or school.

### **If the death of a pupil or member of staff occurs**

This is likely to cause considerable distress to everyone in the organisation and the following, additional actions will be undertaken:

- Discussions will take place with the family and their wishes taken into account, on how and what to tell the school community.
- School will ensure that all people who are close to the deceased within the school community will be told in a sensitive and supportive manner. Arrangements will be made for counselling to be available if necessary. This is more likely in cases of unexpected or violent death. Appropriate agencies outside school will be contacted.
- Once the funeral has been arranged, it is important that the family's wishes are adhered to. The family may welcome involvement from the school community; in which case, it may be appropriate for the school to be closed so that as many people as possible can be released to attend the funeral or memorial service, if they so wish (the Head Teacher will seek the permission from the Chair of Governors). However, the family may wish to keep the funeral a private matter, and only want a representative from school to attend. The Head Teacher will identify this person.
- If parents wish to visit the school at any time after the funeral, this will be arranged. Past experience has shown that this can help with their grieving.
- Staff and children will be supported throughout the grieving period. There will be systematic observation and monitoring with any signs of complex grieving, brought to the attention of the appropriate professional agencies.

- It may be appropriate to hold a memory assembly and staff need to show children that it is perfectly normal to feel upset about the loss of someone they cared about. Remembering together can help with the grieving process.

### **If a child dies in school**

- If any staff member has concerns regarding a child's health they will contact a first aider and ideally, the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.
- In the case of a serious concern, a decision by the first aider or/and a Senior Leader in school, will call for an ambulance. The Head Teacher, or in her absence, the most senior member of staff on site will be informed.
- The Head Teacher will ensure parents are contacted and seek agreement to meet the ambulance at the hospital. A member of staff will be appointed to travel to the hospital in the ambulance or in their own transport. The purpose of this is to be a familiar face to the child's family on their arrival at the hospital.
- If a child stops breathing, immediately a trained school staff member will administer CPR. Once an ambulance has arrived in school, the child is given over to their care and it is then the Paramedics decision as to where the child is taken and what treatment is administered.
- Any change in circumstance, following the first call to parents, will be reported to them as soon as possible. **NB:** Staff must not impact shocking or worrying news to a parent if they are travelling in a car alone.
- The school will notify the LA if there is a death in school at the earliest opportunity. All press enquiries are to be routed through to the Head Teacher.

### **If a child dies on a school trip**

- If a crisis situation occurs whilst a child is out on an educational visit, then the adult with the child, or the teacher in charge, should telephone for an ambulance and then contact the school to inform the Head Teacher.
- The Head Teacher will then be responsible for contacting parents and keeping them informed at every stage possible.
- Once the ambulance reaches the child, the child becomes the responsibility of the paramedics and they will direct any subsequent actions.
- The school will notify the LA at the earliest opportunity if there is a death out of school

### **Responding to the media**

Some deaths, particularly those in sudden or traumatic circumstances, attract media attention. All members of staff are advised not to respond to journalists and to refer all enquiries to the Head Teacher, who will make a considered response after seeking assistance from the Local Authority Press Office.

### **KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- Be honest with a bereaved child or young person.
- Avoid using metaphors for death.
- Every child and young person's grief is unique.
- Give time to grieve.
- Encourage the child or young person to talk about the death and how they feel – let them show their emotions.
- Understand that children and young people may 'revisit' how they feel about the death and their bereavement as they develop.

- Use language that is appropriate to the age of the child or young person and their level of comprehension.  
(<http://www.cruse.org.uk/Children/loss-from-childs-perspective>)

The **nominated Governor** with responsibility for bereavement is Mrs Catherine Kemp.

Their responsibilities are:

- To contribute to generating and updating the policy.
- To support the Head Teacher in overseeing the way in which bereavement is managed within the curriculum.
- To support the Head Teacher in overseeing the way in which bereavement is dealt with.
- To review practice.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed as part of Winterton Junior School's rolling programme by the staff and the governing bodies.

**Bereavement Policy reviewed by Cathy Logan/Dawn Lovatt:** May 2017

**Bereavement Policy Accepted by staff:** Summer 2017

**Bereavement Policy Adopted by governors:** Summer 2017

**Bereavement Policy Review Date:** Summer 2020

## **Useful Resources**

**The Schools Training and Support Coordinator** on **01494 446648** can offer ideas, guidance and information over the telephone. Any member of staff is welcome to contact her.

