
**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**



Improving People's Lives

Coping with Suicide

A summary of support for educational settings 2021

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Foreward

This guidance has been developed by Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Suicide Prevention Strategy Group. It brings together in one place existing resources and support available to educational settings. In the main this guidance refers to schools. It is equally applicable for the College and can be adapted for use in an early years setting where there is an adult death. Whilst it does not provide new guidance, it aims to make existing support easier to navigate. It provides support in the event of a death by suicide, or a death where suicide is suspected. It is relevant to the death of a student or member of staff. It covers;

- Support available from the local authority
- Guidance on actions to take and helpful templates
- Links to support for families, students and staff
- Suicide prevention messages and resources

The contents of this resource has been largely drawn from two existing resources that are judged by the B&NES Suicide Prevention Strategy Group as providing sensible and constructive advice:-

● [Help When We Needed It Most: How to prepare for and respond to suicide in schools and colleges – Samaritans](#)

● [After a Suicide: A toolkit for schools - American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

Having a response plan in advance of suspected death by suicide is particularly important for maintaining the structure and order of the school / college routine, whilst facilitating the expression of grief, and reducing the risk of imitative suicide (sometimes referred to as suicide contagion or copycat suicide). Schools with critical incident plans in place are best equipped to deal with a suicide should it happen. Good planning in the aftermath of an attempted or suspected suicide enables people to respond effectively at a time when resilience may be low.

Suicide is a very complicated act. It can be caused by a mental health problem such as depression, which can prevent a person from thinking clearly about his or her problems and how to solve them. Sometimes mental health problems are not identified or noticed; in other cases, a person will show obvious symptoms or signs. **Two important messages are that all of us should seek the help of others when we are feeling down or vulnerable and that children and young people should tell an adult if they are worried about a friend.**

The experience of one B&NES head teacher:-

I hope I never have to use this resource but it is good to know it is there. What I learnt from the experience of a student suicide is that you have to draw on every ounce of emotional intelligence within the school. Don't underestimate the intense feelings of grief, loss and anger that the whole community will feel including other parents and be aware that it is not uncommon for this to be directed at the school. Be really careful about what you say and the language you use. Don't talk about the death as suicide unless this has been firmly established and the family has given you permission to do so. If others are talking about suicide then the issue can be addressed in general ways as set out in this guidance.

What to do in the event of a death (or suspected death) by suicide

Begin by contacting B&NES' Director of Education & Safeguarding. They will convene a meeting with relevant officers and services to coordinate a plan of action that meets the specific needs of your situation.

Establish the facts

Following the news of a death, establish the facts before taking any action. The Local Authority and emergency services will be able to help with this. It is important to know:-

- If the death is being treated as suicide at this stage
- If the family want the cause of death to be known

The guidance here helps with how to respond depending on the answers to these questions.

Be aware that it is likely to be many months before an inquest is held, and that in many cases narrative conclusions (formally known as verdicts) may mean that the death is not officially recorded as suicide. It is important to note that there may be a great deal of speculation within the school / college community, and that schools often have to act on the basis that the death is being treated as suicide. When talking with the family and police you may be informed of details of the death such as certain factors that led up to it, the method of death and the existence and contents of any suicide notes. Whilst rumours may circulate about these things and people may directly ask you about them, it is best practice not to disclose or discuss these details particularly with students. Having agreed statements for staff to share with students will help ensure messages remain consistent and appropriate.

Use appropriate language

The UK Charity Papyrus (preventing young suicide) provides helpful suggestions on how to get the language right when talking about suicide. [On pages 17 & 18 of their resource Building Suicide-Safer Schools and Colleges: A guide for teachers and staff](#), they advise that using sensitive language can help build awareness and understanding to increase empathy and support.

Terminology to avoid

“Committed suicide”	Suicide hasn’t been a crime since 1961. Using the word ‘commit’ suggests that it is still a crime (we ‘commit’ crimes), which perpetuates stigma or the sense that it is a ‘sin’. Stigma shuts people up – young people will be less likely to talk about their suicidal feelings if they feel judged.
“Successful suicide”	Talking about suicide in terms of success is not helpful. If a young person dies by suicide it cannot ever be a success. We don’t talk about any other death in terms of success: we would never talk about a ‘successful heart attack’.

