* When supporting children and young people, show that you are willing to talk about the event. Make yourself available and create opportunities for private discussion if needed, for example, through the child or young person staying behind to ‘help’ with a task.
* If the child or young person does not want to talk, respect their right to privacy. They may not want to express their feelings at all, or may prefer to use painting, drawing or play.
* It will be important to monitor the students’ responses over time, including anyone who may be particularly vulnerable (e.g. friends and family members). Adults working regularly with students are best placed to notice any significant changes in behaviour and should seek additional support if concerned.

Help and support for children and young people who experience a frightening event or bereavement is best provided by a trusted, familiar adult as and when it is needed.

It’s quite normal to be upset, even for quite a while after a frightening event; children and young people (and adults) may feel angry, sad, guilty, confused, or any combination of feelings. Children and young people worry less if you can help them to see that their reactions are ***normal*** and ***understandable***.

In time, most children (and adults) will come to terms with what has happened and recover without the need for professional counselling.

It will be important for a teacher supporting pupils to be aware of any cultural or religious influences, particularly beliefs and attitudes to death.

**Supporting Children and Young People following a Frightening Event**

**If the child or young person *does want to talk:***

Answer questions as accurately and honestly as you can

Avoid emphasis on advice or interpretation

Basic supporting skills will be helpful, such as simple acknowledgement of what has been said, reflecting back what the child or young person has said, naming the emotions you hear, and summarising briefly what has been said



Some people may not feel they are the ‘best person’ to do this kind of thing, but if they are trusted by the child or young person, and already have a relationship, then they may be more useful than a more experienced, but unfamiliar, adult.

However, if the teacher, for whatever reason, would rather not attempt to engage the child or young person, then the management team in the school must be sensitive to this and offer someone else.

Listen with full attention

Give the message that the feelings expressed are natural and normal