



Death of a Child Policy

Policy Statement

At Clare House Nursery, the death of a child is an extremely rare and tragic event. Our priority will always be to preserve life wherever possible, protect the dignity of the child, support their family, care for the emotional wellbeing of children and staff, and cooperate fully with the emergency services and relevant agencies.

We understand that such an incident will be distressing for everyone involved. This policy outlines the actions staff must take to ensure the situation is managed calmly, professionally and sensitively.

This policy should be read alongside our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, First Aid Policy, Critical Incident Policy, Health and Safety Policy** and **Staff Wellbeing Policy**.

Immediate Response

If a child becomes seriously ill, unresponsive or is suspected to have died whilst in our care:

- A qualified Paediatric First Aider will immediately assess the child and begin appropriate emergency first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), where appropriate, following current Resuscitation Council UK guidance.
- Emergency services (999) will be called immediately, requesting an ambulance and following the advice given by the emergency operator.
- First aid will continue until responsibility is taken over by the emergency services.
- Only a qualified medical professional can confirm that a person has died.

Caring for Other Children

Whilst emergency treatment is taking place:

- A senior member of staff will calmly move the remaining children to another safe area of the nursery.
- Children will be reassured and cared for in a calm and age-appropriate manner.
- Staff will respond honestly and sensitively to children's questions using language appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Staff will avoid discussing details of the incident in front of children.

Communication

The Nursery Manager will:

- Liaise with the emergency services and police throughout the incident.
- Agree with the emergency services and police how and when the child's parents/carers will be informed.
- Ensure all communication with the family is handled with compassion, dignity and respect.
- Contact the Chair of the Committee immediately.

- Ensure consistent information is shared with staff and families where appropriate.

Parents of the remaining children will be contacted if necessary and advised when to collect their children. Information shared will be agreed with the emergency services and will respect the privacy of the child and family involved.

Preserving the Scene

If the death is unexpected:

- Staff will preserve the area as far as possible.
- Nothing will be moved unless necessary to preserve life or as directed by the emergency services.
- Staff will fully cooperate with the police and any subsequent investigation.

Notifications

Where required, the Nursery Manager will notify:

- Ofsted.
- The Local Authority.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under **RIDDOR**, where applicable.
- Children's Social Care where safeguarding concerns exist.

All notifications will be made in accordance with statutory requirements.

Recording the Incident

A full written record will be completed as soon as possible after the incident.

This will include:

- Date and time.
- Location.
- Factual account of events.
- First aid administered.
- Emergency services involvement.
- Names of staff present.
- Actions taken.
- Advice received from external agencies.
- Notifications made.
- Outcome.

Records will be stored securely in accordance with our **Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy**.

Investigation and Review

Following the incident:

- The Nursery Manager and Chair of the Committee will cooperate fully with any investigation.

- Staff involved will provide factual written accounts.
- Policies, procedures and risk assessments will be reviewed.
- Any recommendations or lessons learned will be implemented promptly to strengthen future practice.

Supporting Children, Families and Staff

The death of a child can have a significant emotional impact on everyone involved.

Clare House Nursery will:

- Offer compassionate support to the child's family.
- Support children attending the nursery through age-appropriate conversations and reassurance.
- Provide opportunities for staff to debrief following the incident.
- Arrange access to counselling, occupational health or bereavement support where appropriate.
- Support staff returning to work following the incident.

We recognise that grief affects everyone differently and will respond sensitively to individual needs.

Confidentiality and Media Enquiries

All information relating to the incident will remain confidential.

Staff must not:

- Discuss the incident outside of those who need to know.
- Share information on social media.
- Speak to members of the press.

Any media enquiries will be referred to the Chair of the Committee or another nominated spokesperson.

Our Commitment

At Clare House Nursery, the welfare of every child remains our highest priority. In the event of the death of a child, we are committed to responding with professionalism, compassion and sensitivity while working closely with emergency services, external agencies and the child's family. We will provide appropriate support to everyone affected and continually review our practice to ensure the highest standards of care and safeguarding are maintained.

