

Intereach Family Day Care Death of a Child Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	1.0	Date approved	20/10/2025	Next review date	20/10/2028

Objective

To ensure in the tragic event of the death of a child while in Family Day Care, all actions taken are respectful, timely and in accordance with legal, regulatory and ethical obligations. This procedure aims to support staff, educators and families through a compassionate and coordinated response, prioritising the wellbeing of all involved while ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and reporting requirements.

Background

The death of a child in a Education and Care is classified as a serious incident and triggers a range of mandatory compliance and reporting obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and Regulation 176(2)(a)(ii) – Education and Care Services National Regulations requires that the approved provider must notify the Regulatory Authority within 24 hours of becoming aware of any serious incident, including the death of a child while being educated and cared for by the service

Definition

Death of a child

- while that child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service, or
- following an incident while that child was being educated and cared for by an education and care service

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Approved Provider /Nominated Supervisor to:

- Ensure coordinators, educators, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of the death of a child procedure
- Notify the Regulatory Authority as soon as practicable but within 24 hours of the death, or the time they become aware of the death. Other notifications include:
 - Emergency Services – Ambulance and Police to be called immediately upon discovering the incident.
 - Safe work NSW -death of a child occur in the service it will be notifiable incident according to Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and regulation 2017.
 - Child Protection Authority or Office of the Children's Guardian (NSW) – if there is any suspicion of abuse, neglect or reportable conduct.
- Complete the Notification of Incident Form and provide any required attachment through NQAITS.
- Follow directions/protocols provided by the Regulatory Authority.
- Demonstrate sensitivity, open mindedness and a balanced approach to managing the incident

- Maintain accurate and detailed record keeping
- Ensure parents, families, children and educators receive adequate and appropriate post-incident support
- Recognise and support cultural needs of educators, FDC educator's children and families
- Ensure all evidence is preserved
- establish protocols for coordinators and FDC educators to discuss the traumatic event
- Advise coordinators and FDC educators of media protocol for the event
- Provide professional and sensitive communication with families of the FDC Service
- Engage the services of health care professionals (counselling and support for coordinators and FDC educators)
- Cooperate on an ongoing basis with agencies involved in the investigation

It is the responsibility of the educators and staff to:

- Be aware of and adhere to this procedure
- ensure immediate and appropriate action is taken in the event of the death of a child whilst at the service by following and implementing the procedure
- contact emergency services and the approved provider/ nominated supervisor immediately.
 - Ensure that the child's parent/ guardian is informed promptly and appropriately of a serious incident, it is not the role of the Educator (or the service) to inform the parent or guardian of a child's death
- Communicate clear, factually and sensitively to the nature of the incident. follow any directions given by the authorities and cooperate with the investigation; and,
 - ensure records are kept for seven years from the date of the child's death. (Refer to Data security and retention Policy).
 - NB: in the tragic event of a child's death, it is not the role of the Educator (or the service) to inform the parent or guardian. This responsibility lies with authorised emergency personnel, such as police or medical professionals, who are trained to deliver such news.
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Procedure

In the unlikely event of a death of a child while in care at an Intereach Children's Service, educators and staff must implement the following procedure:

Actions by /educators/staff

- Emergency guidelines DRSABCD is followed as per first aid training. First aid will only be provided by a qualified educator.
- Triple Zero ('000') is called and a request for an ambulance service is made immediately. In a FDC educator's home, these two actions will be done simultaneously, and the child may need to be carried to the phone or the phone used at the location of the child.
- Resuscitation is continued until the ambulance arrives.
- The Nominated Supervisor is notified immediately (Refer to Notification of serious incident procedure).
- All directions given by the attending authorities are followed.
- An Incident Report is completed within 24 hours of the incident.
- Accurate and detailed record keeping is maintained.

Actions by Nominated Supervisor

- The parent/guardian are notified that a serious incident has occurred, and they are advised to contact the relevant medical agency. This information should be provided in a compassionate manner.
- report all serious incidents as per the Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure (Refer to the Intereach Risk Management Policy and Incident Management Policy) to the:
 - Executive Team immediately; and,
 - Regulatory authority through the NQA IT System as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours; (Refer to Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure).
- Arrange where possible, two staff members to be sent immediately to the Family Day Care residence, venue or excursion/ outing location.
 - One staff member will remain with the educator to provide emotional and practical support, while the other will supervise the remaining children and coordinate their safe and timely collection from care while maintaining a calm environment.
- All directions given by the attending authorities are followed, and ongoing cooperation is provided with the investigation.

Wellbeing of Staff, Educators, Families and Children

- Counselling services are organised and made available for all educators, staff, families and children affected by the incident.
- An appropriate person is arranged to conduct a debriefing session with staff and educators (and families if appropriate).
 - Support and guidance will be sought from relevant/appropriate healthcare professionals to provide appropriate materials to send home to families to assist in understanding the effects of trauma on children.
 - Refer staff, educators and families to external mental health services when needed.

NB It is not the role of the service to inform the parent/guardian that their child has died. A doctor is the only person who can determine whether a person has died and be responsible for organising notification to be given to Next of Kin.

Mental Health Services and Support

Beyond Blue 24/7 mental health support service 1300 22 4636 beyondblue.org.au	headspace Online support and counselling to young people aged 12 to 25 1800 650 890 (9am to 1am daily) headspace.org.au	Kids Helpline 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services for children and young people aged 5 to 25 1800 55 1800 kidshelpline.com.au
Lifeline 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services 13 11 14 lifeline.org.au	Suicide Call Back 24/7 crisis support and counselling service for people affected by suicide 1300 659 467 suicidecallbackservice.org.au	13YARN 24/7 crisis support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 13 92 76 13yarn.org.au
Mensline 24/7 counselling service for men 1300 78 99 78 mensline.org.au	1800 RESPECT 24/7 support for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence and abuse 1800 737 732 1800respect.org.au	QLife LGBTIQ+ peer support and referral 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

If you are concerned about someone at risk of immediate harm, call 000 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.





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Monitoring, evaluation, and review

This procedure will be reviewed every three years and incorporate feedback and suggestions from children, families, educators, coordinators, volunteers, and students or after a critical event

National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
2.2.2	Incident and Emergency Management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service that is child safe.

Compliance and Reference

Legislation	Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulations 2017.
Standards or other external requirements	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), National Quality Standards Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), Guide to the National Quality Framework – updated Sept 2025 Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Childcare Service Provider Handbook 2018 (updated Sept. 2025)
Internal Documentation	Intereach Risk Management Policy Intereach Incident Management Policy Data Security and Retention Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure Notification of Serious Incidents Procedure Incident Form

Document Control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	13/12/2019	R. Phillips - Acting Senior Manager, Children and Family Services	13/12/2022
2.0	29/09/2022	M.Tai – General Manager, Operations	29/09/2025
1.0	20/10/2025	The Children's Services procedure separated to be a standalone procedure for OOSH and Family Day Care approved by: Kerri-Anne Hyde, General Manager - Operations	20/10/2028