**The Support and Information Line: 01494 446648.** This number offers a confidential listening service and can be given out by school staff to families affected by the death of a child, or who are caring for a bereaved child.

**Teachers Forum** - make contact with colleagues to share thoughts, ideas and concerns.

### **Online Resources and Information**

[www.winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.winstonswish.org.uk) A useful website offering practical ideas for helping those bereaved in the family and school community.

[www.chums.info](http://www.chums.info) A bereavement support service for those who have suffered loss.

[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk) A bereavement support service for those who have suffered loss.

[www.juliesplace.com](http://www.juliesplace.com) A support resource for bereaved siblings.

[www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature](http://www.bhf.org.uk/smallcreature) British Heart Foundation site to help children come to terms with loss using cartoon creatures.

[www.stchristophers.org.uk](http://www.stchristophers.org.uk) **St Christopher's Hospice.** Provides a lot of information, resources and contacts. St Christopher's also runs training courses for teaching and support staff.

<http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk> An organisation offering local bereavement support to both adults and children.

[www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement\\_helpchildren.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/.../bereavement/bereavement_helpchildren.shtml) Information on the way bereavement affects children.

<http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/index.htm> Federation of organisations.

### **Booklists**

Most of the books on the book list can be purchased via Amazon.

Both Child Bereavement network and St Christopher's have a bookshop.

Heather Nicklin has included the booklists from St Christopher's, Child Bereavement Trust and Winston's Wish. Heather particularly likes the Winston's Wish list as it is age related.

### **Candle**

Someone close to you has died

St Christopher's Hospice, 2001

£2.00

A short 12 page booklet which describes many feelings experienced by teenagers - it covers issues such as not being understood, wondering if normality can ever be possible again, changes, and unfinished business. It ends with some dos and don'ts to help through the grieving process.

Black and white photographs illustrate the text.

**Grollman E**

Straight Talk About  
Death For Teenagers.  
Beacon Press 1993  
£10.99

It is not always easy to hit the right note for teenagers. This book has short, pithy sentences explaining likely powerful feelings in grieving the death of someone close - the most important message it conveys is that the tremendous mixture of feelings is normal and that there are positive ways of dealing with them. It will be useful to many people - not just teenagers.

**Heegaard E**

When Someone Very Special Dies. Children Can Learn To Cope With Grief  
Woodland Press, 1991  
£8.99

Published in the United States, this is one of a series of workbooks on illness and loss issues. It is designed so that children (aged c. 6–12) can provide answers to important questions or comments in the text. The first 4 pages have drawings but the rest of the book has just enough text to start a child thinking about a subject, for example: 'Sometimes I get angry because----' or 'I remember being told about the death----' However, most of the space is left free for drawing or further text on the theme of that page. It can be useful for parents, relatives or counsellors to help children to articulate their feelings. 32 pages.

**Krementz K**

How It Feels When A Parent Dies  
Alfred A Knopf, 1999  
£21.30

Eighteen personal accounts of young people whose parent has died. An American publication but it speaks to young people from all countries. An excellent resource though it is currently rather expensive.

Approximate age range: 8 - 15 year olds.

**Mood P, Whittaker L**

Finding A Way Through When Someone Close Has Died.  
A workbook by young people for young people  
Jessica Kingsley, 2001  
£7.95

The subtitle of this book, 'A workbook by young people for young people', is the key aspect of this interactive book that can be helpful for children between 5-15 years old. Young people and teenagers offer advice, based on their own experiences, on how to cope with the practical and emotional upheaval of bereavement. It also provides adults with an understanding of issues, which are important to young people at the time of bereavement.

**St Christopher's Hospice**

My Book About  
St Christopher's Hospice, Dept. of Social Work 1989  
£2.50

This is a workbook for children. It is designed so that they can write and draw information about themselves and about any person close to them who is very ill. This enables them to express their feelings on paper. It can then also be the catalyst for discussing relevant issues regarding the situation. It could be used in any situation where someone is seriously ill.

**St Christopher's Hospice**

Someone Special Has Died

St Christopher's Hospice, Dept of Social Work 1989

£2.00

This has been a bestseller at St Christopher's. It is for children up to age 11, although adults have also found it useful. Apart from describing emotions likely to occur after bereavement, it has a brief description of what happens to a body after death.

