

Critical Incidents

***A Support Framework for
Norfolk Schools and Other Settings
for Children***

7th Edition revised

Many years have passed since the first Norfolk Critical Incident Framework was launched in 1995. It was felt that this document needed a major overhaul, as the understanding of the impact of Critical Incidents on schools, settings and communities has grown and new technologies have a major impact on how we conduct our lives.

This book has been revised by Bianca Finger-Berry, Susan Wilkinson and Chris Ducker, and we are grateful for the work which has been undertaken by all those colleagues across the country who are involved in this field, and for their experience and wisdom which we can draw upon.

The update of the book has been undertaken with support and advice from the headteachers who are part of the Critical Incident Steering Group.

It was approved by the Critical Incident Group on the 8th of October 2012.

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CRITICAL INCIDENTS

A support framework for Norfolk Schools and other settings

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FOREWORD TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

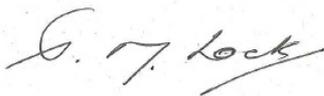
I am pleased to introduce the seventh edition of this booklet which has been distributed to all maintained schools in Norfolk

Norfolk's Critical incident support framework has a strong history of providing support to schools since it was first launched 19 years ago.

This booklet has been rewritten and completely updated to take account of the experiences of schools and our greater understanding of the impact of critical incidents on schools, pupils, and the wider community. This new version has chapters on the effects of a critical incident and how to create a resilient school environment. In addition there is a frequently asked questions section, and a list of useful websites and organisations to provide additional and specialist support.

Support for the framework is provided by the Critical Incident Steering group. The group comprises Head teachers, Children's Services officers, and other support services who oversee the Critical Incident Support Strategy. The Steering group is always keen to hear from Head teachers and others who have ideas about the strategy and how it may support schools and early years settings more effectively. If you have any comments please contact Dave Winteringham, Principal Educational Psychologist, Children's Services.

I hope that you find this booklet useful, and that if you have need to refer to it that it provides helpful information in providing support for children and the whole school community.



Sheila Lock
Interim Director of Children's Services

25 April 2014

1. Introduction & Background

The aims of this booklet are to give Norfolk Schools a better understanding of the impact of a Critical Incident, some helpful approaches in dealing with a Critical Incident (in particular more details about the role of the Critical Incident Management Group), as well as an overview of a selection of useful resources in relation to Critical Incidents and Bereavement.

Critical Incidents can have a profound impact upon everyone in school, not just those directly affected. The impact can last for a considerable time. It is important that senior managers within schools have the knowledge and competence to respond to incidents appropriately, both in the short term, as well as in the longer term.

Headteachers and managers are strongly recommended to read this book in advance of a Critical Incident occurring. It should be read in conjunction with the Red Book procedures, which provides operational guidelines in case of a Critical Incident.

Support is offered to all Local Authority Schools, as well as those academies and independent schools, which subscribe to the Critical Incident Service.

1.1 Background and definition of a Critical Incident

The Critical Incident Service was developed in 1995, when schools requested support in relation to children whose parents were engaged in the Gulf war, as well as following requests from individual schools where a death or a traumatic event had occurred.

Over the last nineteen years the Critical Incident Service has offered advice and support to schools in relation to a variety of incidents, as well as consultation and advice in relation to more general bereavement issues.

For the purpose of the Norfolk Critical Incident Service, a Critical Incident may be defined as:

‘An event or events, usually sudden, which involve the experience of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures, and coping strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences.’

These incidents tend to affect the whole or at least a large part of the school community. They have included the suicide of pupils, serious accidents while travelling to and from school or on school trips, the deaths of pupils, staff, and members of the community who are closely linked with the school, as well as the effects of war and serious fires in schools. Children or staff who suffer a terminal illness, as well as needing special attention themselves, also have a significant impact on the whole school community. Sometimes other significant events, like the arrest of a member of staff, also require specific

support for the school to support its pupils, parents and the wider school community.

Although, thankfully, we have not experienced this in Norfolk, we also want to ensure that we are prepared for a major emergency. Examples for this are a violent intruder who seriously harms several people, a major accident in which a number of children/staff are killed and/or seriously injured, or any other event which affects a larger number of members of the school community.

The crises referred to in this booklet are those which affect the school community. We do, however, recognise, that bereavement and trauma affecting individual children and staff can also have a serious impact on those individuals. The Critical Incident Co-ordinator offers consultation on how to support these individuals in school, as well as advice about which services to refer to for individual support.

2. Effects of Critical Incidents

The effects of a critical or traumatic incident upon the school community, whether occurring at the school, or involving pupils away from the school environment, can be profound, disruptive and long lasting. The effects on a child can be wide ranging and can impinge upon his or her family, other children (particularly those close to the child or the incident, or who may be emotionally vulnerable themselves), and upon the staff at the school.

Headteachers who have experienced such events comment upon a number of important factors. These include:

- The suddenness of the occurrence.
- The shock effect.
- The apparent uniqueness of the occurrence.
- The need for any support to be available very rapidly.
- The publicity and media attention which can sometimes follow.
- The need to communicate with a number of people quickly.
- The need for support for those directly affected, and for the larger number who might be indirectly affected.
- The need that they and senior members of staff have for support.
- The need to be aware of the possible impact on the local community.

2.1 Acute Phase – immediately after an incident

The majority of traumatised persons respond in an appropriate way. The immediate impact may involve shock or emotional numbness particularly to those who witnessed the event, which may last from minutes to hours or longer. Other responses may include emotional upset, which can be shown by shivering or shaking, apathy, denial, sadness, longing, anger and anxiety. Organisational impacts include disruption of the timetable, new responsibilities for staff in supporting children and informing their parents, and communication difficulties.

2.2 Sub-Acute Phase – starts within hours after trauma

This phase starts shortly after the incident occurred, and lasts from several days to several weeks and is very important for recovery. At this stage behaviour and emotions are mostly affected. Many children and adolescents express some kind of distress, intrusive thoughts about the incident or behavioural change in the acute phase of recovery from a traumatic event. Not all short-term responses to an incident are problematic, and some behaviour changes may reflect attempts to adapt and cope with a difficult or challenging experience.

The potential effects might include:

- recurrent dreams of the event;
- feeling as if the event is recurring;
- sleep disturbance;
- bed wetting;
- guilt about surviving;
- diminished interest in significant activities;
- feelings of detachment;
- irritability;
- depression or low mood;
- exaggerated startle response and heightened alertness to danger;
- memory impairment;
- trouble concentrating;
- disturbing images and memories of the event;
- avoidance of activities which recall the event.

