



Horsforth School

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Our Ref: PCB/TRH/JFI

10th November 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

It is with great sadness that I write this week's letter after the tragic events on Tuesday. A young man has been taken from us far too soon and whilst he was not currently studying at Horsforth, he will always be our student.

We send our deepest condolences and sympathies to Alfie's family.

You will have seen the emails from us as well as the stories in the media and you may be aware of a lot of social media posts. I would like to reiterate that the police have requested we refrain from unhelpful speculation around the incident and treat the social media posts with caution.

Students and staff have been affected, either because they knew Alfie or because they know there has been a violent crime on our doorstep. We have led whole school assemblies, had drop in counselling and support sessions and we will continue to support the students and staff who need it.

I would like to thank everyone who has sent in kind messages and we have been overwhelmed with the offers of counselling and support. I would like to thank any members of the public who supported in person on Tuesday when we were trying to help Alfie.

With the weekend approaching we wanted to share support that is suitable for not only students but also parents/carers. Bereavement can hit in many different ways, it can be immediate or it can be delayed but there is no right or wrong way to support someone.

We hope these links can offer some guidance or support to you and your families.

Support for Parents:

The pastoral team at Horsforth School is committed to providing holistic support for our students during this period and there is a range of things that we are offering from drop in sessions with our team at break and lunch, 1:1 sessions with our team, group sessions on trauma, extended time with our school counsellor and the quiet, reflection corner in the hall.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at school if you have any needs, questions or wish for some more direct signposting or possible referrals to agencies to support mental health. We work closely with

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Horsforth Children's Services who will support you and your child directly and our Mental Health Champion, Mrs Bellis can further signpost parents.

Please email the pastoralhub@horsforthschool.org to contact us. FAO: bereavement support.

We want to aid parents and carers as much as we can in supporting their children with bereavement and trauma, so we have put together the below lists and links of agencies or charities which offer guidance or signpost parents to useful resources.

Child Bereavement UK – A national organisation aimed at parents and professionals to help guide young people through the bereavement process. This should always be the first port of call for parents and professionals. <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>. **0800 02 888 40** their phone line is operating as normal and is available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Winston's Wish - <https://www.winstonswish.org/> - a great website and charity with lots of tips for parents on how to talk to and advise their children.

Young Minds- a superb mental health website, please check out the parent's section. <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/grief-and-loss/>. You can speak to their help line between 9.30am and 4pm. 9.30am-4pm, Monday-Friday 0808 802 5544

Cruse Bereavement Care -Support for anyone who is grieving. [Webchat service](#) open 9am - 9pm, Monday to Friday. Opening times: 9.30am - 5pm, Monday to Friday; late opening until 8pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; 10am - 2pm at weekends. 0808 808 1677

Support for Students:

We have signposted students to school support and external support in assemblies:

Connect Helpline on 0808 800 1212 (6pm – 2am 7 days a week) if you are in distress at night time and need someone to talk to.

CAMHS Crisis Call We are a new Freephone helpline for under 18s. We are for young people struggling to cope and parents that are worried about their child.

Our phone number is 0800 953 0505 and it is open from 8am – 8pm, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Victim Support provides emotional and practical help to victims or witnesses of any crime, whether or not it has been reported to the police. Phone: 0808 16 89 111

Chat Health – NHS team – text service Text 07520 619 750

We do recommend that at home they use KOOOTH.COM. This is a free confidential counselling service for mental health and crisis. Students have had assemblies led by the Kooth team and are aware of this online service.

The **Marketplace** is offering free counselling and this can be face to face or on the phone, they are based in Leeds. The Market Place offers a drop-in service, long-term and short-term counselling, bereavement

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counselling, wellbeing workshops, youth work support, and crisis counselling for 11 – 25 year olds in Leeds city centre.

The website below can also be used to find support in your local area.

<https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/if-you-need-help-around-death/finding-support-local-you>

Our thoughts remain with Alfie's friends and family who must be suffering such incredible feelings of loss at this time.

Thank you, as always, for your support.

Yours faithfully

Dr P Bell
Headteacher