**Althea**

When Uncle Bob died

Happy Cat Books Ltd, 2001

£5.99

This is an adaptation of a picture book for c.4-11 year olds, first published in 1982. Illustrations and text have been slightly altered but it is useful for bereaved children and non-bereaved children to gain an understanding of death.

**Remembering Mum**

Author: Ginny Perkins and Leon Morris

Publisher: A & C Black (Childrens books)

ISBN 10: 071364432X

ISBN 13: 978-0713644326

Adrian Grimmin's partner, Mandy, died from pneumonia aged 27 in 1988, leaving their two young sons Sam and Eddy feeling hurt and confused. Ginny Perkins, Sam's schoolteacher, worked with the family to produce a book which emphasizes the importance of talking about bereavement and of remembering. Showing the family eating dinner, looking at old family snapshots and preparing for bed, the book illustrates that the ordinary events of life carry on alongside the trauma the family feels. The book reminds the reader of the need to express grief in a society, which all too often sees death as a taboo subject.

**Badger's Parting Gifts**

Author: Susan Varley

Publisher: Harper Trophy

ISBN 10: 0006643175

ISBN 13: 978-0688115180

When old Badger dies, his friends think they will be sad forever. But gradually they are able to remember him with joy and gratitude and to treasure the gifts he left behind for each one of them. A sensitively written, highly acclaimed book which helps children come to terms with the death of someone they love.

**Waterbugs and Dragonflies: Explaining Death to Young Children**

Author: Doris Stickney

Publisher: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd

ISBN 10: 0826464580

ISBN 13: 978-0826464583

Price: £1.99

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.

### **What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?**

Author: Trevor Romain

Publisher:Free Spirit

ISBN 10: 1575420554

ISBN 13: 978-1575420554

Price: £5.99

Written by Trevor Romain, after his father died, this book suggests ways of coping with grief and offers answers to questions such as 'Why do people have to die?' and "How can I say Goodbye?" Friendly, accessible text and illustrations aimed at ages 8-14.

### **When a Family Pet Dies: A guide to dealing with children's loss**

Author: JoAnn Tuzeo-Jarolmen, Ph.D

Publisher: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

ISBN 10: 1843108364

ISBN 13: 978-1843108368

Price: £9.99

Pets are often felt to be "one of the family" and a companion for children when they are growing up - an individual who is loved in life and greatly missed in death. When a pet dies, it can have a huge impact on children, and it is important that parents are equipped to understand and support their children. JoAnn Tuzeo-Jarolmen explains that children grieve for a dead or missing pet as they would for a family member, and gives guidelines on how to identify signs of grief in children. She describes the differences between child grief and adult grief, and takes the reader through the major developmental stages in a child's grieving process, explaining the common types of behaviour and emotions experienced at each stage. She also discusses whether or not pets should be replaced and how to encourage children to "move on." This easy-to-read guide to children's grief suggests methods for sensitively addressing the emotional needs of children and gives age-appropriate strategies. It is an informative resource for parents and carers as well as counsellors and those in the caring professions.

### **We Need to Talk About the Funeral**

Author: Simon Smith and Jane Morell

Publisher:Accent Press

ISBN 10: 1906125015

ISBN 13: 978-1906125011

Price: £14.99

This enlightening, beautiful and practical book informs about the wide choices available when arranging a funeral. It shows you how to make a funeral ceremony that both commemorates and celebrates a life, and provides comfort, inspiration, and good memories. Complete with real life stories, practical ideas, many pictures and information not readily accessible to the public, this unique book will provide invaluable reading for anyone needing to arrange a funeral or wanting to leave this world on their own terms.

### **BOOKS FOR AGE 5 TO 8 YEARS**

#### **A Birthday Present for Daniel: A child's story of loss**

By Juliet Rothman & illustrated by Louise Gish, 2001

Prometheus Books, ISBN: 978-1573929462

Told by a young girl whose brother, Daniel, has died, she talks about how things have changed in the family. She also talks about the things she does when she is sad and how these differ from other members of her family. This book has small black and white pictures with minimal text but it conveys some important issues. It would be particularly useful to broach the subject of birthdays as it describes how the family remembered Daniel on his birthday.



