

ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO LEARNING (ABLE)

Taking a Closer Look at Bereavement

Pupil's Name	
Date of Birth	
School	
Class	
Date	

Names of those involved in ABLe conversation

Key: Highlight statements using "traffic light" system

Red - area of concern/difficulty

Orange - emerging skill/some difficulty

Green - fine

Leave blank - not known/not relevant at this time

Note:

Following a death, the reactions of children and young people may cause a great deal of concern, and some families feel they should get specialist help immediately. However, with the right support from the people around them, most children will be able to cope with the death of a loved one. Gradually they will learn to deal with all the changes. However, significant losses in the past may impact on the present, and so it is important past losses are not forgotten. Also, if the reactions of children or young people persist or become more severe over time after a death, it may be necessary to seek specialist help or advice. See over from some risk factors to consider that may lead you to seek specialist help for a child/young person/their family

	Date	Date	Date	Comments
Signs of more complicated grief				
• Child is preoccupied with thoughts and images of the deceased				
• Prolonged impact on ability to concentrate and learn				
• Extended period of disrupted relationships with family and friends				
• Inability of parent to meet child's needs (due to parental grief)				
• Prolonged lack of interest in activities they used to be involved in				
• Prolonged refusal to attend school				
• Continuing problems with sleeping				
• Persistent low confidence, shame or guilt				
• Persistent aggression, anxiety, physical complaints or eating disturbances				
• Prolonged fear of being alone				
• Risk-taking behaviour, e.g. drug or alcohol abuse, sexual experimentation, fighting, reckless driving				
• Repeated desires to join the dead person, copying symptoms/behaviour of the deceased				

or repeatedly dreaming of their own death				
• They are convinced they have caused harm/death				
• The death of their parent or sibling was by suicide				
• They were directly/indirectly responsible for the death				
• Child is finding it hard to control strong emotions and regulate their behaviour				
Other important risk factors to consider				
• Relationship with the person who died				
• Mode of death- was it sudden or a long fight against illness?				
• Did the family/child have time to prepare/say goodbye				
• How the child found out about the death				
• Child's general physical and/or mental health before the death/loss				
• Availability of spiritual/religious/cultural beliefs and rituals and child's response to these				
• Child's understanding of death in general and this death in particular				
• Child's general development and experiences in the early years				
• Any other significant losses such as parental separation, previous bereavement, other				

/multiple losses either recently or in the past				
• Child is or has been LAAC				
• Pervious traumatic experiences (Please see relevant section on trauma)				
• Temperament variables (see temperament section)				
• Attachment style. More information about attachment styles and how they develop can be found in the relevant section.				
• Availability of a support network				
• Any other current stressors affecting the child and/ or the family				