Bereaved pupil support in schools: teacher training

Jodie Crooks [1], Austin Orr,[2] Christine Irvine,[2] Charlotte Simpson-Greene,[1] Briony Hudson,[1] Joan McEwan[2]

[1]Policy and Research, Marie Curie, London, UK
[2]Policy and Research, Marie Curie Hospice, Belfast, UK

Correspondence to
Jodie Crooks, Policy and Research, Marie Curie, London SW11 7BW, UK; jodie.crooks@mariecurie.org.uk

ABSTRACT

Objectives Approximately, 1600 pupils are bereaved by a parent or sibling each year in Northern Ireland, equating to at least one child in every school class. Despite this, many children who are bereaved do not receive support from their school or college. Unsupported childhood bereavement is a risk factor for a number of social, psychological and educational difficulties. We aimed to carry out a service evaluation to explore the impact of a bereavement training course delivered to teaching staff in Northern Ireland.

Methods A mixed methods, participant-oriented evaluation was carried out. Data were collected via a survey distributed at baseline (prior to training) and 4-month follow-up, and semistructured interviews. All participants were staff within the school community who had participated in the training. Quantitative survey data were analysed via statistical analysis, and open-text survey responses and interview data were analysed via thematic analysis.

Results Quantitative survey responses indicated statistically significant improvements in teachers' confidence and knowledge on supporting bereaved children after the training. Six key themes were developed from interview data: the impact of the training on teaching staff's confidence, knowledge, on the schools' policy and practice, the impact on pupils, and whole school training.

Conclusions Given the significant role that teachers have in a child's formative years, it is essential that teaching staff are adequately trained and equipped to recognise and support both prebereavement and grief in pupils. A whole school bereavement training programme can be effective, as part of a wider culture and practice which values bereavement support in school.

WHAT IS ALREADY KNOWN ON THIS TOPIC

⇒ Most children will experience a bereavement before they leave school. Approximately, 1600 pupils are bereaved by a parent or sibling each year in Northern Ireland, equating to at least one child in every school class.
⇒ Schools and staff within the school community have a critical role in supporting bereaved pupils.
⇒ However, school staff often do not feel confident or equipped to adequately support pupils experiencing bereavement.

WHAT THIS STUDY ADDS

⇒ Training on supporting bereaved pupils, such as the one outlined in the current paper, can significantly increase the confidence and knowledge of teaching staff.
⇒ Training can positively impact a school's wider culture and practice such as presence or content of a bereavement policy, and staff's awareness and use of such a policy.

HOW THIS STUDY MIGHT AFFECT RESEARCH, PRACTICE OR POLICY

⇒ Given the significant role that teachers have in a child's formative years, adequately trained school staff can provide support resulting in lasting impacts on a child's educational outcomes and social and emotional development following a bereavement.
⇒ This evaluation contributes to a growing campaign for more support for bereaved children within the school setting.

BACKGROUND

Approximately, 1600 pupils are bereaved by a parent or sibling each year in Northern Ireland (NI), equating to at least one child in every school class.[1] Further, most children will experience the death of someone close to them by the time they leave school.[1] Despite this, a recent report by the UK Commission on Bereavement found that half of the children in the UK who were bereaved in the past 5 years did not receive support from their school or college following bereavement.[2]

Unsupported childhood bereavement is a risk factor for some social, psychological and educational difficulties. Children who experience parental bereavement often have lower educational attainment, lower attendance and are more likely to experience school exclusion.[3–5] Without adequate support, young people often report increased anxiety and depression, and lower self-esteem following bereavement.[6]

Although in some cases children may need professional psychological support following a bereavement, evidence is increasingly acknowledging the importance of varied support, including from within a child's existing social networks to offer a sense of 'normality' during a time of rupture.[7 8] Evidence suggests schools are particularly well suited to offer bereavement support to pupils: they often already understand the needs of the pupil and can be a 'safe space' where children spend a large amount of time, fostering regular relationships and social support.[7 9 10] A review of approaches used to support bereaved children in schools emphasised that encouraging children to openly communicate and express emotion was the most common and successful approaches.[11] Consequently, teachers play a key role in recognising and supporting bereavement in children. Despite this, bereavement training is not mandatory in schools while head teachers are provided with some guidance, it is not available to all teachers. This often results in teachers' poor confidence or knowledge acting as a barrier to providing joined up emotional support to bereaved pupils.[12] This barrier is often exacerbated when considering death in a multicultural environment: research has shown that teachers within schools described as multicultural within Ireland often feel afraid of saying the wrong thing, lack confidence in addressing a bereavement and report having no continued professional development on grief and bereavement.[13] Furthermore, bereavement is not explicitly referenced in the personal development curriculum for pupils. While schools are encouraged to have a bereavement policy, it is not currently a statutory requirement. Where schools have an absence of a bereavement policy, teachers report feeling worried and lost among an unmanaged approach to a pupils bereavement.[13] It is critical, therefore, that all schools within NI are required and enabled to strengthen pupil bereavement support which includes whole school training.