### **Always and Forever**

By Alan Durant & illustrated by Debi Gliori, 2003 (h'back)

ISBN: 978-0552548779

Otter, Mole and Hare miss Fox when he falls ill and dies. They stay at home and don't want to talk about him because it makes them sadder. Then Squirrel visits and reminds them of all the fun times they had together. They all find a way to remember Fox and get on with their lives. Colourful, detailed pictures in this book emphasise the importance of holding on to memories.

### **Flamingo Dream**

By Donna Jo Napoli & illustrated by Cathie Felstead, 2003

Greenwillow Books,

ISBN: 978-0688167967

In this bright and colourful book, a young boy tells the story of his Dad who is seriously ill and dies soon after a trip to Florida to see the place where he grew up. The collage style illustrations capture the things the boy collects to remind him of his Dad. A sensitive but honest book which emphasises the importance of memories.

### **Fred**

By Posy Simmonds, 1998

Red Fox, ISBN: 0099264129

A light-hearted book with detailed illustrations about Fred, Nick and Sophie's lazy cat that dies. After burying him in the garden, they wake up at night to find all the cats in the area have come to say goodbye to Fred, the famous singer! This funny and touching story would be useful to introduce death to children.

### **Granpa – The Book of the Film**

Based on the story by John Burningham, 1990

A Red Fox Picture Book, ISBN: 0099752409

This beautifully detailed picture book has very few words but tells the story of a little girl's relationship with her Granpa. It takes the reader through many happy times they spent together playing games, telling stories and on outings. On the last page, Granpa's chair is empty, signifying that he has died. Children may benefit from reading this book with an adult to talk about the pictures and to elaborate some of the messages it conveys.

### **Saying Goodbye: A Special Farewell to Mama Nkwelle**

By Ifeoma Onyefulu, 2002

Frances Lincoln, ISBN: 978-0711217010

This book has large bright colourful photos and follows a little boy, Ikenna describing what happens at the ceremony after his great-grandmother's funeral. It gives ideas of different ways to remember someone and an insight into Nigerian culture. A lovely book that could be used in many different situations, including schools.

### **There's NO Such Thing as a Dragon**

By Jack Kent ISBN: 0-307-10214-9

Golden Books Publishing Company

There's No Such Thing as a Dragon (1975) by Jack Kent, part of the Family Storytime series, relates the charming tale of Billy Bixbee, who awakens to find a dragon "about the size of a kitten" sitting on his bed. The dragon grows by leaps and bounds, until Billy dares to pet the attention-seeking creature and it shrinks back down into an adoring little lap dragon.

### **The Sunshine Cat**

Written by Miriam Moss, Illustrated by Lisa Flather

ISBN: 978-1841215679

Orchard Picturebooks

Sunny the cat is loved by all his human family, but one day there is a knock at the door - Sunny has been killed in an accident. A sensitive story which aims to help children come to terms with death.

### **Heaven**

Written and Illustrated by Nicholas Allan

ISBN: 978-0099488149

Dill, the dog, knows his time is up, so he packs his case and tells Lily, his owner, that he's off "up there". "Can I come too?" asks Lily. "Er...not yet," replies Dill. While he is waiting for the angels to collect him, Dill explains to Lily what he thinks heaven is like: hundreds of lamp posts to pee against, lots of whiffy things to smell and bones everywhere - with meat on them! But, Lily completely disagrees; she thinks heaven is quite different. Luckily, they agree to disagree just in time for a fond, and very poignant, last goodbye.

### **The Huge Bag of Worries**

By Virginia Ironside & illustrated by Frank Rodgers, 1996

Hodder Wayland, ISBN: 0-75002-124-1

Jenny begins to worry about lots of different things and these worries build up and get out of control. She just can't get rid of them, until she meets the old lady next door who helps her feel better. A lovely story with fun illustrations encourages children to talk about their worries.

### **Saying Goodbye to Daddy**

By Judith Vigna, 1991 (h'back) Albert Whitman & Company,

ISBN: 978-0807572535

Clare's Dad died in a car accident and this book looks at changes in the family, difficult feelings, funerals and memories through the eyes of Clare. It would also be a good book to help parents understand the child's perspective. It gives good examples of how adults can answer children's questions, emphasising the need to be clear and honest.

