

13 January 2017

Dear Students

We would like to thank everyone within our school community for the support that has been given and expressed in so many ways in response to the tragic house fire and deaths of Emilia Kordaszewska and her mother. It was such a shocking and unthinkable event that has changed our school community and it has been heartening to see how you have all been supporting each other during a very distressing time. We have spoken with some parents/carers, families and students during the Christmas break and since the start of term, and we wanted to acknowledge how difficult it was to have such a thing occur during a school holiday; meaning that there was a period of time when as families you were bearing the emotional impact of this tragedy yourselves. Having spoken with students about ways in which they have been supporting each other as friends and families there have been some key themes coming through about what students have been finding helpful and comforting including:-

- If you want to talk about this tragedy that can be really helpful, so that we can acknowledge how awful it was and that it has made some of us very upset. It is ok to cry and show that you are upset, equally some people can feel incredibly sad and not cry which is ok too;
- Everyone will be affected by this in their own way. There is no one way to feel, or act when someone we know dies. You might find yourself feeling lots of emotions, all at once or changing rapidly;
- There is no 'measure' of how much a person grieves when someone dies. Sometimes we want to feel as though we are the person who will miss them the most. This is because we are feeling as though we really want to be connected to the person who has died. We need to accept that different people feel grief and react differently and that is ok;
- Supporting each other by listening to our friends and being kind to ourselves and each other makes us feel not only better but also that we are part of a team helping one another;
- If a friend tells you something that makes you feel worried about whether they or someone else might not be safe, it is ok to tell an adult so that someone can see if that person would like some help with something. You can talk to your family or any adult in school;
- When we are feeling big feelings you might feel a little wobbly or worried at times. There might be things that help you to feel better, maybe something you used to have or do when you were younger such as a favourite toy or game or routine you had with your family might help you to feel a bit better;
- Eating good for you foods and getting fresh air and exercise can help you to feel better for a while;
- It is a good idea to do things where you can have fun and a laugh – it is ok to have fun even if you still feel sad at the same time;
- Talking about your friend who died with other people can be helpful and make you smile especially when remembering fun or silly things you did together.

With kind regards



Mr D Conway
Headteacher