Terminology to use

When a suicide has occurred	“Ended / took their life” “Died by suicide” “Killed themselves”
About suicidal behaviour	“Attempted to take their life” “Engaged in suicidal behaviour” “Expressed suicidal ideation”

Critical incident support in B&NES

B&NES Council and partners have critical incidents protocols that cover both schools and early years settings. The death of a student or member of staff by suicide or suspected suicide would be considered a critical incident.

In the first instance settings should contact the Director of Education & Safeguarding. They will convene a meeting with relevant officers and services to coordinate a plan of action that meets the specific needs of your situation.

If you are made aware of a death out of normal working hours e.g. in the evening or weekends and need to access additional advice then please email or call the Director of Education and Safeguarding who will contact you as soon as possible. This is not a 24 hour or emergency response service, so you may not receive a response until the next working day. If you are concerned about the safety of family members or other young people call the Out of Hours Emergency Duty Services **(01454) 615165**.

Key facts to establish

- Is there confirmation that the cause of death is being treated as suicide?
- What do the family want disclosed?

Immediate thought must be given to contain any media interest and a media plan and statement will need to be considered and agreed (B&NES Council schools will agree a media statement with B&NES Communications and Marketing Team).

Alerting CAMHS

In order to protect other potentially vulnerable children and young people the B&NES Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) request that you also alert them of the death as a matter of priority. By informing the duty / on call desk of the situation they are able to be mindful of young people in their service who may be affected by the death. They will urgently review risk plans of those within the same school / college or family as required.

Telephone 01865 903889

Free support from the Samaritans

Schools / colleges may consider using the Samaritans 'Step by Step' service www.samaritans.org/your-community/supporting-schools. Whilst this is not quality assured by B&NES Council, it is a national service promoted by Public Health England. The Samaritans provide a free and comprehensive package of support for schools, colleges and other settings from day one following a suicide. All Postvention Advisors have received training and are DBS checked. Alongside practical advice the service is able to provide emotional support to staff. The Samaritans do not offer 1-1 emotional support to young people aged under 18 in the school or youth setting.

Sources of help and support for students aged under 18 are available in [Appendix 10](#).

Additional resources

Further guidance and information in appendices

- **Sample media statement.** [Appendix 1](#)
- **Key messages when responding to the media.** [Appendix 2](#)

Informing the school community

Handling rumours and misinformation

Telling staff

If possible, hold an emergency staff meeting or implement a predetermined crisis alert system. Call an end of afternoon whole staff meeting to debrief the day.

Further guidance and information in appendices

- **Sample agenda for staff meeting and notes for informing staff.**
[Appendix 3](#)

Telling students

Best practice is to do this in small groups e.g. tutor groups or class sets. Avoid breaking news in an assembly. Be factually accurate but avoid disclosing any details. Produce a clear statement to ensure consistency of message using appropriate language. The content of this will depend on whether or not the death is being treated as suspected suicide and if the family has requested the cause of death is not disclosed.

Ensure that when informing students of the death they are directed to sources of support and trusted adults if they feel distressed by the news.

Further guidance and information in appendices

Sample notification statement for students when:-

- **Death has been agreed as suspected suicide.** [Appendix 4](#)
- **Cause of death unconfirmed.**
[Appendix 5](#)
- **Family request cause of death is not disclosed.** [Appendix 6](#)

Telling parents / carers

Best practice is to do this as soon as possible by email or via letter. This should include a brief statement plus information on what their child has been told and where to access further help. The content of the message will depend on the circumstances.

Further guidance and information in appendices

Sample letter to parents / carers when:

- **Death has been agreed as suspected suicide.** [Appendix 7](#)
- **Cause of death unconfirmed.**
[Appendix 8](#)
- **Family request cause of death is not disclosed.** [Appendix 9](#)

Providing immediate support

Ensure that all staff know how to signpost students to sources of emotional support if needed. Strike a balance between being sensitive to those who are grieving and in shock and maintaining the school / college routine. Set aside a room with a staff member where students can go if they are upset or need privacy or a quiet space.

Ensure that all staff are also supported. They too will be deeply shocked by the death and feel bereaved. For both staff and students, the death may also trigger personal grief and anxiety due to circumstances outside of work.

