

### Critical incident – Death of a child



The manager and staff are aware of their responsibilities and know how to act swiftly, appropriately and effectively in the case of the death of a child within the setting. The death of a child in a childcare setting is thankfully rare but is particularly distressing for all involved.

A child may die in a childcare setting because of one of the following reasons: cot death, illness, fatal accident or negligence leading to fatal illness or accident. It must be remembered that only a medical practitioner can pronounce someone to be dead.

- If it is suspected that a child has died in the setting, emergency resuscitation will be given to the child by the qualified First Aider until the ambulance arrives
- A senior member of staff will coordinate the removal of other children in the vicinity to a safe place where they can be reassured and comforted as necessary
- The manager will call the emergency services – Ambulance and Police
- The manager will call the Chair Person and informs them of what has happened and ask them to come to the setting
- The manager, Chair Person and Police agree who should call the parents, how they will be informed of what has happened, and who should meet with them.
- The manager ensures the children are kept away from where the child is thought to have died, and asks staff not to discuss it in front of them.
- A member of staff is delegated to phone all parents to collect their children. The reason given must be agreed by the setting's line manager and the information given should be the same to each parent.
- The setting's Committee will decide how long the setting will remain closed, taking advice from the Police
- When the children have gone home, members of staff remain at the setting and cooperate fully with police investigation; they go home when the police have agreed

#### **Preparation of possible forensic investigation scene**

- If it is thought that the child has died in the setting, the Police may want to investigate- in which case the setting becomes a forensic scene- and evidence is kept intact.
- A critical incident report is written up and a RIDDOR report is sent to the Health and Safety Executive/Local Authority Environmental Health Officer. The setting's manager is responsible for this and for informing Ofsted.
- The manager and the setting's Chair Person are aware that the grief of staff may be overwhelming. Bereavement counselling is made available if needed.

**Staff will not discuss the death of a child with the press.**