Northern Ireland School Bereavement Programme

This evaluation is part of the Northern Ireland School Bereavement Programme[14] that recognises the need to better support children and young people with bereavement.

The training was developed and delivered in partnership with Cruse Bereavement Support and an independent child bereavement counsellor. It offered a 1-day, in-person training course of interactive sessions including role-playing elements and peer-to-peer learning.[15] Training occurred across 9 sites, to 374 teaching and education staff from 162 schools, including 1 whole school.

AIMS

This evaluation aimed to explore the impact of a bereavement training course delivered to teaching staff in NI.

METHODOLOGY

Design

A formative evaluation using a participant-oriented approach was carried out. To ensure a robust evaluation, we utilised a mixed-methods approach, occurring in two phases over 2 years.

Study population and recruitment

All teaching and education staff who attended the bereavement training were eligible to participate. This included varied roles, including but not limited to principals, vice principals, classroom/subject teachers, pastoral staff and special educational needs teachers and support staff. This covered a range of nursery, primary, postprimary schools, from varied school management types (including controlled, grammar, Catholic).

Recruitment was two phased: first in December to January 2022 following the first training cohort in August 2022 (cohort 1), and again in December to January 2023 following the second training cohort in August 2023 (cohort 2). An opportunity sampling approach was adopted for both streams. After giving consent to contact at the training, teaching staff from both training cohorts were approached via email and asked to complete the follow-up survey and invited to participate in an interview.

Ethics and consent

Ethical approval was not sought as this project is a service evaluation. The Health Research Authority decision tool was used to confirm that ethical approval was not required for this evaluation project.[16] All participants gave informed consent prior to participation for their responses to be utilised within research outputs and dissemination.

Data collection

There were two main streams of data collection for each cohort of the training: semistructured interviews and an online survey.

Survey data were collected at baseline (ie, prior to the training), and at follow-up (4 months after training). Surveys contained a mixture of quantitative, and qualitative, open-text questions. Respondents were asked at baseline and follow-up to state a level of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale to a set of statements about the training. The baseline survey was filled in at the beginning of the training session, via SmartSurvey (cohort 1,

in 2022) or MS Forms (cohort 2, in 2023). The same survey questions were used for both cohorts of the training, to allow for direct comparison and collation of responses.

Semistructured interviews were carried out post-training. Interviews explored the participant's experience of the training, if/how they had applied it to their role since, including dissemination, changes to practice and policy, changes to their confidence and knowledge and impacts for pupils. A semistructured approach was selected to encourage flexibility in interviews and to allow participants to discuss elements of the training salient to their roles and experiences. Interviews were carried out remotely via MS Teams and lasted approximately 30 min.

Data analyses

To analyse the quantitative survey responses, percentage of 'very confident' and 'confident' and 'strongly agree' and 'agree' responses to each statement, at baseline and follow-up, were described. In addition, the means from baseline to follow-up were compared, alongside a Mann-Whitney U test for significance between the results. The Mann-Whitney U test was chosen because it is appropriate for small sample sizes, the data are ordinal Likert scale responses, and the data are unpaired survey responses.

Interview transcripts were created using an in-meeting MS Teams transcription tool. They were proofread and checked against audio recordings to account for corrections and to remove any identifiers. Interviews were analysed using thematic analysis by JC.[17] Transcripts were re-read to encourage familiarisation before inductive line-by-line coding occurred in which descriptive codes were assigned to the data. Through revisiting the data and discussions with the wider research team, interpretative codes and subsequent themes were developed.