The reactions of the child will be influenced by his or her developmental stage, and may include separation anxiety or regression of behaviour (such as going back to wetting the bed) in the very young, apparent indifference in young children, to feelings of guilt or anger in older children.

2.3 Long term effects

After an event there may be continuing need to support and monitor pupils who have been affected and to support staff. The consequences for a school may last for a year or more and involve the pupils, staff and governors. Particular care will need to be given when incidents affect specific community groups or where there may be cultural issues to be considered.

Despite exposure to traumatic events and experiencing short-term distress, most children and adolescents return to their previous levels of functioning after several weeks or months and resume a normal developmental course. Young people who have been exposed to multiple traumas, have a past history of anxiety problems, or have experienced family adversity are likely to be at higher risk of showing extended or more complex symptoms.

Research gives some evidence that individual, family, cultural, and community strengths can facilitate recovery and promote resilience. Recovery can be impeded by individual and family factors, the severity of ongoing life stressors, community stress, prior trauma exposure, developmental needs or diagnoses and ongoing safety concerns. Parents or caregivers can be affected by children's exposure to trauma, and in turn their responses affect children's reactions to trauma.

Although most return to previous levels of functioning, some develop severe acute or ongoing symptoms which continue to interfere considerably with their daily living, and may require further input. Advice should be sought if the

child's upset feelings and behaviour seem to be getting worse or the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, although normal for a short period, become a problem, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), when they go on for too long.

2.4 Impact on staff

Staff may be affected by a Critical Incident in a similar way to children, and suffer from the same short term and long term effects, as detailed in section 2.1 to 2.3.

It needs to be recognised that some staff may not wish, or may be unable to be directly involved in supporting children because of their own experience or who are vulnerable for any other reason.

Staff closely associated with the pupils involved, especially those responsible for them at the time of the incident, should be offered opportunities to talk about the event. Some staff may need long term support, and it should be considered whether counselling services need to be made available to them. School staff whose schools use Norfolk HR or who subscribe separately are able to access Norfolk Support Line for confidential support and counselling. The demands of leading a school through a Critical Incident can be profoundly disturbing but may not be identified or acknowledged until after the crisis has subsided. It is important that those managing an incident also take care of themselves and that someone takes responsibility for ensuring that this element is not overlooked.

3. Creating a resilient school environment

Resilience is thought to be the ability to bounce back from whatever life throws at you. Stroebe, Schut and Strobe's (2007) note that resilience is a key component in managing grief. Resilient children are better equipped to resist stress and adversity, cope with change, and uncertainty, and to recover faster and more completely from traumatic events and episodes (Newman and Blackburn 2002).

Resilience is believed to include several related elements such as: self esteem; a belief in ones own abilities and a range of problem solving skills.

Three fundamental building blocks that are thought to underpin resilience:

- A secure base, whereby the child feels a sense of belonging and security.
- Good self-esteem.
- A sense of self-efficacy (i.e. a sense of mastery and control along with an understanding of personal strengths and limitations)

In creating a resilient environment the potential role of the school is to provide:

- Encouragement, a sense of importance, support and high expectations in education from a key adult.
- A secure, emotional and consistent environment.
- Good adult / teacher role models.

In a practical sense the following may be useful to consider in developing a resilient school environment.

- Issues of loss are not uncommon and it would be helpful for children to have the opportunity to discuss everyday losses prior to any significant event.
- Recognise and utilise ways in which the National Curriculum Programmes of Study serve to help staff to provide learning experiences for pupils about loss, change, and bereavement. For example, as part of PSHE lessons pupils can discuss normal reactions to stress or crises and be given the opportunity to consider practical measures to alleviate stress responses e.g. relaxation techniques.
- Consider providing relevant fiction and non-fiction books in the school library.
- Consider whole staff training (see section 6).

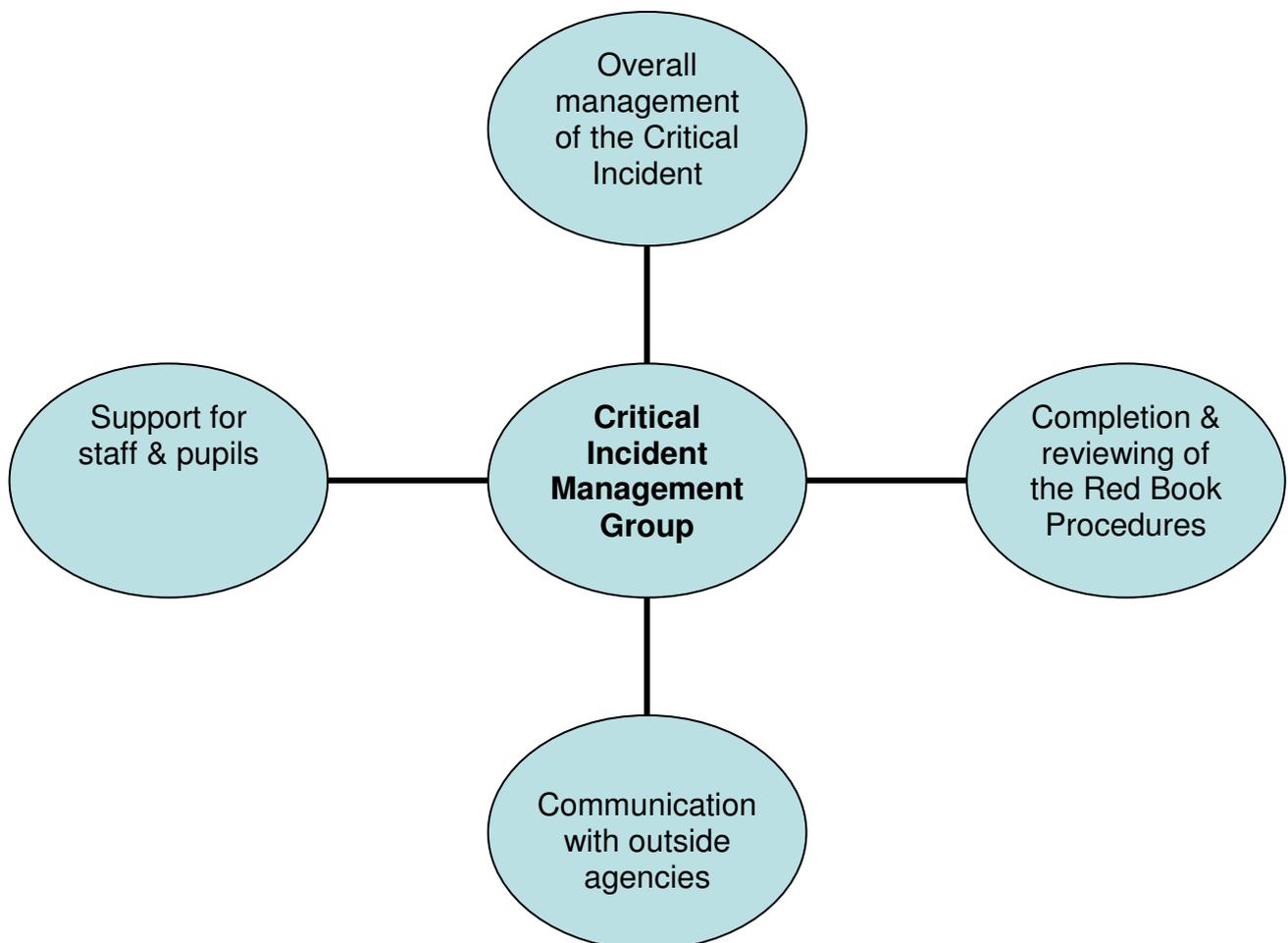
- Be aware of multicultural and multi faith issues.
- Develop strategies for increasing social support between staff and between pupils.
- You may wish to contact the Educational Psychology Service for more information on creating a resilient school environment.