Further guidance and information in appendices

- Available support from -B&NES Council Services and others. [Appendix 10](#)

Memorials and funerals

Memorials: Best practice is to acknowledge the importance of memorials but to avoid anything that sensationalise or glamorises suicide and to limit any memorials to within two weeks following the death. Consider offering to forward cards and tributes to the family if they would welcome it.

Talk with students about the risks linked with online memorials. For example comments may become public or published without their permission. They can also attract negative and hurtful comments which will be distressing to family and friends. Finally, anything that romanticises suicide can be harmful to those who are vulnerable and increase the risk of suicide in other vulnerable readers

Funerals: If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, parents or carers of students who wish to attend should request their child to be absent from school in the normal way. It is recommended that parents / carers accompany students who want to attend the funeral.

Further guidance and information in appendices

- Further advice about memorials and funerals. [Appendix 11](#)

Hosting a parent carer meeting

A parent / carer meeting can be a good way of addressing questions and fears and provide strategies for supporting children and young people at home. The meeting should acknowledge the recent death but make clear that the focus will be on supporting children and young people in times of distress and crisis and signposting to sources of support if worried about mental health issues.

Further guidance and information in appendices

- Further advice about hosting a meeting. [Appendix 12](#)

Providing ongoing support

Death by suicide will have a lasting impact on a school / college or setting.

Support for individuals - Some members of the school community will be particularly vulnerable and effort should be made to identify any such students, staff or families and provide them with additional support

A whole school / college approach can be supported through a range of emotional health and wellbeing resources that cover, information, PSHE and broader pastoral care.

A note about self-harm

Some people self-harm as a way of coping with difficult feelings. Self-harming is not in itself an indication that someone is suicidal, however, many people who die by suicide have at some point in their life self-harmed. Some students may self-harm as a way of dealing with grief and schools are alerted to B&NES Guidance on supporting young people who self-harm using the Oxford NHS Foundation Trust website [HarmLESS](#)

Further guidance and information in appendices

- Sources of support for staff, students, parents/ carers / curriculum and policy development. [Appendix 10](#)

Further guidance and information in appendices

- Further information on self-harm. [Appendix 13](#)
- HarmLESS www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/harmless

Appendix 1

Sample media statement:

The following sample media statement has been approved by the B&NES Communications and Marketing team and can be adapted as relevant. It deliberately makes no reference to the word suicide as it is not appropriate for the school / college to identify this to the media.

The senior management team at [insert name of school] has been informed that one of their students has died suddenly. The student was [add age] years old. Our thoughts and support go out to their family and friends at this difficult time.

The school/ college will be hosting an information meeting for parents and the community regarding unexpected deaths. Members of the school /college pastoral team [add others] will be present to provide information on common reactions following a sudden death and how to support children and young people. Trained counsellors, school nurses [add others] are also available to meet with students and staff over the coming weeks, as needed.

*The Samaritans offer a listening service for anyone who is in distress or has been affected by this death. They can be contacted on **Tel. 116 123** or email them at jo@samaritans.org.*

*Papyrus is a national charity www.papyrus-uk.org/contact dedicated to supporting young people. Their website provides information and advice to young people their families and friends in times of distress. They also promote a confidential helpline number: **HopeLineUK – 0800 068 4141***

Appendix 2

Key messages when responding to the media

- We are heartbroken over the death of one of our students. Our thoughts go out to their family and friends, and the entire community.
- We will be offering support for students and staff over the coming days and weeks
- We will be hosting an information meeting for parents and the community regarding such unexpected death. Experts will be on hand to answer questions.
- No TV cameras or reporters are allowed in the school or on school grounds.
- The media are advised to refer to the Samaritans Media Guidelines www.samaritans.org/media-centre/media-guidelines-reporting-suicide

Appendix 3

Telling Staff: Sample agenda for staff meeting and notes for informing staff

This meeting should be conducted by a senior member of staff such as the Head or Assistant Headteacher / HR manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They will act as the nominated Crisis Response Lead. It should be held as soon as possible, ideally before school or setting starts in the morning.

Depending on when the death occurs, there may not be enough time to hold the meeting before students have begun to hear the news through word of mouth, text messaging, social media. If this happens, the Crisis Response Lead should first verify the accuracy of the reports and then notify staff of the death through the school's predetermined crisis alert system, such as e-mail or calls to classroom phones. Remember that information about the cause of death must be withheld until the family has been consulted.

