

‘Space to Grieve’ Bereavement Support at Felixstowe School



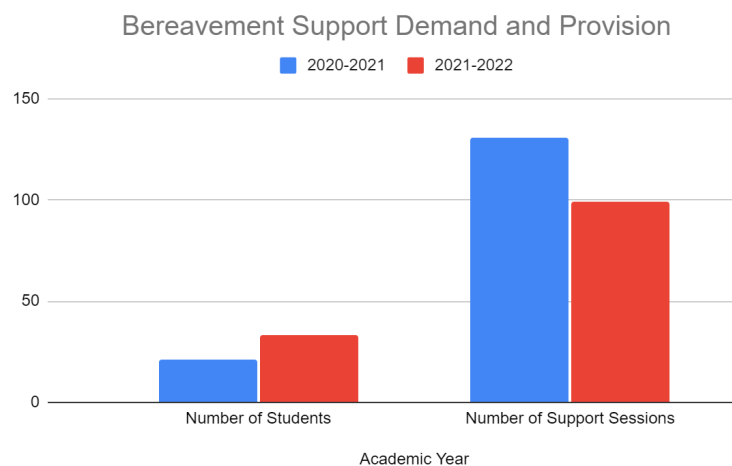
Update from local charity Boost Felixstowe as they pioneer partnerships between faith and education, through chaplaincy at Felixstowe School.

On average, one child in every classroom has experienced grief, loss or bereavement. The pandemic has seen an increased number of young people experience bereavement first hand. The challenges of the pandemic have also impacted on how much time young people were able to spend with relatives, and whether they were able to attend important events such as funerals too.

Through Boost’s School Chaplaincy partnership at Felixstowe School, we’ve been able to support students who have experienced death, dying, bereavement or loss. This has become an specialist area of support for us over the past three years, with students now directly referred to the chaplain in the event of a child experiencing a bereavement. This is a result of regular, high quality training and support for the chaplain, and the positive feedback from students following the support.

While it is heartbreaking to hear stories of young people losing a loved one, it is also a great privilege to see them continue to attend school, try their best, and grow, despite the huge challenges of trying to process very sad news. Let’s not forget that often this will be a young person’s first ever experience of death. For some, multiple bereavements over the past few years have been incredibly challenging at what is already a difficult stage of life for some.

Support takes the form of one-to-one sessions with our chaplain in the comfortable environment of Student Services at Felixstowe School. This support is offered voluntarily to students, and offered for as long as is needed.



Since September 2021, we have supported 33 students with 99 one-to-one sessions.

During the previous 2020-2021 academic year, we supported 21 students with 131 one-to-one sessions.

At the time of writing, we are two thirds of the way through the 2021-2022 academic year, so already seeing an increase in the number of students requiring this support compared to last year.

Providing this unconditional, individual and conversational support at the time and place where young people need it (in school) makes a huge difference. One young person, after weekly bereavement support, wrote:

“Thank you for your support during some of the hardest times of my life. There are no words to express how truly grateful I am”.

This academic year, students who have experienced bereavement have required, on average, three sessions of one-to-one bereavement support. However, the presence of the chaplain at Felixstowe School full-time means that students can access continued support if they feel they need it at a further date, for example, on key anniversaries of a death where things may prove to be difficult.

The past few years have been so difficult, but we are grateful to offer a continued presence at Felixstowe School, through a full-time chaplaincy, in particular supporting students who have experienced grief, bereavement and loss.

Boost Felixstowe thanks Felixstowe Town Council for their support of this important work benefitting young people in and around our town.

You can find out more about our work by visiting www.boostfelixstowe.org.uk