4. The Critical Incident Management Group

The following sections will overview the purpose of, and detail the roles within, a school's Critical Incident Management Group (CIMG).

4.1 General purpose of the group

Ideally before any Critical Incident has taken place, each school will have completed the Red Book and have considered how they would respond to a Critical Incident. This plan should have room for flexible and creative responses to support staff and pupils, should an event occur. The headteacher will form a Critical Incident Management Group, which will be revised should an incident occur.



It is useful to involve all staff in sharing the schools Critical Incident Procedures so that everyone knows that they have a vital role to play. It is important that a climate of support, trust and confiding will strengthen the schools' response at a time of crisis.

During a Critical Incident the Critical Incident Management Group will need to meet on a regular basis to make decisions, and to review the decisions they have made.

Most Critical Incidents involve a number of outside agencies and different departments within Norfolk County Council. An incident affecting a member of staff is likely to involve HR services, whilst an incident affecting children often involves staff from Children's Services. Following the death of a child there are set procedures to follow, which may include a strategy meeting. The school will always be invited to these. It is important that the school works closely together with all agencies involved, in particular Children's Services, Police and Health.

The Critical Incident Management Group will in particular focus on re-establishing or keeping up normal routines, as it will help children and staff if they can rely on as much continuity as possible. Every attempt should be made to maintain the normal school day, so as to ensure that children are unsettled as little as possible. At the same time they should be given the opportunity to talk about their feelings if they wish to do so.

All members of the Critical Incident Management Group need to ensure that they keep accurate records of what is happening, how they are responding and why. It is important that this information is factual, and that any opinions are clearly marked as such.

All involved in a traumatic incident will need sympathetic support from those around them. All members of the Critical Incident Management Group need to encourage all staff to follow these guidelines:

- Maintenance of routines.
- Flexibility and sensitivity to take account of particular needs.
- Calm, reassuring adult models.
- A willingness by adults to listen and to make time for those who are distressed.
- Encouragement to talk and express feelings.
- Understanding of problems with work and relationships.
- Awareness by others, that post-incident enquiries and processes may significantly exacerbate the child's distress.
- Recognition of when it is important to refer for more specialist help.

4.2 Specific roles

The following sections will detail the key roles and responsibilities of the members of the CIMG.

4.2.1 Incident manager

The Critical Incident Manager will lead the Critical Incident Management Group and will co-ordinate the response to the Critical Incident. The Manager will ensure that swift and appropriate action is taken the moment the school is made aware that a critical incident has occurred.

Reviewing Critical Incident Management Group Membership

The Critical Incident Manager will review membership of the Critical Incident Management Team and take responsibility for assigning roles within the team.

Obtaining accurate information

He or she will ensure that every attempt is made to obtain accurate information of the situation. This is not always easy, as while information that something has happened spreads quickly, confusion about the exact details may surround the event for some time. This is particularly compounded by social networking and texting, as information can be exchanged very quickly, and this applies to pupils, as well as staff and parents. Any issues need to be discussed with the communications manager who will take a lead in managing the exchange of information, and deal with conflicting and wrong messages.

Liaising with outside agencies

The Critical Incident Manager will, quickly, decide which services the school needs to call upon. This will involve contacting outside agencies including the Critical Incident Support Service. In small schools, the Critical Incident Manager will need to decide what additional support is needed, and whether to call upon additional members of the school community, e.g. governors, clergy, parent support advisors, community police etc. The Chair of Governors should always be informed of a Critical Incident affecting the school community.

In the case of a major incident the scale of the incident is likely to be beyond the resources available to the school. In such situations the County Council will, if appropriate, activate it's emergency plan and mobilise all of its resources, which may involve other departments and agencies.

Link staff member for directly affected families

The Critical Incident Manager needs to decide who the link will be for individual families who are in particular affected by the incident that has occurred. In smaller schools it is likely to be the headteacher, but in larger schools there may be other staff members who know the family well and who would be a better link for the family.

Informing the school community

The Critical Incident Manager, in conjunction with other members of the Critical Incident Management Team, will decide of how to inform the school community about what has happened.

The following would be useful to consider:

- The whole staff should be informed of the situation at the first opportunity, and as much detail as possible should be shared. The management of a Critical Incident can result in a great deal of stress, and it is important that the management team supports each other during this process. It needs to be recognised that the burden of dealing with an incident may fall disproportionately upon a small number of staff and they may need the support of outside professionals.
- Besides informing staff, the Critical Incident Manager also needs to decide, in conjunction with the rest of the management group, on how to inform children. This is often best done in small groups, and the red book provides a template on how this can be done. The reason for this is that it allows children to ask questions, and can be better supported individually. However, in larger schools, especially high schools, it may be appropriate to inform pupils in bigger groups, e.g. year groups.
- Pupils should be told in simple language and information should be given about the circumstances of what happened if possible. Staff should be prepared to listen and encourage children to talk. Children should be told about the normal reactions to traumatic events. Very distressed pupils should be offered support away from the larger group. If children are very distressed, they may need to go home, if a supportive adult is available at home. Particular attention needs to be given to children with learning or communication difficulties, or where English is not their primary language.
- The Critical Incident Manager will need to ensure that teachers who are informing the children about the traumatic event that has occurred have appropriate support available when doing this. Sometimes the Critical Incident Manager may decide that he or she will tell all children, so that all children receive the same message across the school.

Liaising with Critical Incident Group Members

Other members of the Critical Incident Management Group will discuss with the Critical Incident Manager throughout the day issues of welfare, communication, property, etc. The Critical Incident Manager will need to make decisions throughout the day, responding to the needs of individuals as well as keeping in mind the need to continue with normal routines for the sake of all pupils and staff. The Critical Incident Manager will, if possible, call the group at regular intervals to review decisions made and discuss further issues.