RESULTS

Quantitative results

From the survey, a total of 293 baseline responses (phase 1: 86 responses; phase 2: 207 responses) and 65 follow-up responses (phase 1: 23 responses; phase 2: 42 responses) were received.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test demonstrate that, for all statements, there was a significant improvement after the training. A statistically significant result means that the reported change is likely to reflect an actual effect, rather than being due to chance alone. Results of these tests, as well as percentage agreement with the statements made by teaching staff, are given in tables 1 and 2.

In addition to improvements in confidence, table 1 highlights that there were significant improvements in access to a bereavement policy, tools and resources and information. There were also significant improvements in participants understanding of how to support young people through their grief, the number of young people affected by grief and bereavement and when and how to refer young people for additional support relating to their grief.

Table 2 highlights a statistically significant increase in teachers being aware of, and having access to, a bereavement policy following the training. Education staff stated that post-training, they had a good understanding of supporting a pupil through bereavement, and had tools and resources needed to appropriately do so. They also felt confident that they knew where to refer a pupil on for further support, where necessary.

Qualitative results

A total of 28 interviews were carried out over the two phases (table 3).

Impact of training on teaching staff's confidence

Evidence highlights that the training had a vastly positive impact on teachers' confidence regarding

Table 1 Responses of 'very confident' and 'confident' as a percentage of all responses to Likert scale survey questions about participants' confidence in supporting pupils affected by bereavement

Statement	'Very confident' and 'confident' as a proportion of all responses		Mean average response (1=not at all confident, 5=very confident)			
	Baseline (n=293)	Follow-up (n=65)	Baseline (n=293)	Follow-up (n=65)	Change	Statistically significant?
I can recognise when a young person is grieving	53%	89%	3.4	4.1	+0.7	Yes**
I know when a conversation around grief is needed	37%	89%	3.1	4.2	+1.1	Yes**
I have conversations around grief with young people	37%	89%	3.0	4.2	+1.2	Yes**
I can recognise when it is appropriate for a young person to be referred on for further bereavement support	41%	91%	3.1	4.3	+1.2	Yes**
I know how to support my colleagues in talking to a young person who is grieving	19%	89%	2.6	4.1	+1.5	Yes**
*p<0.05; ** p<0.01.						

Table 2 Responses of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' as a percentage of responses to Likert scale survey questions about resources available to support pupils affected by bereavement

Statement	'Strongly agree' and 'agree' as a proportion of all responses		Mean average response (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree)			
	Baseline (n=293)	Follow-up (n=65)	Baseline (n=293)	Follow-up (n=65)	Change	Statistically significant?
I have access to a bereavement policy	23%	31%	2.9	3.3	+0.4	Yes*
I have the tools and resources needed to appropriately support a young person through their grief	15%	66%	2.6	3.7	+1.1	Yes**
I have the information I need to support a young person through their grief	14%	80%	2.6	3.9	+1.3	Yes**
I have a good understanding of supporting young people through their grief	21%	83%	2.7	4.0	+1.3	Yes**
I am aware of how many children in my school are affected by grief	41%	55%	3.2	3.6	+0.4	Yes*
I can recognise when I need to take a step back from supporting a young person with their grief	26%	85%	3.0	4.0	+1.0	Yes**
I know where to refer a young person on for further bereavement support	33%	86%	3.0	4.2	+1.2	Yes**

*p<0.05 **p<0.01.

the topic of bereavement, expressed by all interview participants.

> It gave that extra confidence. I think that's the difference—to be able to deal with the young people and be there at that time and to feel confident that you can speak to them (SENCO).

Post-training, teachers felt they could now approach the subject of bereavement, including confidence in talking to pupils and having open, honest conversations. Oftentimes, this increased confidence meant the difference between letting a pupil's bereavement go under the radar, versus having the confidence to address it.

> I don't know that I would ever have acknowledged it, but for the youngster I think it's important that you do. And I would do that now. I would let the

child know that I'm aware that they have had a bereavement, and I would talk to them. (SENCO)

Prior to the training, teachers felt 'frightened of doing or saying the wrong thing' (SENCO, Special educational needs coordinator). Post-training, they reported learning that it was adequate to simply be there for a pupil and provide a listening ear, as opposed to feeling pressure to fix a situation. A part of countering this instinct to 'fix', was developing the confidence to not shy away from difficult questions. They learnt that they did not always have to have the answers and gained confidence to provide support in the ways that they could while recognising the boundaries of that support.