### **The Tenth Good Thing About Barney**

By Judith Viorst & illustrated by Erik Blegvad, 1987

Prentice Hall & IBD, ISBN: 978-0689712036

A young boy's cat dies and his parents suggest that he could think of ten good things about Barney to tell at the funeral. But he can only think of nine, until he talks to his Father about what happens to someone after they have died, and he discovers the tenth. A carefully written book with black and white pictures, that sensitively deals with death and lets the reader make his or her own decisions about what happens after the funeral.

### **When Dinosaurs Die - A Guide to Understanding Death**

By Laurie Krasny & illustrated by Marc Brown, 1998

Time Warner Trade Publishing, ISBN: 0316119555

This factual picture book uses cartoon dinosaurs to illustrate the text and comment on what is said. It is a bright and colourful book that explains death in a simple and unthreatening way. It covers many issues including 'why does someone die?', 'feelings about death' and 'saying goodbye'. It would be an excellent resource for anyone caring for young children

## **BOOKS FOR AGE 9 –12 YEARS**

### **A beautiful way to explain life and death to children**

Belitha Press, ISBN: 1855617609

This thought provoking book has large pictures complemented with small sections of text. It clearly explains about life and death focussing on plants, animals and insects before moving on to people. It emphasises that death is part of the life cycle and is natural and normal whenever it occurs. A simple book with a powerful message.

### **Death: What's Happening?**

By Karen Bryant –Mole, 1994

Hodder Wayland, ISBN: 0750213795

This factual book has clear text and large photos. It uses stories of young people to discuss issues surrounding death such as feeling frightened, the funeral and the future. It includes advice on how to feel better and cope with difficult situations after someone has died. Using straightforward language, this book may reassure the reader there are other young people who have had someone important to them die and answer some of their questions and concerns.

### **The Cat Mummy**

By Jacqueline Wilson & illustrated by Nick Sharratt, 2002

Corgi Childrens, ISBN: 978-0440864165

(also on audiocassette)

Verity's Mum died the day she was born but she rarely talks about her. Verity doesn't want to upset her Dad or Grandparents. This humorous but sensitive story mainly focuses on Verity's missing cat Mabel but reveals some of the misunderstandings and anxieties children can have about death. It also shows it can be good to be open, honest and to talk about difficult issues.

### **The Ghost of Uncle Arvie**

By Sharon Creech, 1997

Macmillan Children's Books, ISBN: 978-0333656327

This fun and humorous book is about Danny, an ordinary nine-year-old boy. However, once or twice a year a ghost visits him. This time it is the ghost of his Uncle Arvie who follows him, persuading him to make his three wishes come true. As a result Danny and his dog get into adventures which makes him think about his dad who has also died. This book has some important messages and talks about death in an open way, but is primarily fun and imaginative.

### **The Mountains of Tibet**

By Mordicai Gerstein, 1989

Barefoot Paperbacks, ISBN: 978-1898000549

Based on Tibetan teachings, this book tells of a small boy who grows up to be a woodcutter. When he dies, he discovers there is a chance to live again but first he must make a number of choices. A simple tale with deep meaning but the theme of reincarnation could be confusing.

### **Losing Uncle Tim**

By Mary Kate Jordan & illustrated by Judith Friedman, 1999

Albert Whitman & Company, ISBN: 978-0807547564

This picture book for slightly older children explains how a young boy finds out his Uncle Tim has AIDS and is going to die. It is a serious and sensitive book covering many of the issues, changes and difficult feelings that can occur when someone has a serious illness.

### **Michael Rosen's SAD BOOK**

By Michael Rosen & illustrated by Quentin Blake, 2004

Walker Books, ISBN: 0744598982

This book has large illustrations and small snippets of text. It is wonderfully honest and will appeal to children and adults of all ages. We all have sad stuff, but what makes Michael Rosen most sad is thinking about his son who died. This book is a simple but emotive story. He talks about what sad is and how it affects him and what he does to cope with it. In true Michael Rosen style, this book manages to make you smile as well.

### **Milly's Bug Nut**

By Jill Janey, 2002

Winston's Wish, ISBN: 978-0-9539123-4-6

A short, simple story with black and white pictures, of a young girl who's Dad has died. It talks about the ups and downs of family life and how things slowly get easier as time goes. Milly misses her Dad and things are just not the same anymore. She knows when people die, they can't come back but she still keeps a wish to see her Dad one more time.