4.2.2 Welfare lead

The main responsibilities for the Welfare lead are detailed below:

Acute
<p>Arrange special groups for very distressed pupils. Pupils who were involved in or witnessed the incident should be identified quickly as they may require higher levels of support. Similarly, it is known that children who are themselves emotionally vulnerable may be particularly susceptible to adverse reactions to such events even if they were not directly involved. Such children should be identified and their reactions monitored.</p> <p>Very distressed pupils may need to go home, with the usual care about getting them there and ensuring the availability of a supportive adult at home.</p> <p>For vulnerable or very distressed children immediate access to outside professionals may be appropriate, such as the Critical Incident Support Team.</p> <p>It might be useful to talk to children about what is a normal stress reaction and to give them guidance about measures to alleviate the stress response (for example, muscle relaxation, deep breathing, and positive imagery). Guidance on this could be offered by the Critical Incident Support Team.</p> <p>It can help to facilitate other means of expressing feelings such as painting, drawing, clay modelling, writing, dance and drama.</p> <p>It is important to be alert to changing and varied expressions of grief and responses to trauma in children.</p> <p>Checking whether special arrangements with Examination Boards will be needed.</p> <p>Some children may require support at a level which cannot be provided in a class or small group situation. They should be brought to the attention of the group of more experienced staff who can provide short-term support outside the normal timetable. The Critical Incident Support Team can offer also offer psychological support to those pupils, some schools may also have counsellors available in school.</p> <p>For vulnerable or very distressed staff support may be offered from the Welfare Lead initially and any concerns can be communicated to the Critical Incident Manager.</p>

Sub Acute

After a few days any children needing continued support should be directed to a designated member of staff.

Some children may not be attending school after the incident and it will be necessary to assist their return to school in ways that meet their individual needs as far as possible. The school could consider such arrangements as:

- negotiating a date for return with parents.
- arranging with parents for a visit by the form teacher to a child's home.
- briefing children who may be able to help in the process of resettling. This is likely to be children in the same form group.
- arranging for part-time attendance at first if this is considered helpful.

It may be useful to arrange for a 'sanctuary' that a child could go to if upset during the school day.

During this time it is important that all staff who teach the child are aware of the need for sensitivity in relation to missed work and the possible need to reschedule projects. Staff should continue to monitor children informally during the months following the incident.

Checking whether special arrangements with Examination Boards will be needed.

Children can also be taught to recognise signs of post traumatic stress reactions such as flashbacks and sleep disturbances and to use stress reduction techniques such as progressive muscular relaxation, control of breathing and positive imagery.

Any longer term concerns that the Welfare Lead has regarding a member of staff should be brought to the attention of the Critical Incident Manager and/or line manager in order that the member of staff receives the most appropriate support.

Long term

If children remain in a state of distress after 6 - 8 weeks, further professional advice could be sought. If staff feel further professional help may be needed they can arrange for this to be given if a child wishes it, following discussion with, and the consent of, parents. This will be a matter of great sensitivity and staff will seek advice from Senior Management colleagues and appropriate professionals if they are unsure of how to proceed.

If suitable, groups of children can be brought together to work with outside professionals who will seek to help them develop coping strategies and to understand their reactions. If children do not wish to be involved in this sort of treatment families will be contacted and advised on the kinds of help that are available to them and their children.

Staff should continue to monitor children informally during the months following the incident. Some children, and perhaps staff, will need ongoing therapeutic support.

Therapeutic approaches to traumatic events might include the following features:

- Speedy access to a skilled counsellor or interviewer who will encourage the child to communicate his or her feelings and understanding of the event. Children should be helped to make sense of their experiences and to understand that their reactions are normal. (The absence of a skilled interviewer should not preclude encouraging the child to talk).
- Bereavement support where appropriate, after any post traumatic stress has been addressed.
- Longer term counselling may be appropriate after the initial phase.
- Measures to help young people to learn from the experience.

Where a number of children have been involved, they may be supported in groups.

It may be appropriate to check whether special arrangements with Examination Boards will be needed.

It is possible that affected individuals will experience renewed grief on the anniversary of the incident in the years following its occurrence. The Headteacher will need to ensure that staff are made aware that this is a time of remembrance for some and that sensitivity and support may be needed.

Any longer term concerns about a member of staff should be brought to the attention of the Critical Incident Manager and/or line manager in order that the member of staff receives the most appropriate support.

4.2.3 Communications lead

A named senior member of staff should have responsibility for communicating with the media. Critical incidents are often characterised by confusion in the early stages and are of immediate interest to the media.

It is possible that the media will have heard of the name(s) of those involved in the incident. Those name(s) should not be released nor confirmed by the school to the media until the Authorities have confirmed the identity and the parents have been informed. Even then, consideration will need to be given to how staff and other pupils should be informed.

If there has been a Critical Incident at your school it is likely there will be media interest. It is a good idea to alert the media team at County Hall as soon as possible (Media Officer for Children's Services – 01603 224214, or the press office general number 01603 222973, or the out of hours number 07818 454782). If you subscribe to the County Council's media support package then the team will be able to provide you with advice and support on how to handle the media.

If you do not subscribe to the media support service and you feel you wish to access the advice and guidance on offer, you can sign up at an hourly rate.

Communicating with Parents

It will be important to consider appropriate means of communicating with the local community and parents. This could be done via a letter from school to update and advise parents at the end of the school day. If issues are more pressing it may be appropriate to use alternative means, such as calling parents from school, or using the school website or texting service, although this should be used as an alert rather than as a source of information, perhaps asking parents to contact or attend school for further details. The information will need to be given sensitively and with regard to the range of cultures represented within the school to avoid any misunderstandings or later complications.

Practical matters/Telephone contact

There may be additional practical responsibilities and issues which may include the following: consideration should be given to communication issues; including the likely difficulty in communicating with the school should a traumatic event occur and the landline telephone blocked by the volume of calls. Schools are encouraged to make suitable arrangements for making and receiving a large volume of calls in such circumstances.

The communications lead should also consider how information can be given to parents with little English. The school may need to consider translating important information into other languages.

Major incident

In the case of a major incident (for example, the crash of a school mini-bus, a plane or a ship) the scale of the incident is likely to be beyond the resources available to the school and parents will often hear of the incident from other sources. In such a situation the County Council will mobilise all of its resources and would be likely to involve other departments and agencies.