> I feel confident and reassured that a lot of it is just listening—it's okay not to have answers. If a situation becomes beyond my remit, I know that I would be able to refer a pupil onto further support (Pastoral Class Teacher).

Post-training, teachers had the confidence to pass the control back to the student, as opposed to 'jumping in' out of panic. This presented in the form of being assured to broach the topic with a pupil, and guide a transparent, supportive conversation regarding the

Table 3 Demographic information for interview participants

Demographic	Number of participants
School management type	
Controlled	14
Voluntary grammar	2
Catholic	2
School type	
Primary	9
Postprimary	8
Nursery	1
Job title	
Principal	2
Vice principal	5
Special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)	5
Class teacher	6

Six core themes were developed from the interviews. They are outlined in box 1 and explored below.

Box 1 Core themes developed from the interviews

Theme title
⇒ Impact of training on teaching staff's confidence.
⇒ Impact of training on teaching staff's knowledge.
⇒ Impact of training on school's policy.
⇒ Impact of training on school's practice.
⇒ Impact of training on pupils.
⇒ Whole school training.

child's needs—something participants reported feeling uncomfortable about prior to the training.

> I think before I would have been very like mollycoddle…[Now], I try and get them to guide what they want to happen. You know, do they want counselling? Do they want you to tell their friends for them? Do they want a home pass because they can't focus on anything? (Class Teacher).

Underlying this theme on confidence, is that teaching staff felt that the training allowed them to feel more prepared. Knowing that the training has equipped them to handle a situation enabled them to feel confident in real-life scenarios: *'I definitely felt that I was more able to be able to deal with things. Having that guidance and having got literature to back it up changed my attitude' (Vice Principal).*

Impact of training on teaching staff's knowledge

Feedback from participants highlighted that they frequently felt the training positively impacted their knowledge around bereavement and grief for pupils: *'I have a better understanding of the many different ways that grief can be expressed by young people and feel better equipped to both recognise them and deal with them effectively.' (Class Teacher, Head of Year)*

Participants compared their newly acquired knowledge with their experience pretraining, illustrating that they previously would not have known how to deal with a bereavement in school. Even experienced staff reported gaining new knowledge as a result of the training: *'I'm a teacher of over 30 years' experience. I went into the course thinking what can they really tell me that I haven't already experienced? But no, I left there with many more tools for my toolbox.' (Senior Teacher).*

Training increased participants' knowledge of the bigger picture of bereavement for a pupil and the knock-on effects this may have within their education. The interactive, role-play format of the training heightened attendees' appreciation of life outside of school for bereaved pupils, particularly family dynamics and relationships: *'The complex needs and family structures was highlighted in the day for our kids. This has helped me think more about my approach to dealing with grief with the kids I teach.' (Class Teacher, Head of Year).*

Importantly, teachers reported beginning to understand a pupil's behavioural responses within school following a bereavement. Teachers reported having more knowledge surrounding the impact of bereavement on a pupil, the ripple effects of grief and the meaning behind seemingly disruptive behaviour.

> I was guilty of this before the training…you get a bit frustrated with the child who hasn't done their homework, or who hasn't brought this in or hasn't brought that in, and you forget that there's a bigger picture there. (SENCO).

Training also supported knowledge regarding a bereaved pupil's emotions. Of particular benefit to teachers, was learning how children often display grief differently to adults, which they did not recognise prior to training. Teachers reported having greater awareness and understanding of how a pupil may be feeling: *'It's just given us more insight into how that child might be feeling, and especially all those different emotions…I hadn't really thought about that at all before to be honest.' (Senior Teacher).* This increased knowledge and sensitivity towards pupil behaviour and emotion following a bereavement has allowed teachers to embrace the uniqueness of each bereavement and adopt a person-centred approach.

Underlying this impact on knowledge is how the training supported attendees to develop a toolbox of resources and strategies that they can implement in practice. Resources that participants valued included: links to online materials, books, sources of information, and analogies and metaphors to relate to pupils.

Impact of training on school policy

Depending on the pretraining status of a school's bereavement policy, attendees expressed various ways in which the training impacted school policy. Where schools already had a bereavement policy, the training provided up-to-date knowledge that was fed into the policy: *'We had the bare bones before, but we were able to use a lot of what I had learned at the course and padded it a bit more… So a new version of the policy is now in place.' (Senior Teacher).*

Within some schools the training bought their attention to the need for a bereavement policy: *'I think it just emphasized and it made it very clear this is a key document to have' (Pastoral Vice Principal).* For some, they were actively developing a new bereavement policy. For others, this meant separating bereavement from their schools existing critical incident policy.