Goals of Initial Meeting

- Introduce the Crisis Response staff
- Share accurate information about the death
- Allow staff an opportunity to express their own reactions, feelings and grief. Identify anyone who may need additional support and refer them to appropriate resources
- Provide an appropriate statement to students for use in tutor or class groups
See appendices 4-6
- Arrange cover for any staff unable to manage reading the statement
- Prepare for student reactions and questions by providing handouts to staff on talking about a sudden death to young people
- Explain plans for the day, including locations of crisis counselling rooms
- Remind all staff of the important role they may play in identifying changes in behaviour among the students they know and see every day, and discuss plans for handling students who are having difficulty
- Brief staff about identifying and referring at-risk students as well as the need to keep records of those efforts
- Appraise staff of any outside crisis responders, or others, who will be assisting
- Discuss plans for students and staff wishing to attend the funeral when more details are known
- Identify which Crisis Response staff member has been designated as the media spokesperson and instruct staff to refer all media enquiries to them.

Appendix 3 continued

End of the First Day

It can also be helpful for the Crisis Response Lead and/or the Head teacher to have a full staff meeting at the end of the first day. This meeting provides an opportunity to take the following steps:

- Offer verbal appreciation to all the staff for their response today
- Review the day's challenges and successes
- Debrief, share experiences, express concerns, and ask questions
- Check in with staff to assess whether any of them need additional support, and refer accordingly
- Disseminate information regarding the death and/or funeral arrangements
- Discuss plans for the next day
- Remind staff of the importance of self-care and to look out for each other
- Remind staff of the importance of documenting crisis response efforts for future planning and understanding

Appendices 4, 5, 6

Sample death notification statement for students

These statements are intended as a guide to staff. They indicate the tone of a message that should be used when breaking the news of a death and the boundaries of information that can be discussed. They should be used in small group settings such as tutor groups or class sets. It is not appropriate to break such news in large groups such as in assemblies.

Appendix 4

Breaking the news to students

Option 1 – When the family have agreed that the cause of death can be described as suspected suicide.

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you that one of our students [for those in different year group give Year X, for those in year group / class give name provided parents have agreed] has died by suspected suicide. This is a big shock to all of us and we are all thinking off their family and friends. All of us want you to know that we understand how upsetting this news is. We are here to help you in any way we can.

A suicide death presents us with many questions that we may not be able to answer right away. Rumours may begin to circulate, and we ask that you do not spread these as they may be untrue and hurtful to others. We will do our best to give you accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Suicide is a very complicated act. It can be caused by a mental health problem such as depression, which can prevent a person from thinking clearly about their problems and how to solve them. Sometimes mental health problems are not identified or noticed; in other cases, a person will show obvious symptoms or signs. Two important messages are that all of us should seek the help of others when we are feeling down or vulnerable and that children and young people should tell an adult if they are worried about a friend.

Each of us will react to this death in our own way, and we need to be respectful of each other. Feeling sad is a normal response to any loss. Some of you may experience a great deal of sadness. For others this tragic death will trigger feelings of distress about other sad events in your life and people you have lost. Some of you may find you are having difficulty concentrating on your work, and others may find that diving into your work is a good distraction. However you react, we want to reassure you that your feelings are quite natural. We also know that sometimes people have feelings of guilt when someone they know dies. It is really important that you know this death is not anyone's fault.

We have arranged for support to be available to any student who wants it. [Describe here support details re counsellor / quiet room and arrangements to access these] Remember you are not allowed to leave the school / college grounds without permission. A notice is going home today to your parents and carers about the death so that they understand if you want to talk to them today or sometime in the future.

Appendix 5

Breaking the news to students

Option 2 – When the cause of death is unconfirmed.

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you that one of our students [for those in different year group give Year X, for those in year group / class give name provided parents have agreed] has died suddenly. This is a big shock to all of us and we are all thinking of their family and friends. All of us want you to know that we understand how upsetting this news is. We are here to help you in any way we can.