Clearly, if a major accident occurs, the school could be inundated with phone calls from distressed parents. A record of who has called in should be kept, so that parents will not be further distressed by additional calls. Those operating the switchboard will be briefed by the senior member of staff co-ordinating the response or by the Headteacher in order to ensure that the best information available is relayed to parents. An independent line for outgoing calls is vital to ensure two way communications.

If appropriate, emergency telephone numbers, hospital numbers, or other support agency numbers will be given to parents or put on a website and arrangements will be made to inform them of developments in the situation.

4.2.4 Property manager

The property manager should be aware of the correct procedures and processes in the event of an incident where they are the first school representative on site. This may include having access to and implementing the business continuity plan.

In Critical Incidents that involve damage to school property/buildings it is crucial that the property manager is kept fully briefed. This will include: practical aspects such as when any investigations are due to take place, when/if buildings can be entered, when any additional work can be undertaken and also close liaison with the Critical Incident Manager and the Communication Lead.

4.2.5 Link Governor – Critical Incidents

The role of the Link Governor is to support the school in managing the Critical Incident. This ties in to the usual roles of the governing body, which includes the following: to act as a critical friend to the school, offering support and advice, and help the school to respond to the needs of the parents and the community.

Communication with Governing body

Schools should always inform their Chair of Governors when a Critical Incident has occurred. It is good practice for schools to name a Link Governor for Critical Incidents in advance of anything occurring (see Red Book, p.6). The Link Governor should ensure that the governing body has an up to date copy of the completed red book, and is confident that the school has

procedures in place to respond to a Critical Incident should one occur. The Link Governor should also ensure that the school has the appropriate resources to respond. This includes ensuring that the arrangements are in place to respond to media requests, either via subscribing to the LA media service, or by putting alternative arrangements in place.

When the Chair of Governors is informed of an incident, he or she needs to consider whether the named person in the red book is the most appropriate Link Governor for that particular incident. This will depend on the nature of the incident, as well as people's work and personal commitments.

Communication with the school community

The Link Governor should be part of the Critical Incident Management Team, to offer support and advice. However, they are not required to take part in the day to day decisions in relation to the management of the school. The Link Governor may wish to be involved in letters to parents, and should be a link to the community. If additional resources are needed during a Critical Incident, the Link Governor should discuss this with the chair and ensure that the school can provide the best possible advice to staff and pupils. It is often helpful to have some presence in school to show the school community that the governing body takes an active interest in what is happening at school and is offering support to the community. If the school is invited to the funeral, the Link Governor or Chair of Governors will represent the governing body. If the headteacher is intending to close the school or part of the school for a funeral, this will need to be agreed by the governors.

Staff Support

Where the school acts as an employer to its staff, the Link Governor should be aware of the implications for the provisions that the school is responsible for in relation to health and safety. This includes ensuring that appropriate support services are offered to staff who have witnessed potentially traumatic events, e.g. Critical Incident Support Team, counselling services, occupational health services, etc.

It is likely that the school management team will personally be affected by the Critical Incident that has occurred, and this will have an impact on their ability to respond to the incident. As a 'critical friend' to the school, the Link Governor should make an assessment of how the headteacher is coping with managing the Critical Incident, and to ensure that he or she has appropriate support available to help them deal with what happened. Any issues should be brought to the attention to the Chair of Governors, who may contact the local authority for advice and/or support.

The Critical Incident Co-ordinator offers training for governors, details of which can be found in the Children's Services Governors Training handbook.

5. The Local Authority's Critical Incident Support Service

The Local Authority recognises both the responsibilities of Headteachers and Governors to respond to Critical Incidents and the Local Authority's responsibility to provide rapid and effective support to LA schools and those schools, which subscribe to the Critical Incident Support Service.

When a Critical Incident occurs that affects the running and stability of the school the Local Authority wishes to offer every support it can. To do this it has a range of supportive strategies and resources available.

As soon as the school is informed of an incident, you are advised to inform the local authority by phoning the Critical Incident Support Line on 07623 912974 and follow the procedures in the red book. You will speak to a senior children's services officer who will inform other services as appropriate.

The Critical Incident Co-ordinator will be able to talk with you about any immediate actions you need to take, and if you feel that you would benefit from additional support in school, this will be made available to you.

Members of the Critical Incident Team are able to support the Critical Incident Management Team to deal with the initial shock of the situation and to support you to re-establish normal routines. They are able to offer psychological support to staff and children, and help you identify vulnerable individuals. They are also able to offer follow up services and access to other county services.

The Critical Incident Team works in collaboration with the school, and the purpose of support is to provide information to children and staff, help normalise reactions and mobilise social support. They work in a structured but flexible way, and aim to foster a culture where talking about the event and expressing feelings is okay, but without any pressure to do so. They are also able to signpost to additional services.

6. Additional considerations for major incidents

In the event of a major emergency, it is likely that the scale of the incident will be beyond the resources available to the school.

The common theme of major emergencies are: the scale of the impact of the event or situation, the demands it is likely to make on local responders and the exceptional deployment of resources.

In such an event the Norfolk Emergency Response and Recovery Strategy Plan and the Norfolk County Council Emergency Management Strategy and Operational Procedures will be activated.

You can find a copy of the plans here:

http://intranet.norfolk.gov.uk/cex/emergency_planning/Content/emergency_response_plans.htm

In addition to the possibility of schools being directly affected by a major emergency, a number of schools have also been designated as rest centres for the local authority. In such circumstances, schools will serve as a resource for the wider community and may be closed to pupils during this time.

Schools are strongly encouraged to have a business continuity plan in place, which should be regularly updated. In the event of a major emergency, the incident management plan, which is part of the business continuity guidance, can be used alongside the red book and green book to inform the schools actions.

Support is available to guide schools through the process of creating a new plan or updating an existing one. A sample plan is available here:

<http://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/School-management/Emergencies/business-continuity-and-managing-emergencies/index.htm>

You can contact a Business Continuity Officer at businesscontinuity@norfolk.gov.uk for advice by email or to organise a visit.

7. Frequently Asked Questions

How do I respond to an enquiry from the media?

Any member of staff should know how to respond to an enquiry from the media. Here are some guidelines:

Find out why they are calling

Do not assume it is about the incident. They may be calling about a separate matter and know nothing about the incident.

Buy some time

Find out what they want to know and when their deadline is. Explain that you will get back to them before their deadline. If you haven't already done so you can then contact the media team at County Hall for advice.

Be prepared

It is helpful to have a statement and sometimes some possible question and answers ready so that you feel prepared to speak to the media. However, when doing an interview try not read from a script.

Identify a spokesperson

It's usually best if this is the headteacher but it may be appropriate for the Chair of Governors, deputy headteacher or another member of staff to act as a spokesperson.

Never say no comment

It is always better to say something than nothing at all. Saying no comment can make it sound like there is something to hide.