### **The Best Day of the Week**

By Hannah Cole & illustrated by John Prater, 1997

Walker Books, ISBN: 0744554675

This storybook tells of two young children who spend Saturdays with their Grandparents when Mum is at work. It has three chapters, with stories of three different Saturdays. The first is a happy day; the second is at the hospital and sad as Granny dies, the third at the theatre. It is a lovely story that gives an important message that it is still okay to have fun after someone dies.

### **Water Bugs and Dragonflies: Explaining death to children**

By Doris Stickney & illustrated by Gloria Stickney, 1983

Continuum International Pub Group, ISBN: 0264669045

This pocket size booklet with small black and white pictures is based on a fable, associating death with a water bug's transformation into a dragonfly. It portrays the mystery around death but may need an adult to explain the analogy and help a child relate it to their own experience. It uses Christian beliefs with a focus on life after death and also contains advice for parents.

### **What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?**

By Trevor Romain, 1999

Free Spirit Publishing Inc, ISBN: 1575420554

This book for older children is a factual guide, answering questions such as 'why do people have to die?', 'is it okay to cry?' and 'what is a funeral/memorial service?' It is written in a straightforward way, with practical tips, advice and information about different faiths and beliefs.

### **There's NO Such Thing as a Dragon**

Golden Books Publishing Company

By Jack Kent ISBN: 0-307-10214-9

This is part of the Family Storytime series, relates the charming tale of Billy Bixbee, who awakens to find a dragon "about the size of a kitten" sitting on his bed. The dragon grows by leaps and bounds, until Billy dares to pet the attention-seeking creature and it shrinks back down into an adoring little lap dragon.

**There are also many books where death is not the main focus of the story but features bereavement or the main character has been bereaved. These include:**

**A Little Princess** By Frances Hodgson Burnett & illustrated by Tasha Tudor Penguin Books (1996),  
ISBN: 0140622373

**Bambi** By Felix Salten, Target Books (1997), ISBN: 0426203143

**Charlotte's Web** By E. B. White & illustrated by Garth Williams  
Puffin Books (1993), ISBN: 0140364498

**Danny the Champion of the World** By Roald Dahl & illustrated by Quentin Blake Puffin Books (2001),  
ISBN: 0141311320

**Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone** By J. K. Rowling  
Bloomsbury Children's Books, ISBN: 0747532745

**James and the Giant Peach** By Roald Dahl & illustrated by Quentin Blake  
Puffin Books (2001), ISBN: 0141311355

**Little Women** By Louisa May Alcott, Gramacy (1994), ISBN: 0140621199

**Oliver Twist** By Charles Dickens, Penguin Books (1994), ISBN: 014062046X

**The Secret Garden** By Frances Hodgson Burnett, Penguin Books (1995), ISBN: 014062153

**See Appendix A** – i) Letter informing parents of the death of a pupil.  
ii) Letter informing parents of the death of a staff member.

Date:

Dear Parents,

Your child's class teacher had the sad task of informing the children of the death of <Name>, a pupil in <Year>. He/She was a very popular member of the class and will be missed by everyone who knew him/her. Our thoughts are with <Names> family at this time and in an effort to try and respond to his/her death with sensitivity; all the children have been informed.

When someone dies, it is normal for their friends and family to experience lots of different feelings like sadness, anger and confusion. However, the children are likely to ask questions about the death and it is important that these are answered honestly and in a way that they will understand. The children have been told that their teachers are willing to try to answer their questions at school but if there is anything more that you or your child needs to know, please do not hesitate to contact school and we will try our best to help you.

We will be arranging a memorial service in school within the next few weeks as a means of celebrating <Name> life. We will let you know the details as soon as possible.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Cathy Logan  
Head Teacher

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child's class teacher had the sad task of informing the children of the tragic death of <Name>, who has been a <teacher> at Winterton Junior School for many years.

<Name> was a very popular member of staff and will be missed by everyone who knew him/her. Our thoughts are with <Names> family at this time and in an effort to try and respond to his/her death with sensitivity; all the children have been informed.

When someone dies, it is normal for family and friends to experience many different emotions like sadness, anger and disbelief. However, the children are likely to ask questions about the death and it is important that these are answered honestly and in a way that they will understand.

The children have been told that their teachers are willing to try and answer their questions at school but if there is anything else you or your child needs to know, please do not hesitate to contact school and we will try our best to help you.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Cathy Logan  
Head Teacher