The cause of death has not yet been determined by the authorities. A sudden death presents us with many questions that we may not be able to answer right away at the moment. Rumours may begin to circulate, and we ask that you do not spread these as they may be untrue and hurtful to others. We will do our best to give you accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Each of us will react to this death in our own way, and we need to be respectful of each other. Feeling sad is a normal response to any loss. Some of you may experience a great deal of sadness. For others this tragic death will trigger feelings of distress about other sad events in your life and people you have lost. Some of you may find you are having difficulty concentrating on your work, and others may find that diving into your work is a good distraction. However you react, we want to reassure you that your feelings are quite natural. We also know that sometimes people have feelings of guilt when someone they know dies. It is really important that you know this death is not anyone's fault.

We have arranged for support to be available to any student who wants it. [Describe here support details re counsellor / quiet room and arrangements to access these] Remember you are not allowed to leave the school grounds without permission. A notice is going home today to your parents and carers about the death so that they understand if you want to talk to them today or sometime in the future.

Appendix 6

Breaking the news to students

Option 3 – When the family has requested that the cause of death not be disclosed

It is with great sadness that I have to tell you that one of our students [for those in different year group give Year X, for those in year group / class give name provided parents have agreed] has died suddenly. This is a big shock to all of us and we are all thinking of their family and friends. All of us want you to know that we understand how upsetting this news is. We are here to help you in any way we can.

The family has requested that information about the cause of death is not be shared at this time. A sudden death presents us with many questions that we may not be able to answer right away at the moment. Rumours may begin to circulate, and we ask that you do not spread these as they may be untrue and hurtful to others. We will do our best to give you accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Each of us will react to this death in our own way, and we need to be respectful of each other. Feeling sad is a normal response to any loss. Some of you may experience a great deal of sadness. For others this tragic death will trigger feelings of distress about other sad events in your life and people you have lost. Some of you may find you are having difficulty concentrating on your work, and others may find that diving into your work is a good distraction. However you react, we want to reassure you that your feelings are quite natural. We also know that sometimes people have feelings of guilt when someone they know dies. It is really important that you know this death is not anyone's fault.

We have arranged for support to be available to any student who wants it. [Describe here support details re counsellor / quiet room and arrangements to access these] Remember you are not allowed to leave the school / college grounds without permission. A notice is going home today to your parents and carers about the death so that they understand if you want to talk to them today or sometime in the future.

Appendices 7, 8, 9

Sample death notification statement for parents

To be sent by e-mail or regular mail

Appendix 7

Informing parents and carers

Option 1 – When the family have agreed that the cause of death can be described as suspected suicide.

I am writing to you with the very sad news that one of our year [add year] students has died by suspected suicide. Our thoughts and sympathies are with their family and friends.

All of the students were given this news by their teacher in [tutor groups/class sets] this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was shared with them. Support has been available to all students through [add detail]. If you feel your child needs support in school they should speak to [add detail about arrangement in place].

We know that you may be concerned about your child's reaction or expressions of feelings about this news. If you can, try and talk with them about positive ways to manage problems. Two important messages are that all of us should seek the help of others when we are feeling down or vulnerable and that young people should tell an adult if they are worried about a friend.

Over the coming weeks and months we will be concentrating on supporting students and staff affected by this death. This not only includes close friends of the student but also those for whom this news triggers feelings of sadness and loss due to events in their own lives. We plan to provide this support whilst also returning the school to normal routines as soon as possible.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany them to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school. This should be sent in writing to us.

We will be hosting an information meeting for parents and the community regarding unexpected deaths. [Add date / time / location / or further details to follow]. Members of our Crisis Response Team and local services will be present to provide information about common reactions following a sudden death and how adults can help children and young people cope with these. They will also provide information about suicide and mental health issues in children and young people and will address attendees' questions and concerns.

If you would like to speak to a member of staff about your child's response to this sad news or any aspect of the content of this letter, please contact either myself or [add details].

*Yours Sincerely,
[Head Teacher]*

Appendix 8

Informing parents and carers

Option 2 – When the cause of death is unconfirmed

I am writing to you with the very sad news of the sudden death of one of our year [add year] students. Our thoughts and sympathies are with their family and friends.

All of the students were given this news by their teacher in [tutor groups/class sets] this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was shared with them. The cause of death has not yet been determined by the authorities. We are aware that there has been some talk about the possibility that this was a suicide death. Rumours may begin to circulate, and we have asked the students not to spread these since they may turn out to be inaccurate and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to family and friends. We will do our best to give accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Support has been available to all students through [add detail]. If you feel your child needs support in school they should speak to [add detail of arrangements]. We know that you may be concerned about your child's reaction or expressions of feelings about this news and any rumours they have overheard. If you can, talk with them about positive ways to manage problems. Two important messages are that all of us should seek the help of others when we are feeling down or vulnerable and that young people should tell an adult if they are worried about a friend.