Sensitive information/names

Do not give out names of those involved without checking with the police/media team first. If a child has been killed or seriously injured it may be that the school knows before all of the child's relatives have been informed.

Express regret without accepting blame

You may want to say that staff and pupils feel shock and sadness etc.

Be reassuring – is there anything positive you can say?

Have staff/pupils coped particularly well with the situation etc. Put the incident into context.

Say what you are doing about it.

Is there an investigation, does the school receive support from the Critical Incident Team etc.

There is no such thing as off the record

Anything you say to a journalist could potentially be reported so you may wish to discuss with the media team at County Hall what information to share with the media.

What should I do if an incident occurs on an educational visit?

All Educational Visit leaders should know how to respond in an emergency. Every visit must have an emergency point of contact (EPOC) back at base, school or home, who has the task of coordinating communication with parents and the local authority. They will be a senior member of staff, who will also hold the red book and who will then phone the Critical Incident Number for support and advice. Once you have made contact with us, we will inform the Educational Visits Advisor who will work jointly with the Critical Incident Co-ordinator to give advice and support according to your specific circumstances.

What should we do if the incident occurs when the school is closed or on holiday?

Schools should ensure that their emergency contact details are always kept up to date on the 'my schools' website, or for academies, that they have notified the Critical Incident Co-ordinator of the emergency contact details for senior staff. During school closure times, it is possible that we will inform you of an incident that has occurred and will be affecting your school community.

There will be an expectation that the school responds to the crisis as soon as it re-opens. On occasions, the school needs to consider whether support may need to be offered during the holiday, e.g. if children are due to pick up exam results, or if the funeral is going to be during the holiday.

The Critical Incident Support Service is operational 7 days a week, 365 days a year, so please do get in touch if you need support and advice during times when the school is closed.

How should we respond if a child receives a diagnosis of a terminal illness?

The initial shock of any such news is similar in many ways to other incidents, and you may feel that the impact on the school community is such that you will want to phone the Critical Incident Service for immediate advice and support.

In other situations you will want to take time to establish more details, and will be working in collaboration with the family and other services to make appropriate provision. Each situation will vary depending on the condition, life expectancy, and whether children are in school.

From the time of diagnosis the Critical Incident Support Team are available to help plan with the school, and you can telephone us on the office number 01263 739064 for advice and support.

For some it might be more difficult than others to think about an impending death, but if you are able to prepare staff and children, then this will help.

What should we do if an incident has occurred but we feel that we can manage?

The Critical Incident Service is there to offer support when you feel that you need it.

However, sometimes it might be helpful to us if you inform us of the incident by telephoning the Critical Incident Support Line, especially if the incident relates to the death of a child or a member of staff. You may have heard about the death before we have, and if you let us know we can then inform other children's services professionals who are involved with the child or family, and update our records. We can also identify others who may be affected, e.g. siblings attending a different school.

You may find, that even if you do not need any in school support, a consultation with the Critical Incident Co-ordinator, who has supported many schools over the last few years, is still helpful in talking through what has happened and your plans to deal with the incident.

What should we do when we are informed about the death of a parent or sibling?

The death of a sibling or parent, whilst tragic, is unlikely to overwhelm school responses to the same degree as a member of the school with direct links to staff and children.

Responses should be targeted to any siblings or children within the school, in consultation with the family. This will include the appropriateness of sharing information, provision and responses when a child may become upset and so forth.

If you would like additional advice, you can telephone the Critical Incident Co-ordinator on 0263 739064 for a consultation around responses, although this may not be necessary in all cases. We can also inform you about different services available to support the child/family at home.

8. Training

Schools are strongly encouraged to make use of the training offered by the Critical Incident Support Team. The latest training will be published on the schools website, www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/criticalincidents

We offer the following training courses:

Supporting your school in a Critical Incident – Training for headteachers and members of the Critical Incident Management Group

Supporting your school in a Critical Incident – Training for school governors

Supporting children who are bereaved in school communities – Training for all school staff

Supporting children whose parents have a terminal illness – Training for school staff (on request)

The above two courses can also be offered as INSET in your school. Please contact us for further details.

In addition to this, media training is available to schools that subscribe to the Media Service. For further information you can contact them on 01603 217809 or 01603 228888.

9. Useful organisations and websites

This section will detail a list of available websites, help lines, support groups and books/information sources.

Contact details	Services offered/ to whom
<p>The Compassionate Friends 53 North Street Bristol BS3 1EN 08451 23 23 04 info@tcf.org.uk www.tcf.org.uk</p>	<p>Telephone support and information daily from 10.00 - 16.00 and 19.00 - 22.00. The line is always answered by a bereaved parent. Help for anyone of any age who has lost a child. Telephone/letter contact; group meetings; One to One Visiting; Newsletter; Newsletter for siblings (teenage and over); Contacts for siblings; Contacts for grandparents. Special contacts for those bereaved by suicide or homicide. Leaflets, library list, booklist. Local group meetings in Norwich, Kings Lynn and Attleborough. The helpline will give details as requested.</p>
<p>Grief Encounter PO Box 49701, London, N20 8XJ, UK 0208 3718455 contact@griefencounter.org.uk www.griefencounter.org.uk</p>	<p>Grief Encounter aim to provide the following support to bereaved children and their families, in a four tiered approach: Tier 1 Information gathering, via website. Tier 2. Telephone/email enquiry for further information, grief encounter registration and possible signposting. Tier 3 . Family visit/assessment for possible direct contact/work e.g. coming to meet others, one to one counselling, attendance on Residential camps, e-counselling. Tier 4. Referrals to outside services e.g. CAMHS</p>
<p>Nelson's Journey Trafalgar House 4 Meridian Way Norwich NR7 0TA 01603 431788 enquiries@nelsonsjourney.org.uk www.nelsonsjourney.org.uk</p>	<p>Nelson's Journey is a Norwich based charity which supports children and young people under the age of 18yrs, living in Norfolk, who have experienced the death of a significant person in their life e.g. parent or sibling.</p>
<p>The Child Death Helpline 0800 282986 Every evening 7pm – 10pm and Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10am - 1pm and Every Wednesday 10am - 4pm</p>	<p>Based at Great Ormond Street Children's' Hospital and Alderley Centre in Liverpool Helpline for anyone affected by the death of a child. A parent who has themselves been bereaved answers the telephone. Professional consultants provide backup.</p>
<p>Road To Peace PO Box 2579 London NW10 3PW 08454500355 www.roadtopeace.org</p>	<p>Information/support groups for those with relatives or friends killed in road accidents.</p>

