**Reactions**

So some of our pupils who are neurodivergent and come to the world in a very concrete and black-and-white way were challenging at the time. It was challenging at the time because they said it as it was. And that often goes against what society's norms are around dealing with death.

They might laugh. They might shout out, they might seem completely unconcerned. They might say exactly what they think and be very blunt in approaching it. All of these reactions are okay, and it's really important to reassure them that whatever they feel is okay. But we might need to remind them that other people might struggle and not understand why they're reacting in such a way and other people might have opinions. It's also important for them to recognise why other people might be sad or crying to help them understand that this is how people are feeling, and that's okay, too.

One of my neurodivergent pupils stood up and very clearly expressed that they didn't feel sad at all. I'm not sad at all, and I'm not bothered at all. And that was okay as well. It was a little shocking and it's hard to make sure that your responses to that aren't your responses, that you have to remember that everybody's coming to this information from a very different starting point and experiences about how they express themselves. But what we did in that assembly was talk to that young person about, that's okay if that's how you feel, but recognising and remembering that everyone feels something different, and we use that to reinforce that. So you might not be sad and that's okay, but recognising that other people might be sad and how it would be appropriate to respond to that, it's that opportunity to reinforce empathy and again, empathy being a really tricky area of development for many, many of our pupils.

*SEN1E Reactions*