

# Learning Unit: Pet Bereavement

## Key Stage 2

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|---|---|--|--|
| Unit title: Coping when a pet dies  |   | Teacher:   |  |
| Subjects: English; PSHE; General studies; Science   |   | Duration of Unit: 1 week   |  |
| Summary: How to support children when a pet dies  |   |  |  |
| Desired Results   |   |  |  |
| <b>Objectives:</b><br>To support children through the loss of a pet   |   | <b>Essential Questions:</b><br>How does a pet's death make us feel?<br>How can we remember our pet?<br>Who can help me if I am sad?  |  |
| <b>Factual Knowledge:</b><br>Children will know:<br>That their feelings are valid and it is ok to feel them.<br>Where to get help if they need support. | <b>Embedding Knowledge:</b><br>Children will:<br>Complete the worksheet and have a discussion around the topic of a pet's death. Encourage the child to draw and write about their pet. Encourage other children to support the grieving child. | <b>Information becoming knowledge:</b><br>Children will discuss ideas, then complete the worksheet to help process their feelings, and discuss their feelings with family at home. |  |
|   |   |  |  |
| <b>Extensions:</b> discuss your feelings at home with parents or carers   |   | <b>Differentiation considerations:</b><br>Describe the strengths and needs within the group and how to meet needs and objectives in different ways.                                |  |

## **Learning Plan**

### **Differentiated Objectives:**

**Most will be able to understand that losing a pet can be very sad**

**Some will understand that pets can be family members and loss can be very difficult**

**Some will understand and empathise with feelings of loss**

**Some will liken the loss to the loss of a human family member such as a grandparent, which can make feelings about the loss worse.**

### **Plan:**

**The session plan can be used with a whole class, or an individual child suffering the loss of a pet. The worksheet is designed to support a child suffering the loss of a pet. If you feel the child needs further support, talk to the parents or carers about seeking professional help.**

### **National Curriculum links**

**This learning unit will relate particularly to the PSHE curriculum, and includes elements of English, literacy and speaking & listening. The pupils will have the opportunity to build on their learning from KSI and will be able to use words associated with feelings of sadness and loss, as well as associating them with events that can lead to specific feelings, such as the loss of their pet.**

**They will also begin to learn about finding a trustworthy person that they can rely on when they want to speak about their feelings, and recognise if their friends or relatives are finding their emotions difficult to deal with.**

**The unit provides the opportunity to think about and cope with loss or grief.**

# Session Plan

**Project Name:** OTAC education programme

**Programme Session Name:** Pet Bereavement

**Session Date:**                      **Session Time:** 30 mins

**Group Name/Age Group:** KS2

**Session Lead/Planner:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Healthy Living</b>                     | Promoting and supporting healthy life-styles to secure physical, spiritual, social and emotional well-being.   |
| <b>Feel Safe</b>                          | Ensuring that members of the Community are supported to feel safe.   |
| <b>Life Enhancement &amp; Achievement</b> | Inspirational and exciting learning activities that ensure members of the Community raise their expectations and aspirations, and achieve at the highest possible level.                   |
| <b>Participation</b>                      | Opportunity for the voice of the Community to be heard and to help shape the services available to them, whilst encouraging them to make a positive contribution to their local community. |
| <b>Learning &amp; Development</b>         | Providing access to a range of learning pathways so that members of the Community develop knowledge and robustness.  |

## **Session Aims and Objectives:**

**To cope with the loss of a pet.**

**Teacher's notes:** This session can be conducted with a whole class, or can be used one to one to support a child if they have come into school or another setting after a recent pet bereavement. Use this outline in conjunction with the Pet Memories worksheet.

If a child has also suffered another recent bereavement such as a grandparent, this can amplify feelings of loss and make them difficult to cope with. If you feel the child is struggling to cope, talk to their parents or carers about seeking professional help.

### **Session/Activity Outline:**

- Ask the children who has pets at home? Tell them that today we are going to talk about when a pet dies. It can be very sad when a pet dies. Can anyone think of another word for how they might feel if they had a pet who died?
- Then ask the children if anyone had a pet who died? What was the pet's name? How did they feel about the animal? Encourage the child to express their feelings about the pet and their death.
- Tell the child that it is important that they talk about the pet and their loss whenever they like as it helps to think about the big feelings we have when a pet dies.
- Ask the child to draw a picture of their pet who died and write words about them around the picture. The words could be about their pet, or they could be feelings the child had when the pet died. Remind the child that it is ok to feel very sad when someone close to us dies, and that pets are part of our family too.
- Tell the child that it is good to talk about how we feel about the pet's death, but it is also good to remember the lovely times we had with our pet when they were alive. Encourage the child to think about 3 happy times they had with their pet. These could be playtimes, outings, holidays, feeding times, training they did with them, or when they first got the pet. Ask the child to write or draw about these 3 happy memories with their pet.
- Discuss other family members with the child. Remind them that other people may be feeling sad about the pet too, and even other pets could be missing them. Encourage them to talk to other family members about their loss.
- Ask the child if there is something they could keep to remember their pet. This could be an accessory like a collar or name tag, a memory box, a plant or tree they plant in the garden or a plaque they make with the pet's name on. It could also be a photo of their pet.
- Ask the other children how they could help the child suffering the loss to feel better.

**Resources/Materials:** Basic stationery box, projector or board for class discussion notes, soft toy dog or cat, Pet Memories worksheet

**Extension Exercises/Take-Home Activity:** Talk to your family at home. Ask your parents or carers whether they miss the pet

who died and how they feel. Ask them whether they did anything or kept anything to remember the pet.

## **Session Evaluation**

**Participant Comments/Evaluation**

**Staff Evaluation**

**Issues Raised/Discussion Points**

**Follow-up/Action Required**

**Additional Notes**

**Staff signature:**

**Name:**

**Date:**