However, some participants reported challenges in developing or updating a bereavement policy. Devoting non-teaching time to policy development can be difficult, in addition to existing responsibilities. Further, there was a desire for a model policy to be provided by the training providers. Although there is currently an education authority provided template, this was described as *'long and complicated' (Specialist Teacher, ASD).*

Initial reflections on impact of training on pupils

Some pupils were aware of staff receiving pupil bereavement training and a number of teachers reflected on how they felt this was interpreted by pupils. Teachers felt that for pupils, knowing that their teachers had attended the training meant that they were aware and confident in having a point of support within school: *'There is an increased awareness by young people as to teachers maybe being there for them and as someone*

that they could potentially engage with.' (Senior Teacher).

As teachers became more confident and knowledgeable about how to support bereaved pupils, they felt pupils were more able to voice their needs. This generally meant they were more in control of what happened within school and could express where they needed support: *'It's ensuring that those children are in control. One size doesn't fit all, but allowing them that control and having those discussions with them… do you want me to tell the class, or do you want to? Do you need extra time for homework' (Vice Principal)*. Within this, teachers felt that pupils may feel as though they don't have to hide their emotions and could feel listened to and heard.

Whole school training

In the second phase of this teacher training (2023/2024), one school received whole school training. A reported benefit of this was the feeling of teamwork and solidarity, particularly considering the sensitivity around a bereavement: *'At the time of the training we had just lost a colleague and friend. So, in that instance it was positive because I didn't have to explain that the training was going to be difficult, and we were there for each other.' (Vice Principal)*.

Teachers who had not received whole school training reflected on the value and benefit of the whole school community receiving training together.

> I definitely would value it [whole school training], and certainly if there was potential going forward for whole school training, I definitely would encourage my staff to do it and would invest in it. (Teaching Principal).

Schools indicated that they would be happy to attend whole school training alongside other schools, intending to reduce burden on facilitators: *'If only if there was funding to make it available where the facilitators would be able to come, even in a cluster of schools. It would be really worthwhile.' (Vice Principal)*.

Participants suggested one benefit of whole school training was that it would be received first hand. Consequently, the training would be equally impactful for all recipients, as opposed to the training losing meaning or power when disseminated to colleagues through one trained individual.

> I actually think whole school training would be very good because while I can deliver what I learned that day, I think the way the girls told their scenarios and stories really made you buy into the training even more. (Specialist Teacher, ASD).

Some suggested that this could become a mandatory training held on existing summer training days, to ensure all teaching staff receive the training: *'I think it would be brilliant to have and maybe on a teacher training day, it would be absolutely fantastic to have that as a whole school thing.' (SENCO)*.

DISCUSSION

This evaluation examined the impact of a training course for teaching staff to support bereaved pupils in NI. Survey data demonstrated statistically significant increases in teachers' self-reported confidence and knowledge on supporting young people through bereavement. In-depth, semistructured interviews generated six core themes exploring the areas of impact of the training: teacher's confidence and knowledge, the school's policy and practice, impact on pupils, and the impact of whole school training.

Prior to this training, only 37% of teachers reported feeling confident or very confident in having conversations with young people about grief. This increased to 89% post-training, highlighting that the training resulted in a significant increase in teachers being equipped with both practical and emotional resources to support bereaved pupils. This mirrors findings from an evaluation of a school bereavement training course offered to eight schools in Scotland, which reported an increase from 40% to 70% of teachers feeling confident to recognise bereavement needs within a child from pretraining to post-training.[7] This was also demonstrated in an Australian 'grief and loss' training, where teachers reported increased confidence in addressing bereavement-related issues.[12] There are considerable data across countries and training programmes suggesting that teachers benefit from tailored training to increase their confidence. In turn, this can contribute to improved support for pupils experiencing bereavement.

Table 2 demonstrates an increase from 23% to 31% of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'I have access to a bereavement policy'. School bereavement policies are often absent or underdeveloped: only a small number of UK schools report having a planned and managed response to bereavement.[3] However, even where schools have a bereavement policy in place, additional work is needed to ensure teachers are aware of it and can use it.[3] Though this training resulted in a significant increase in awareness and presence of bereavement policies, it is clear that further work is needed to create and implement policies more widely.

