How to help a pupil grieve

At some point a child will lose someone. Every child is different in how they react to a death. This can depend on their age, maturity, background, and previous experience of loss.

- Help them express how they feel. All feelings are ok! – help them label their emotions and talk about them.
- Be mindful that before the age of about 6 most children do not understand the permanence of death.
- Stick to routines as much as possible.
- Reassure them that they have support around them.
- Reassure them that this is NOT their fault.
- Be age appropriate and give information in an age appropriate way. Make sure you answer their questions as honestly as you are able.
- Do use clear language eg died, dead and not euphemisms such as 'gone to sleep' that can be even more scary and may cause bedtime issues.
- Make suggestions for collecting or talking about memories but don't force this. Let this be child led. They may prefer to play with a toy, draw or craft.