<p>Child Bereavement UK Aston House High Street West Wycombe High Wycombe Bucks HP14 3AG 0800 0288840 enquiries@childbereavementuk.org www.childbereavement.org.uk</p>	<p>Support and counselling for grieving families. Provides resources and information for families and professionals, eg, books, cassettes, videos. Provides training and support for professionals to enable them to meet the needs of grieving families.</p>
<p>Samaritans Samaritans LinkLine, 08457 909090 Norwich: 19 St Stephens Square 01603 611311 and 321 Aylsham Road– 01603 441531 Gt Yarmouth: 62 North Quay – 01493 842800 Kings Lynn: 26 Queen St – 01553 761616 www.samaritans.org</p>	<p>Samaritans aim to benefit society by improving people’s emotional health in order to create a greater sense of well being. Apart from being a 24-hour source of support on the telephone, by email, by letter or face to face, we also work in the local community, visiting: schools, prisons and workplaces.</p>
<p>Victim Support Norwich: 01603 756354 Or 08453030900 www.victimsupport.org.uk Support does not depend on reporting a crime to the police.</p>	<p>A national charity giving free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family, friends and anyone else affected across England and Wales. We also speak out as a national voice for victims and witnesses and campaign for change.</p>
<p>Winston’s Wish Bayhills Road Cheltenham GL50 3AW Tel: 01242 515157 Fax: 01242 546187 E-mail: info@winstonswish.org.uk Website: www.winstonswish.org.uk Helpline: 0845 2030405</p>	<p>Winston’s Wish provides support for bereaved children aged up to 18 plus their parents and carers. The programme includes: Home visits, residential ‘Camp Winston’ weekends for children (aged 4-18), specialist support for those affected by suicide. These services are free to families living in Gloucestershire. If the bereaved family lives elsewhere please contact Winston’s Wish for further information.</p>
<p>ACT Association for children with life threatening or terminal conditions and their families. Orchard House Orchard Lane Bristol BS1 5DT Helpline: 08088088100 Office: 0117 9897820 email: info@act.org.uk website: www.act.org.uk</p>	<p>ACT aims to provide information on support services available for families whose children have life threatening or terminal conditions regardless of the particular diseases involved. It is involved in consultation and contact between service providers and campaigns to encourage the development of children’s’ palliative care services.</p>
<p>TAMBA Twins and Multiple Births Association PO Box 30 Little Sutton South Wirral L66 1TH www.tamba.org.uk Twinline - 0800 138 0509 The service operates from 7pm to 10pm every weekday, and 10am to 10pm on Saturdays and Sundays, all year round.</p>	<p>Has a bereavement support group offering parent support from parents who have experienced a similar loss. Through correspondence, phone, local contacts, meetings at the Twins’ Clinics and members’ homes, newsletter, Memorial Book and annual Memorial Service. Twinline is a confidential listening support and information service operated by trained parents of twins or triplets.</p>

COUNSELLING SERVICES	
Point 1 Counselling	0800 9774077 Counselling and mental health support for young people under 18 years.
MAP	Mancroft Advice project Norwich and Great Yarmouth, 11-25, General advice and support 01603 766994 or 01493 854839 email: info@map.uk.net website: www.map.uk.net
The Matthew Project	24 Pottergate Norwich NR2 1DX 01603 626123 - Office number 0300 7900227 (24 hr helpline) Support offered to families who have lost children/partners through drug related deaths.
Off The Record	1 Trinity Street Norwich, NR2 2BQ 01603 626650 Contribution to costs depending on ability to pay
St Barnabas Counselling Centre	Derby St Norwich, NR2 4PU 01603 625222 www.stbcc.org.uk email: admin@stbcc.org.uk Contribution to costs depending on ability to pay
The Norwich Centre	7 Earlham Road, Norwich Tel: 01603 617709 www.norwichcentre.org Free counselling for 16-18 year olds, otherwise contribution to costs depending on ability to pay
Norfolk County Council Norfolk Support Line	0800 169 7676 24 hour support and free counselling for eligible staff.
Norwich Branch Cruse Bereavement Care Princes Street United Reform Church Norwich NR3 1AZ 01603 219977 www.norwichcruse.org helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk	Help for the bereaved through counselling, information and social support through local branches. Publication list, journal.

Books

Inclusion on this book list does not constitute a recommendation, as we are aware that members of the school community have different needs, and incidents can vary widely.

Managing a Critical Incident

'Wise Before the Event' – Coping with Crises in Schools
W Yule and A Gold
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation
ISBN: 0-903319-66-7

There and back again
School shootings as experienced by school leaders
Albert H. Fein
ISBN-10: 0810845024

Order from Chaos
Responding to traumatic events
Marion Gibson
ISBN-10: 1861346972

Workplace Trauma
Noreen Tehrani
ISBN-10: 1583918760

A student dies – a school mourns
Ralph Klicker
ISBN-10: 1560327421

Handling death and bereavement at work
David Charles-Edwards
ISBN-10: 0415347254

Trauma

Post-traumatic stress
Stephen Regel and Stephen Joseph
ISBN-10: 0199566585

Post traumatic stress disorder
Patrick Smith, Sean Perrin, William Yule and David M. Clark
ISBN-10: 0415391644

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder In Children
Herbert
BPS Books. 1996.
ISBN: 1-85433-197-3

Supporting traumatized children and teenagers
Atle Dyregrov
ISBN-10: 1849050341

Reconstructing early intervention after trauma
Roderick Orner and Ulrich Schnyder
ISBN-10: 0198508344

Children with a terminal or life threatening illness

Supporting the child and the family in paediatric palliative care
Erica Brown with Brian Warr
ISBN-10: 1843101815

When someone has a very serious illness
Children can learn to cope with loss and change
Marge Heegaard
ISBN-10: 0962050245

When I die, will I get better?
Joeri and Piet Breebaart
ISBN-10: 0872263754

Joe has Leukaemia
Clic Sargent
ISBN-10: 1848412460

Lucy has a Tumour
Clic Sargent

Chemotherapy, Cakes and Cancer
Megan Blunt

A parents guide to children's cancer
Macmillan Cancer Support

Cancer... what's the score
Clic Sargent

When your Mum or Dad has cancer
Ann Couldrick
ISBN-10: 0951753738

The Secret C
Julie A. Stokes
ISBN-10: 0955953928

Need to know cancer
Oliver Gillie
ISBN-10: 0431188424

Supporting bereaved children

Grief in Children. A Handbook for Adults.
A Dyregrove
Jessica Kingsley (pub) 1990.
ISBN: 1-8530-2-113-X

The little book of bereavement for schools
Ian Gilbert
ISBN-10: 1845904648

An Intimate Loneliness: Supporting Bereaved Parents and Siblings
G Riches and P Dawson
Open University Press. 2000.
ISBN: 0-9523281-0-0