Over the coming weeks and months we will be concentrating on supporting students and staff affected by this death. This not only includes close friends of the student but also those for whom this news triggers feelings of sadness and loss due to events in their own lives. We plan to provide this support whilst also returning the school to normal routines as soon as possible.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany them to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school. This should be sent in writing to us.

We will be hosting an information meeting for parents and the community regarding unexpected deaths. [Add date / time / location / or further details to follow]. Members of our Crisis Response Team and local services will be present to provide information about common reactions following a sudden death and how adults can help children and young people cope with these. They will also provide information about suicide and mental health issues in children and young people and will address attendees' questions and concerns.

If you would like to speak to a member of staff about your child's response to this sad news or any aspect of the content of this letter, please contact either myself or [add details].

Yours Sincerely,

[Head Teacher]

Appendix 9

Informing parents and carers

Option 3 – When the family has requested that the cause of death not be disclosed

I am writing to you with the very sad news of the sudden death of one of our year [add year] students. Our thoughts and sympathies are with their family and friends.

All of the students were given this news by their teacher in [tutor groups/class sets] this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was shared with them. The family has requested that information about the cause of death is not shared at this time. Rumours may begin to circulate about the cause of death, and we have asked the students not to spread these since they may turn out to be inaccurate and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to family and friends. We will do our best to give accurate information as it becomes known to us.

Support has been made available to all students through [add detail]. If you feel your child needs support in school they should speak to [add detail of arrangements]. We know that you may be concerned about your child reaction or expressions of feelings about this news. If you can, talk with them about positive ways to manage problems. Two important messages are that all of us should seek the help of others when we are feeling down or vulnerable and that young people should tell an adult if they are worried about a friend.

Over the coming weeks and months we will be concentrating on supporting students and staff affected by this death. This not only includes close friends of the student but also those for whom this news triggers feelings of sadness and loss due to events in their own lives. We plan to provide this support whilst also returning the school to normal routines as soon as possible.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany them to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school. This should be sent in writing to us.

We will be hosting an information meeting for parents and the community regarding unexpected deaths. [Add date / time / location / or further details to follow]. Members of our Crisis Response Team and local services will be present to provide information about common reactions following a sudden death and how adults can help children and young people cope with these. They will also provide information about bereavement and mental health issues in children and young people and will address attendees' questions and concerns.

If you would like to speak to a member of staff about your child's response to this sad news or any aspect of the content of this letter, please contact either myself or [add details].

Yours Sincerely,

[Head Teacher]

Appendix 10

Sources of support

Supporting Bereavement: B&NES Services and resources

For up to date lists of support sources also see the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#)

Out of Hours Contacts – to be called if the school are concerned about a family / family member outside of normal working hours

Emergency Duty Services (01454) 615165

B&NES Guidance Bereavement in Early Years. Bereavement in Childhood and Adolescent

B&NES Public Health Programme
<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/20768>

Supporting Bereavement: Other sources

Samaritans Step by Step Service

www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-education/step-step

CRUSE when a child is bereaved by suicide

www.cruse.org.uk/for-schools/suicide

Papyrus: prevention of young suicides
HopeLine UK

www.papyrus-uk.org
0800 0684141

Diocese of Bath and Wells

Supporting Church of England Schools.
01749 670777
Ask for bereavement support

Roman Catholic Schools

School Chaplains / Priest support

The Good Grief Trust

<https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org>

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide
(includes B&NES group for adults)

www.uk-sobs.org.uk
03001115065

Support After Suicide Partnership

www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk

Appendix 10 continued

Sources of support

Support for children & young people in times of distress.

