



Dunmore Community School

Dunmore, Co. Galway. H54 KP03

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7/10/2020

Dear parent(s)/guardians(s),

We are all deeply saddened to learn of the death of one of our 3rd year students, Ali Herviaux.

For some students, a death of someone they know may remind them of some other loss in their lives. For other children this may be their first encounter with death. Children grieve differently from adults. It is possible that your child may have some feelings and questions he/she may wish to discuss with you. It is important to give factual information that is age appropriate. Should you have difficulty approaching this issue, the school Chaplain, counsellor and Care team are here to assist. Psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPs) have been with us all day supporting and advising teachers in their efforts to assist our students at this time.

It is important that they have the opportunity to express their feelings. You can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging him/her to express feelings. All children are different and will express their feelings in different ways. It is not uncommon for children to have difficulty concentrating or be fearful, anxious, or irritable. They may become withdrawn, cry, complain of physical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares. Some may not want to eat. These are generally short term reactions. Over the course of the coming days and weeks, please keep an eye on your child and allow him/her to express their feeling without criticism. Although classes will continue as usual, I anticipate the next few days will be difficult for everyone.

Young people frequently turn to social media to see what others are saying, or to find out more. At these times it is important that you monitor their use and engage with them about what they read. We urge you to emphasise and reinforce the need to be extremely sensitive and careful about what they post.

It is important that you deal honestly and directly with their questions. Referring to death as going to sleep or passing away result in confusion, it is appropriate that you use the word "death" and refer to Ali as having "died".

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding in these matters. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

Yours sincerely,

Principal.