A core, overarching finding of this evaluation, supported within the wider literature, is the essentiality of bereavement training for teachers and for this training to be consolidated through a supporting culture, ethos and policy and practice of the school. In this evaluation, teachers unanimously agreed that their school would benefit from receiving whole-school delivery of the bereavement training programme. Today, the role of teachers encompasses more than solely teaching; teachers play a role in children's mental health, family life and general emotional well-being.[18] Schools undoubtedly play a key role in recognising and supporting the needs of a bereaved child,[7] including educating pupils on supporting their peers, dispelling

stigma around death and bereavement, and educating children about grief.[18 19] Training programmes, such as the outlined in this evaluation, can alter the course of bereavement experience for pupils, as well as preparing all children through open class discussion for this inevitable life event.

CONCLUSIONS

This school-based bereavement training programme delivered to 374 teachers across NI had significant impacts on teachers, schools and pupils. Every school will be touched by bereavement at some point, with many children experiencing loss of a close relative throughout their school years. Given that schools are, therefore, a core component within a child's experience of bereavement, it is essential that teaching staff are adequately trained and equipped to provide support. Widespread endorsement and roll-out of school-based bereavement training programmes, such as this, could impact the ability of school's to provide lasting support in the often traumatic case of childhood bereavement.

ORCID iD
Jodie Crooks http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2574-4420

REFERENCES

1 Child bereavement UK. n.d. Available: https://www.childbereavementuk.org/
2 UK Commission on Bereavement. Northern Ireland briefing. n.d. Available: https://bereavementcommission.org.uk/media/u2ljgslu/ukcb-northern-ireland_briefings.pdf
3 McLaughlin C, Lytje M, Holliday C. Consequences of childhood bereavement in the context of the British school system. 2019. Available: https://www.winstonswish.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/COCB.pdf
4 Elsner TL, Krysinska K, Andriessen K. Bereavement and educational outcomes in children and young people: a systematic review. *School Psychology International* 2022;43:55–70.
5 Burrell LV, Mehlum L, Qin P. Educational attainment in offspring bereaved by sudden parental death from external causes: a national cohort study from birth and throughout adulthood. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol* 2020;55:779–88.
6 Lundberg T, Forinder U, Olsson M, *et al*. Bereavement stressors and Psychosocial well-being of young adults following the loss of a parent–a cross-sectional survey. *Eur J Oncol Nurs* 2018;35:33–8.
7 McManus E, Paul S. Addressing the bereavement needs of children in school: an evaluation of bereavement training for school communities. *Improving Schools* 2019;22:72–85.
8 Child Bereavement UK. Managing bereavement: a guide for schools. n.d. Available: childbereavementuk.org
9 Lytje M, Dyregrov A. The price of loss–a literature review of the psychosocial and health consequences of childhood bereavement. *Bereavement Care* 2019;38:13–22.
10 Dyregrov A, Dyregrov K, Lytje M. Loss in the family–a reflection on how schools can support their students. *Bereavement Care* 2020;39:95–101.
11 Duncan DA. Death and dying: a systematic review into approaches used to support bereaved children. *Review of Education* 2020;8:452–79.
12 Lynagh M, Gilligan C, Handley T. Teaching about, and dealing with, sensitive issues in schools: how confident are pre-service teachers. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education* 2010;1:5–11.
13 McGloughlin C. The challenges that face the primary school teacher in coping with grief and loss in a multicultural setting. Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, 2017
14 Marie Curie. Schools bereavement programme. n.d. Available: https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/policy/schools-bereavement-programme
15 Baines S, Patynowska K, McEwan J, *et al*. O-18 evaluation of the school bereavement programme in Northern Ireland (phase 1 pilot). *Supportive and Palliative Care* 2023;13:A7.
16 Health Research Authority. Is my study research? n.d. Available: https://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/
17 Braun V, ClarkeV. *Thematic analysis*. American Psychological Association, 2012.
18 Holland J. How schools can support children who experience loss and death. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* 2008;36:411–24.
19 Dawson L, Hare R, Selman L, *et al*. The one thing guaranteed in life and yet they won't teach you about it'. *Bereavement* 2023;2.