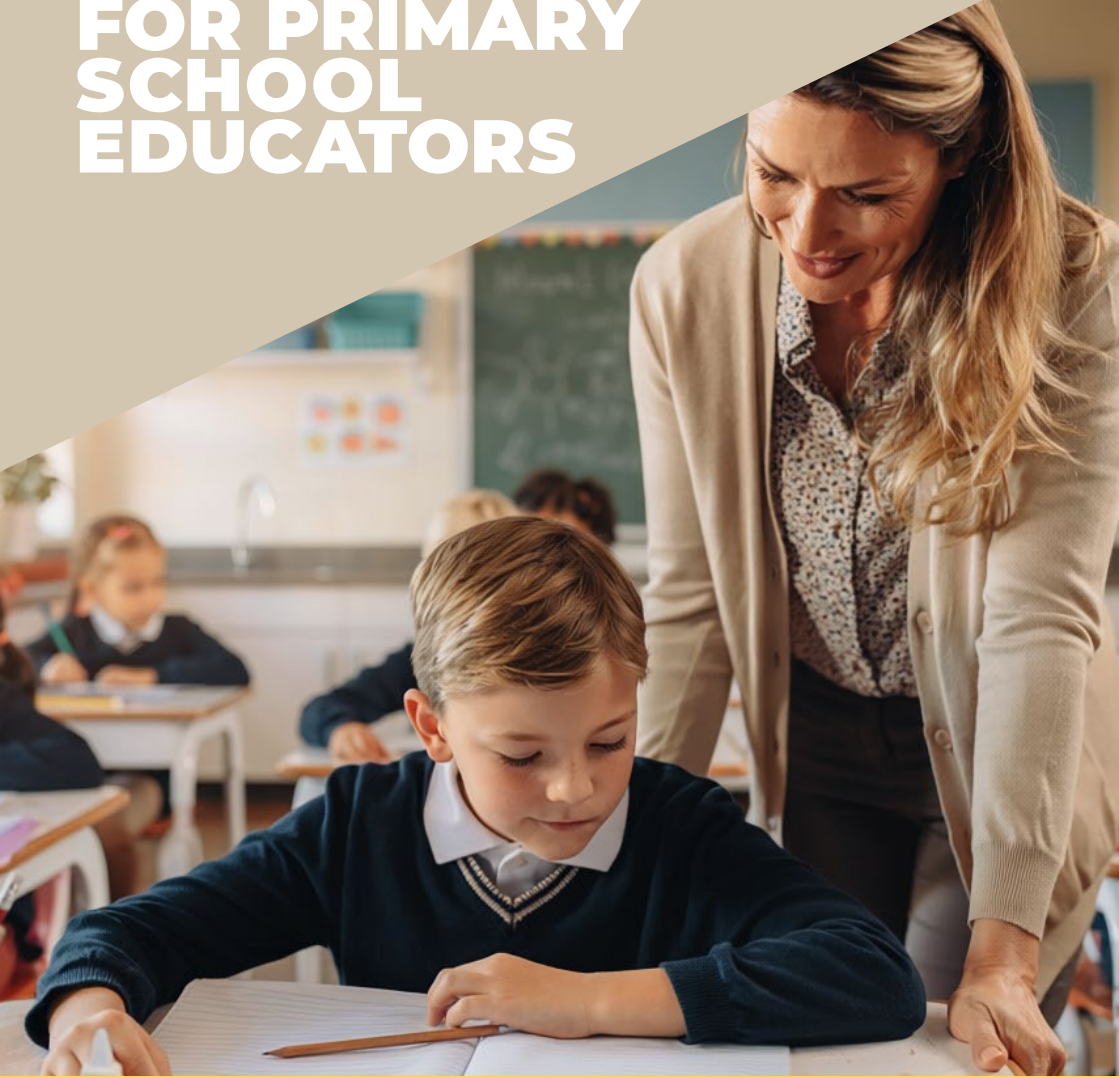


TOP TIPS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS



**STRIDES
PROGRAMME**



scotty's
THE MILITARY BEREAVEMENT CHARITY



Every Single week, 40 children will walk into a classroom for the first time following the death of their parent who served in the UK Armed Forces.

Having a family member die is a known adverse childhood experience (ACE). But schools and school staff can play a vital role in helping a child following a bereavement.

School can be a safe space and an escape, but it can also be somewhere that is hard for a grieving child. Especially if staff or classmates do not know how to support a bereaved child.

Or if they do not understand how grief might impact a child in the classroom. Grief can affect a child's ability to concentrate, it can affect them physically and it can make certain topics at school very difficult.

Knowing who your bereaved children are is an important first step. Being aware of things that might be upsetting for them and planning ahead can really help.

Scotty's has free training, resources and guidance available for schools. Please get in touch.

1 Grieving is tiring. It takes up a lot of their thinking and expressing emotions takes its toll physically. They might find it harder to concentrate because they are tired, so offer them regular breaks from learning to have a stretch, get a drink or have fresh air.

2 Be prepared for difficult questions. Young children are still building an understanding of what death means and may ask questions you weren't prepared for. Be honest, if you don't know the answer say so, and agree a time to talk again when you have the information you need..

3 Primary school children can often feel grief physically. They report headaches and tummy aches along with other ailments. Be respectful of these as expressions of their feelings, talk to parents to make a plan as to how these can be managed in school.

4 Children may start to bring toys and objects to school with them, as a means of comfort or as a totem to help them talk about the person who died. Be respectful of the importance of these objects but agree with them how sharing these things can be done appropriately.

5 Be mindful of lessons or assemblies that could impact them, like discussions about dying, war and Remembrance. Talk to the child first when there may be topics that might be upsetting, so they know what to expect and plan what to do if they are struggling.

6 Never force a child to talk about their experience, just be available if they chose to share their story. Some children may not outwardly express their grief at school as they want to keep it as a protected space for fun and learning. This is completely normal.

7 Speak with the parent or primary care giver about what the child understands about what happened to their loved one, what language was used and how much detail they have been told.

8 Every school should have a Bereavement Policy. To help all staff know what to do when a child experiences a death. A policy can include topics like returning to school after a death, longer term support and support for teachers.

Turn over for more info on how Scotty's can help your school and its pupils

Scotty's Little Soldiers is a charity dedicated to supporting children and young people, 0 to 25 years, who have experienced the death of a family member who served in the British Armed Forces.

When a young person joins Scotty's, they become a member and are supported until their 25th birthday. Whether it be 1:1 bereavement support, a respite break with the family, an opportunity to meet others in a similar situation, or access to extracurricular activities, Scotty's is always there for its members to ensure they don't feel alone.

The **STRIDES** Programme focuses on the education and development needs of bereaved Forces children and young people. This includes removing barriers to learning and providing opportunities to develop life skills.

The **STRIDES** Programme can advocate on behalf of a member in matters related to education, and it also includes access to a range of small educational grants. STRIDES is there to help schools and teachers too. Through this programme, Scotty's can support schools with resources, information, guidance and advice.

For more info contact: strides@scottyslittlesoldiers.co.uk



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