

Dear Parents,

We have a number of books that may help both adults and children with bereavement.

Each person is special and unique and so will deal with such difficulties and emotions differently.

We must always take care when sharing and using such material. Where we have been able, we have added some notes but please use your own judgement as you know your children and friends best. (We have also borrowed a selection from the Sevenoaks Library Service and these are detailed on the second page.)

### **Children's Books Dealing With Bereavement Held at Chevening**

#### **Children's Digital e-Books:**

**Lost for Words – Benjamin Brooks-Dutton** This e-book is a collection of personal insights and advice for bereaved children written by bereaved children. You can download it from the Winston's Wish website...

<https://www.winstonswish.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Lost-For-Words-Benjamin-Brooks-Dutton.pdf>

#### **Children's Picture Books:**

**The Paper Dolls – Julia Donaldson** Very simple book that uses 'paper dolls' to explain that when things are lost they travel somewhere else but remain in the memory. Suitable for very young children but may be too subtle for some to draw the connection to death.

**Are You Sad, Little Bear? – Rachel Rivett** A picture book exploring change due to the death of Grandma Bear. Showing change and loss in a positive way - after little bear initially felt sad in the story.

**Everett Anderson's Goodbye – Lucille Clifton** Deals with the 5 stages of grief using a short, rhyming story structure. (Stages: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance. It may need making explicit that each stage can last any amount of time, as a child may think that the stages move quickly due to the pace of the book.)

**Waterbugs and Dragonflies – Doris Stickney** Small, simple book that explains why we can no longer see the people who have died despite wanting to know what happened; and them wanting to return to tell us. The change from waterbugs to dragonflies is used as an analogy. Also has some prayers and advice for parents. There is a space to dedicate the book to the person who has died.

**Someone I Love Died – Christine Harder Tangvald** Interactive book rather than a story (with spaces for names and artwork). The book explains death from a Christian perspective. It talks about the possible feelings and what has happened to the people who have died. (There is also a short section of guidance for parents and prayer.)

#### **Children's 'chapter books':**

**A Monster Calls – Patrick Ness** Addresses how a young boy tries to deal with his mother's illness and death from cancer. It explores the sadness, anger, confusion and bewilderment that Connor feels. Some of the book is metaphorical and may need some explanation/guidance. (Also made into a film/play.)

**River Boy – Tim Bowler** It is a novel about the connection between a grandfather, who is dying and Jess. It deals with Jess coming to terms with how grandad is and how he acts; as well as some things grandad feels he needs to complete before his death.

#### **Children's 'chapter books' recommended by others (but we have no notes or guidance yet):**

**Two Weeks with the Queen – Morris Gleitzman**

**A Greyhound of a Girl – Roddy Doyle**

**The Thing About Jellyfish – Ali Benjamin**

**My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece – Annabel Pitcher**

#### **Adult Guides:**

**What Happens After Death? – David Winter** (Small pocket-guide)

## Children's Books Dealing with Bereavement from Sevenoaks Library

### Children's Picture Books:

**Goodbye Grandma (helping young children cope with bereavement) – Melanie Walsh** Death of Grandma.

Accessible to very young, with large pictures and simple questions that might be asked, addressed in plain language using references to other things children may have experienced.

**Only one of me – a love letter from Mum – Lisa Wells, Michelle Robinson** Death of a mother – explaining how she wishes she could be there for her daughter and how people around will help. References how the child may feel in a clear, simple way. Suitable for young children with the pictures and words used.

**Only one of me – a love letter from Dad – Lisa Wells, Michelle Robinson** Death of a father – explaining how he wishes he could be there for his son and how people around will help. References how the child may feel in a clear, simple way. Suitable for young children with the pictures and words used.

**The Copper Tree – Hilary Robinson & Mandy Stanley** Death of a teacher – probably from cancer. Accessible to the very young with large pictures and a few questions answered clearly. Some ideas about how to remember someone and carry on, keeping them in our memories. It mentions times like sports days and some times where they saw the teacher ill and others where they could not see her.

**Michael Rosen's Sad Book – Michael Rosen** Death of a child (and later referencing his mother too), from the perspective of the adult telling the story. Very powerful but need to treat with care due to the truths in it about how sad and depressed someone may feel. Could be very powerful for older children and those with mental health challenges but people should be helped through the pages as they could be challenging. Deals with anger too.

### Children's Non-fiction Book:

**What do we think about Death? – Karen Bryant-Mole** Very clearly explained non-fiction text suitable for young children. Also names the emotions children may face and how to deal with them. Answers a lot of questions in a straight-forward way that children may be thinking.

**Talking about death (A Dialogue between Parent and Child) – Earl A. Grollman** The illustrated and clear language of Pages 7-31 could be effectively used with young children. The rest of the book is an adult's guide about questions, misconceptions and dialogues young people may have with an adult about death. There is a lot of useful guidance as to what may help and what may cause misconceptions and problems. In addition there is a section dedicated towards helping bereaved adults. Don't be misled by the style and look of the book, it has a lot to contribute to the whole community who may be experiencing loss.

### Adult Guides:

**How to Help a Child Cope with Grief – Janice Perkins** Advice about questions, misconceptions, including some tools which could be photocopied to do with helping to express feelings. Also, practical advice and ideas for remembrance and memorials. There are sections about how grief, anger, sadness, anxiety may express itself. There is also a section referencing different faiths.

**Talking about death (A Dialogue between Parent and Child) – Earl A. Grollman** This is a guide about questions, misconceptions and dialogues young people may have with an adult about death. There is a lot of useful guidance as to what may help and what may cause misconceptions and problems. Within it are 20 illustrated pages of a conversation between adult and child trying to explain what has happened and how we may feel, which could be used with young children. In addition there is a section dedicated towards helping bereaved adults. Don't be misled by the style and look of the book, it has a lot to contribute to the whole community who may be experiencing loss.

Some helpful websites and information: <https://www.winstonswish.org/>