For up to date lists of support sources also see the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#)

KOOTH free online counselling	https://kooth.com
Off The Record	www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – self referral process	https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/?page_id=321
B&NES School Nursing Service	http://bathneshealthandcare.nhs.uk/childrens/school-nursing
Papyrus: prevention of young suicides	https://papyrus-uk.org/help-advice/resources/spot-the-signs
Childline	www.childline.org.uk Free phone 0800 1111
Samaritans	www.samaritans.org Free phone 116 123
The Mix	www.themix.org.uk
Young Minds	https://youngminds.org.uk

Support for parents / carers

For an up to date lists of sources of support for parents and carers visit the the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#)

Help is at Hand. A resource for people bereaved through suicide or other unexplained death, and for those helping them	https://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/resource/help-is-at-hand/
Beside: Supporting you after suicide bereavement. Real time support service provided for anyone aged over 16 in B&NES	https://www.second-step.co.uk/our-services/our-bath-and-north-east-somerset-services/

Appendix 10 continued

Sources of support

Training resources for staff.

For an up to date lists of links to sources of support for staff and training resources visit the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#).

Policy guidance.

For up to date lists of policy guidance visit the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#).

Creating a Suicide-Safer Community
in your School or College

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/toolkitfinal.pdf>

Samaritans: Help when we needed it most

www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-education/step-step

Curriculum resources.

For a comprehensive list of resources see the mental health and wellbeing pages of the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme](#).

B&NES Early Help App

This App has been designed for professionals working with children, young people and families. It provides details of local organisations, service providers and voluntary groups that support families and links to partner organisations that families may encounter as well as screening tools, thresholds documents and quick access to other useful local directories like 1 Big Database, all helping you to refer or signpost the family you are working with to the most appropriate service for support.

The B&NES Early Help Services App is free to download and use.

App store: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/b-nes-early-help-services/id1137068161>

Google play: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.gov.bathnes.banes_early_help_services&hl=en&gl=US

Appendix 11

Memorials and Funeral

The Samaritans advice regarding MEMORIALS:-

This is a difficult issue that needs to be carefully managed, taking account of the wide range of feelings that are likely to be displayed. It is natural to want to pay tribute to those who have died. However, it is important not to sensationalise or glamorise suicide as that may act as a trigger for anyone who is deeply affected.

School / college managers should set a time limit for memorials [about two weeks]. They may offer to forward cards and other tribute material to the family afterwards. Permanent memorials following a suicide are generally to be discouraged. Schools cannot control online memorials and other social networking activity following a suicide.

Students should, however, be warned about the risks of online memorials. Their comments may become public / published without their permission. Online memorials can attract negative and hurtful comment and anything that romanticises suicide can be harmful to those who are vulnerable and increase the risk of suicide in other vulnerable readers. Schools could consider establishing an online memorial on their own website, which they can then moderate and remove after an agreed time.

The Samaritans advice regarding FUNERALS:-

The nature of the student's death should not by itself encourage greater attendance at the funeral than it would for any other tragic death at the school. It is recommended that parents / carers accompany students who want to attend. Those who don't attend should have normal classes to go to. If appropriate, schools might engage the faith leader prior to the funeral to suggest that eulogies should be fitting and do not sensationalise what has happened.

Appendix 12

Hosting a parent / carer meeting

If the school has offered to host a parent / carer meeting this should acknowledge the recent death but make clear that the focus will be on:-

- Supporting your child if they are experiencing bereavement and or anxiety following the death
- Outlining the support provided within the school / setting including statements about counselling, memorials, social media and the funeral
- Supporting your child if they are experiencing mental health problems or are in distress.

It is advisable to have a high staff to parent / carer ratio and to draw upon the support of health and safeguarding professionals including

- Members of the Critical Incident Team
- School Nursing Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental health Services
- Education Psychology Service
- Local faith leaders
- The Bath and District Samaritans
- Samaritans' Step by Step Service
www.samaritans.org/education/step-by-step

Appendix 13

Responding to self harm

Self-harm is a term used when someone injures or harms themselves on purpose rather than by accident. Common examples include 'overdosing' (self-poisoning), hitting, cutting or burning oneself, pulling hair or picking skin, or self-strangulation. Self-harm is always a sign of something being wrong (Royal College of Psychiatrists). Unfortunately some young people use self-harm as a way of trying to deal with very difficult feelings that build up inside. Whilst many people who self-harm are not suicidal, their actions can be very serious and even life threatening.

Bath and North East Somerset has adopted the self-harm guidance and support tools developed by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust found on their website HarmLESS www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/harmless.

A sample self-harm policy for educational settings is available on the [B&NES Public Health in Schools Programme mental Health in Schools](#)