Children and Grief – When A Parent Dies
J W Worden
Guildford Press. 1996.
ISBN: 1-57230-148-1

Death and Loss – Compassionate Approaches In The Classroom
Oliver Leaman
Cassell. 1996.
ISBN: 0-304-33089-2

Giving Sorrow Words (Book and Video)
S Killick and S Lindeman
Lucky Duck Publishing. 1999.
ISBN: 1-873942-72-9

Grief in young children – a handbook for adults
Atle Dyregrov
ISBN-10: 1843106507

Interventions With Bereaved Children
Pennells and Smith
Jessica Kingsley. 1998.
ISBN-10: 1853022853

Loss, Change and Grief
E Brown
David Fulton Pubs.
ISBN-10: 1853464651

Childhood Bereavement
Developing the curriculum and pastoral support
Nina Job and Gill Frances
ISBN-10: 1904787142

Supporting Bereaved and Dying Children and Their Parents
M Herbert
BPS. 1999.
ISBN: 1-85433-187-6

The Forgotten Mourners
Pennells and Smith
Jessica Kingsley
ISBN-10: 1853027588

Death and Bereavement (2)
Helping children understand
Desmond Spiers
ISBN-10: 0948664258

Grief and Bereavement
Understanding Children
Ann Couldrick
ISBN-10: 0951753711

Effective Grief and Bereavement Support
Kari and Atle Dyregrov
ISBN-10: 1843106671

Supporting bereaved children and young people in school
The Child Bereavement Trust (Pack)

Remember me too
Child Bereavement in a nutshell
Simon Barton
Penhaligons Friends
ISBN-13: 978-0955075704

Talking about death and bereavement in school
How to help children aged 4-11 to feel supported and understood
Ann Chadwick
ISBN-13: 978-1849052467

Suicide

Beyond the rough rock
Supporting a child who has been bereaved through suicide
ISBN-13: 978-0953912377

Suicidal Children and Adolescents: Crisis and preventative Care
S Rioch
Celia Pubs. 1994
ISBN: 0-9523281-0-0

Books - Early Years and Primary

Badgers Parting Gifts

Susan Varley

ISBN-13: 978-0006643173

I miss you – A first look at death

Pat Thomas

ISBN-13: 978-0750260824

When a pet dies

Fred Rogers

ISBN-13: 978-0698116665

When Uncle Bob died

Althea Braithwaite

ISBN-13: 978-1903285084

Waterbugs and Dragonflies

Doris Stickney

ISBN-13: 978-0829816242

Dear grandma bunny

Dick Bruna

ISBN: 9781405219013

The Small Creature

Resource Pack by the British Heart Foundation

Someone has died suddenly

Mary Williams

ISBN-13: 978-1906409104

Always and forever

Alan Durrant

ISBN-13: 978-0552548779

Samantha's missing smile

Julie Kaplow and Donna Pincus

ISBN-13: 978-1591478096

Remembering Mum

Ginny Perkins and Leon Morris

ISBN-13: 978-0713644326

When Dinosaurs die

Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown

ISBN-13: 978-0316119559

A place in my heart

Annette Aubrey

ISBN-13: 978-1848350045

Beginnings and endings with lifetimes in between
Bryan Meltonie and Robert Ingpen
ISBN-13: 978-1855617605

The tenth good thing about Barney
Judith Viorst
ISBN-13: 978-0689712036

Saying Goodbye to Daddy
Judith Vigna
ISBN-13: 978-0807572535

Grandpa
John Burningham
ISBN-13: 978-0099434085

Books – late primary and early secondary

Milly's Bug Nut
Jill Janney
ISBN-13: 978-0953912346

Saying good-bye to a friend
Nicola Edwards
ISBN-13: 978-1841388366

What on earth do you do when someone dies
Trevor Romain
ISBN-13: 978-1575420554

What's happening – Death
Karen Bryant-Mole
ISBN-13: 978-0750213790

Life's End
Cath Senker
ISBN-13: 978-0750249775

The Cat Mummy
Jacqueline Wilson
ISBN-13: 978-0440868576

Drop Dead
Babette Cole
ISBN-13: 978-0099659112

The Scar
Charlotte Moundlic
ISBN-13: 978-1406335958

How can I deal with when people die
Franklin Watts
ISBN-13: 978-1445106212

Books – Secondary

Out of the blue – making memories last when someone has died
Julie Stokes and Pau Oxley
ISBN-13: 978-1903458716

Artichoke Hearts
Sita Brahmachari
ISBN-13: 978-0330517911

A taste of blackberries
Doris Buchanan Smith
ISBN-13: 978-0807212660

What is goodbye?
Nikki Grimes
ISBN-13: 978-0807212660

When a friend dies
Marilyn Gootman
ISBN-13: 978-1575421704

What colour is grief – a journey
Nell Dale
ISBN-13: 978-0955574801

Michael Rosen's Sad Book
Michael Rosen and Quentin Blake
ISBN-13: 978-1406317848

A bit of a Hero
Gervase Phinin
ISBN-13: 978-1842709092

Workbooks

My Book About....
St Christopher's Hospice
Dept of Social Work. 1989.
ISBN: 0-9528196-1-9

Muddles, Puddles and Sunshine
Your activity book when someone has died
Diana Crossley
ISBN-13: 978-1869890582

Hope beyond the headlines
Supporting a bereaved child through murder or manslaughter
Winston's Wish
ISBN-13: 978-0955953910

Talking With Children and Young People About Death and Dying: A
Workbook
M Turner
Jessica Kingsley. 2000.
ISBN: 1-85302-563-1

Good Grief 1 – Talking and Learning about Loss and Death
Barbara Ward
Jessica Kingsley: 1998.
ISBN: 1-85302-340-X

Good Grief 2 – Exploring Feelings, Loss and Death with under 11s
Barbara Ward and associates.
Jessica Kingsley. 2000.
ISBN 0-95128888

Caring For Bereaved Children
Cruse Bereavement Care.
ISBN: 0-900321-06-7

The Child Bereavement Trust
Activity and Information Pack
Loss, Death and Grief
ISBN 0-952-16614-3

When Someone Very Special Dies.
Marge Heegaard
Woodland Press.
Workbook for 6–12 year olds.
ISBN-13: 978-0962050206

When something terrible happens
Children can learn to cope with grief
Marge Heegaard
ISBN-13: 978-0962050237

When Someone Has A Very Serious illness
Marge Heegaard
Woodland press
Workbook for 6-12 year olds
ISBN-13: 978-0962050244

Grief Encounter Workbook
Shelley Gilbert
ISBN-13: 978-1904787211